

Tire Manufacturer Drives Deeper Business Insight with Microsoft® Office PerformancePoint™ Server 2007

Overview

Country: Canada

Industry: Automotive/Manufacturing

Customer Profile

Created in 2005 through the merger of two successful North American companies, GPX International Tire Corp. is a global manufacturer of high-quality OTR tires.

Business Situation

As a multinational firm with multiple and disparate IT systems, GPX was looking for a simpler and more timely way to access mission-critical business data in order to improve its decision-making process.

Solution

Working with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner SHEA Business Solutions, GPX deployed Microsoft® Office PerformancePoint™ Server 2007 to deliver faster analysis and integrated visibility to international sales, finance and logistics.

Benefits

- Improved Reporting, Deeper Business Insight
- More Flexible and Effective Business Processes
- Enhanced Performance and Transparency

“PerformancePoint Server 2007 provides us with the ability to analyze data at the speed of light. It integrates into our existing infrastructure easily, making it a natural choice for our company.”

Andy Soares, manager of business intelligence and data integrity, GPX International Tire Corp.

GPX International Tire Corp. represents one of the largest independent global providers of specialty "off-the-road" tires for the agricultural, construction, materials handling and transportation industries. As a multinational firm which has undergone numerous mergers and acquisitions in recent years, GPX had multiple and disparate IT systems and was seeking a more simple and timely way to access business data and improve its decision-making process. Working with Microsoft Certified Partner SHEA Business Solutions, GPX deployed Microsoft® Office PerformancePoint™ Server 2007 business intelligence (BI) software to deliver faster analysis and integrated visibility to international sales, finance and logistics. Today, GPX is using the PerformancePoint Server-based platform to deliver deeper and on-demand insights of customers, product sales and distribution channels – while helping to improve corporate transparency and governance.

Situation

Created in 2005 through the merger of two successful North American companies, Malden, Mass.-based GPX International Tire Corp. is a leading global manufacturer and distributor of high-quality working and off-the-road industrial tires throughout North America, Latin America and Europe.

GPX has more than 80 years of experience and prides itself on continued investment in technology. Today, GPX's core business revolves around providing branded specialty tires to more than 1,000 active aftermarket dealers in North America and over 30 original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) worldwide.

According to Andy Soares, manager of business intelligence and data integrity at GPX, the company once had a fairly basic approach to product delivery. But as the business grew, it was becoming critical for GPX to improve information access and delivery through a central location.

For instance, a recent merger had expanded the company and created a situation where it needed to reconcile disparate sales and distribution models to gain a clearer picture of business activity. Its existing systems were creating redundant work for staff and there was an urgent need to deliver more consistent and accurate business information to users.

To that end, GPX needed a business intelligence (BI) solution that would help the firm provide better customer insight by adopting a more proactive approach to enterprise-wide data management.

"As a wholesale distributor, external factors such as seasonality, competition and geography can impact the distribution of the right tires, to the right place at the right time," said Soares. "There was a clear

requirement for a BI tool that could help us not only meet our sales and benchmarking targets, but give managers deeper reporting and analytic capabilities to help boost accountability and achieve our business goals."

In particular, GPX was looking to better track sales and distribution data between branch-to-branch locations and conduct branch comparisons, in order to better mitigate loss and avoid having product sit idly within its facilities.

"Our employees were relying too heavily on spreadsheets in Excel in order to track information, which was affecting reporting results and productivity. We needed an affordable solution that could pull important data from each of our regional offices and bring it together under one umbrella to answer the key business questions that help us meet our organizational goals," said Soares.

Solution

To help find a new BI solution, the company enlisted the help of SHEA Business Solutions. The Microsoft Certified Partner conducted a comprehensive review of available database and reporting products (including solutions from Cognos and Business Objects) before determining that Microsoft Office PerformancePoint™ Server 2007 was the best fit for GPX's IT environment.

The solution is currently helping GPX deliver faster analysis and integrated visibility into the company's international sales, finance and logistics. Together with the 2007 Microsoft Office system and Microsoft SQL Server® 2005, Office PerformancePoint Server 2007 is a powerful and cost-effective BI solution that offers monitoring, analyzing, forecasting and planning capabilities through a familiar, easy-

to use-interface for data entry using Microsoft® Office Excel® spreadsheet software.

"Mergers, acquisitions and changing business models present customers like GPX with tremendous market opportunities. We recommended Performance Point Server to help GPX better realize the competitive advantages of its new business model," says Jeffrey Hunt, President, SHEA Business Solutions. "The new solution helps GPX better serve customers, increase productivity and work more effectively with its suppliers by better aligning the company's business goals to the marketplace."

PerformancePoint Server 2007 also leverages GPX's existing Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV ERP system and has been deployed to the company's upper and executive management employees, with plans to further share and expand use of the tool to departmental users. Currently, each user has access to a personalized dashboard that helps track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) required to manage operations for their respective business unit.

"We found that PerformancePoint Server 2007 was the best fit for us considering the attractive price-point and the fact it easily integrates within our existing SQL Server 2005-based environment," said Soares. "The key metrics that PerformancePoint provides our business users through key features like budgeting tools and scorecard management are impressive and can really help us stay ahead of the competition."

GPX is also leveraging the tool's forecasting capabilities which are essential for establishing the targets to support the company's strategies and objectives. For example, the BI solution improves transparency across the organization by enabling

GPX to quickly track which products are selling the most, identify the top sales people and review SKUs by grouping and by different tire brands.

Benefits

As a large, multi-national organization, GPX is currently using the PerformancePoint Server-based platform to deliver deeper and on-demand insights of customers, product sales, and distribution channels, which allows them to better plan and function with increased business agility in an increasingly competitive market.

Deeper and Better Business Insight

Despite its geographically-dispersed locations, GPX is now able to quickly access data as PerformancePoint Server allows employees to quickly access data from its Microsoft Dynamics NAV ERP system, as well as other systems and data sources so that users have a more holistic view of the company's activities. In addition, since employees were already familiar with Microsoft Office System, training costs are minimized and workers can easily create their own reports without any assistance from IT staff. Previously, it took the IT department several hours to create a relatively simple report; now GPX is able to generate reports within minutes.

"PerformancePoint Server 2007 provides us with the ability to analyze data at the speed of light. It integrates into our existing infrastructure easily, making it a natural choice for our company," said Soares. "In the future, we will be using the product to help drive sales and growth. We have found that PerformancePoint helps our business compete within an increasingly competitive industry."

***More Flexible and Effective
Business Processes***

The new integrated data environment helps GPX ensure greater accuracy and security. The firm now has easy access to consistent data and the ability to create a wide variety of reports that enable flexible, in-depth analysis.

“Now when administrators run reports, we have the ability to change the way the report looks and is categorized, depending on the business need. This improved reporting workflow helps us generate reports faster, and ensures employees have access to the information they need, in the format they need it, as quickly as possible,” said Soares.

***Enhanced Performance and
Transparency***

With the PerformancePoint Server-based solution in place, GPX is better able to ensure consistent measurement of targets and results throughout organization by setting targets at the enterprise level. As a result, the company has been able to help improve corporate governance and drive deeper accountability throughout the various levels of the organization. Simply put, GPX now has more confidence in the quality of its data and the ability to analyze its business in real-time.

“The integrated BI solution is not only intuitive and easy to use, it helps deliver significant strategic value to our organization by allowing us to report current activities and better forecast for the future.”

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about SHEA Business Solutions products and services, call (905) 542-1292 or visit the Web site at: www.shea.ca

For more information about GPX International Tire Corp. products and services, call (800) 668-8473 or visit the Web site at: <http://www.gpxtire.com>

Microsoft Business Intelligence

Microsoft provides an end-to-end, enterprise-grade and cost-effective BI solution utilizing the intuitive Microsoft Office 2007 suite and robust BI components of SQL Server 2005 to enable decision makers throughout the organization to drive increased performance.

For more information about the Microsoft Business Intelligence, go to: www.microsoft.com/bi

Microsoft Office PerformancePoint Server 2007

Office PerformancePoint Server 2007 provides all of the functionality that is needed for performance management including scorecards, dashboards, management reporting, analytics, planning, budgeting, forecasting, and consolidation. The application reaches all employees, across all business functions (finance, operations, marketing, sales, and human resources).

For more information about the Microsoft Office PerformancePoint Server 2007, go to: www.microsoft.com/performancepoint

Software and Services

- Office 2007
- Microsoft Office PerformancePoint Server
- SQL Server 2005
- Excel 2007

Partners

SHEA Business Solutions