

The full picture at a glance: Hailo optimizes its decision making processes with arcplan Enterprise



INDUSTRY

- Consumer and investment goods industry

SOLUTION

- Implementation of a sales information system

COMPANY / COUNTRY

- Hailo-Werk GmbH & Co. KG / Germany

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

- Controlling
- Sales
- Marketing
- Performance
 - Contribution margin
 - Turnover / sales
 - Offer calculation
 - Stock management
 - Purchase prices

SOFTWARE

- arcplan Enterprise
- Oracle Essbase
- IBM DB2

USERS

- 40 users

BENEFITS

- Sophisticated reporting options for business departments
- Comprehensive decision support
- Fast and easy adaptation of the solution to changing business processes

Hailo-Werk GmbH & Co. KG, headquartered in Haiger, Hessen, is a leading manufacturer of ladders, safety equipment and waste bins that are sold in more than 60 countries around the world to DIY enthusiasts and trade professionals. Hailo's logo, a bright red dot, stands for unrivaled quality and safety. The company is part of the Joachim Loh Group and employs more than 350 people.

"With arcplan Enterprise, we have access to our vital business data at our fingertips. We can segment our data by customer, by product, or by sales rep with the push of a button. None of us can imagine how we ever managed without this. In addition, the system is extremely easy to use: within less than an hour, all our employees were able to work with the software. Thanks to arcplan, we are on top of our business data and figures at all times!"

Ronny Piesker, programmer/DWH at Lotus GmbH & Co. KG (IT subsidiary of Hailo)

Since its inception, process optimization and improved efficiency have remained the key priorities for Hailo – not least when it comes to reporting. Hailo selected arcplan Enterprise to ensure that management and business units can quickly access the information they need. This business intelligence solution was first implemented more than six years ago and provides the basis on which important corporate decisions can be made and action can be taken quickly and efficiently. Initially, the platform was designed to support only the sales team. As a consequence, it became known as the company's sales information system. Today, arcplan Enterprise provides a number of other departments, including controlling and marketing, with information that improves decision-making.

"At Hailo, we have a number of important IT solutions that we rely on every day. Each department runs its own customized applications, but our BI system is valuable enough to span all departments and processes within our company," explained Ronny Piesker, programmer/DWH at Lotus GmbH & Co. KG, IT subsidiary of Hailo.

Hailo says goodbye to rigid reporting

Before 2003, when Hailo opted for a BI solution from arcplan, the business used a bespoke system based on the PRG programming language. This solution was soon replaced by Hyperion Essbase (now Oracle Essbase). These applications, however, were cumbersome and restrictive to program, and the implementation of new applications was very time-consuming. "Customization was extremely difficult and cumulated values could only be viewed at the highest user level. In addition, integration of new applications was always a challenging task," says Ronny Piesker, reflecting on Hailo's previous systems.

A great leap forward in user friendliness

In the late 1990s, as the business grew and the amount of data to be processed rose significantly, Hailo's IT department considered introducing a BI solution that would offer comprehensive and sophisticated reporting options. MIP, an IT service provider and arcplan partner, was selected as an IT consultant. After a detailed analysis of the company's requirements, MIP recommended implementing arcplan Enterprise.

"We did of course also look at products from competitors such as Hyperion Analyzer. In the end, we opted for arcplan, as its solution was able to meet all our needs," said Ronny Piesker. Flexibility and high performance were essential to Hailo. "A crucial aspect for us was the option to adjust applications on the fly, so development had to be user friendly. In addition, the solution we were looking for had to be comprehensive, meaning we could run reports, dashboards, and department-specific



applications on it. None of the products we looked at met these requirements better than the solution proposed by arcplan.”

The web-based application soon won over Hailo’s employees. Even people who initially were rather skeptical now find their arcplan reports essential to conduct their business. Today, around 40 Hailo employees work with the BI solution from arcplan on a daily basis. Thanks to its user friendliness and clearly structured data output, the system is now in use in virtually all departments of Hailo, especially management, controlling, sales and marketing.

Many applications provide Hailo with data that improves decision-making

With arcplan Enterprise, Hailo employees can access all company data with a web browser and carry out detailed analyses and evaluations. The BI front-end retrieves the data from two pools, namely the multidimensional Essbase database from Oracle and an IBM DB2 database. The arcplan solution provides management with one-click access to inventory and offers real-time information on orders. Employees can, for example, check how well a particular product is selling in a specific region at any point in time. The application also helps keep stock levels to a minimum as it returns updated inventory figures on a daily basis.

Sales personnel now have access to a powerful tool that helps them provide more accurate order estimates, as arcplan Enterprise calculations return price suggestions based on customer and product codes. If the user decides to accept the suggested price, the system generates an offer letter with the appropriate pictures in MS Word. This fully automated process brings huge time savings.

With their purchase price application built on arcplan’s platform, Hailo can now track the prices charged by suppliers and compare planned prices with the actual costs. Thanks to the arcplan solution, the marketing department can easily identify profitable products and determine the product color that sells best to a specific target group.

“The new system assists Hailo workers in many different ways – from simple sales and error analyses to more complex product profitability reports,” explained Ronny Piesker.

IT staff at Hailo are equally delighted with the BI application, as the development environment of arcplan Enterprise can be used efficiently even without in-depth programming skills. In addition,

it allows for flexible customization and fast and easy creation of dashboards and other graphical user interfaces. This means that the program can be quickly adjusted as business procedures change. Furthermore, the time required for maintenance and installation is low for such a robust system.

„With arcplan Enterprise, we have access to our vital business data at our fingertips. We can segment our data by customer, by product, or by sales rep with the push of a button. None of us can imagine how we ever managed without this. In addition, the system is extremely easy to use: within less than an hour, all our employees were able to work with the software. Thanks to arcplan, we are now on top of our business data and figures at all times“, explained Ronny Piesker.

At the moment, Hailo is preparing a new project that will enable the company to track the price of aluminum. For this purpose, Hailo intends to implement a forecast function for this important commodity, which will be based on web services and fully integrated into arcplan Enterprise.

Affiliated partners

MIP GmbH has supported the implementation of the arcplan solution at Hailo’s. The innovative service company is distinguished by years of experience in business intelligence and data warehousing.

www.mip.de



About arcplan

arcplan is a leader in innovative Business Intelligence, Dashboard, Corporate Performance and Planning software solutions for desktop and mobile use. Since 1993, arcplan has enabled more than 3,000 customers worldwide to leverage their existing infrastructure and achieve organizational efficiency through the powerful combination of analysis, insight and collaboration. Simply put: *We make organizations perform better.*

www.arcplan.com