



Blumøller (Sara Lee), Denmark

Concorde, Excel Reports Washed Out by Danish Detergent Subsidiary of Sara Lee— 400 Disparate, Difficult-to-Maintain Reports Become 10 Dynamic PowerOLAP Reports

A case study with comments by Ebbe Skov, IT Manager

After implementing PowerOLAP at Blumøller A/S in Odense, Denmark, 400 disparate Concorde reports and Excel spreadsheets have become 10 dynamically connected reports. “We create lots of Balance Sheet, Cost, and Sales reports for internal use and for our parent company in The Netherlands. Until now this was done primarily in our Concorde system, utilizing an Oracle database management system, but in Excel spreadsheets as well. It became a real mess with 400 different standard reports to keep track of,” said Ebbe Skov, the IT Manager at Blumøller in Odense. “Now, having implemented PowerOLAP—which dynamically collects all our data in multidimensional cubes—we use only 10 OLAP reports to do the same tasks.” The company, a subsidiary of the Dutch-American company Sara Lee, produces and markets well-known products for cleaning and personal care, like Bio-tex, Neutral, Sanex, and Zendium. Blumøller in Odense manufactures 30,000 tons of detergent, fabric softener, and cleaning products, and has 150 employees and yearly revenues of \$80 million.

“American companies are well known for an almost endless demand for reports from their subsidiary companies,” observed Skov. “We typically market 180 products towards each grocery store chain, and for all these products we have to create analyses, reports, and forecasts. We also have to create a lot of financial reports each month, along with many ad-hoc analyses and reports. Most of these we had previously created in our Concorde system using a special report system, and the rest were developed in Excel with a lot of data entry to be done first.”

Easier and much fast access to all data

“Now, with PowerOLAP, it has become a lot easier—we operate without having to re-enter data at all. We have direct access to all of our data and need only 10 OLAP models to do almost all our tasks.”

“All our high-level budgeting and monthly reports are sent to the Netherlands via computer,” Ebbe Skov added. “It is very important for us to be able to create the material quickly, since we only have 3 days to finish the final monthly reports.”

Automatic, dynamic updating

“Another great advantage of PowerOLAP is the dynamic connection to the databases. This means that if the underlying data changes, it is automatically entered into the model, which also happens if the data changes when users use the models [to enter data]. All employees always work on the same data, which eliminates inconsistency. Data no longer has to be re-entered or copied—it is automatically updated. And we no longer have to wait several days to create the monthly reports—it can be done immediately after month-end.”



Blumøller uses Concorde XAL with a lot of special features, but PowerOLAP has now replaced that product's reporting capabilities. The company also used Lotus Notes along with other systems for sales reporting and forecasting. "The standard reports could only retrieve data from one system, whereas with PowerOLAP we can retrieve data from multiple systems," noted Skov.

"We see PowerOLAP as an umbrella that collects data from different data sources in the cube(s), which the users can then easily work with. They have much better access to the data and don't need to think about PowerOLAP because they use Excel as the user interface —so they don't need much training. PowerOLAP gives them a multidimensional version of Excel. It has become more flexible and easy for them to create reports and analysis. And on top of this PowerOLAP was the least costly of the solutions we were looking at."