

## **LTL Logistics Freight Profitability Analysis**

(Less-than-truckload (LTL) Shipping Services Company)

Root cause analysis of declining profit margin through a robust profitability model that allocated costs at a shipment level

## Freight Profitability Analysis for an LTL Logistics Company

ABOUT THE CLIENT: Client is an LTL (Less-than-Truckload) shipping services company serving lanes across ~30 major cities.

#### **SITUATION**

### **VALUE ADDED**

#### **IMPACT**

- Client had negative net profit margins for 5
  years and was unable to identify the root cause
  due to lack of visibility into shipment level
  profitability.
- Partnered with the client to build a shipment-level profitability analysis and identified drivers of low profitability by: i) integrating cost components (linehaul, pick-up, delivery, labor, fuel, etc.) spread across multiple systems; and ii) allocating costs at shipment level.
- Integrated data from disparate source systems (shipment data, dimensions data, GL data, pickup & delivery data, trips data, etc.) into a single database in SQL server by building automated pipelines using Qlik Replicate and SSIS.
- Established relationships across all datasets at shipment level and developed automated data cleansing processes to ensure data quality.
- Developed a comprehensive cost allocation methodology by cost header (shipment volume, miles traveled etc.) to enable margin estimation at shipment level.
- Built robust self-serve dashboards in Power BI to track profitability by customer, lane, transportation mode, etc. and identify drivers of low margin.

- Enabled transformation of the freight network by strategic closure of loss-making lanes, introduction of margin-based pricing, removal of less profitable modes, and review of cities being served. These data-driven initiatives helped the client become profitable within I year of the engagement.
- As a result, Gross Margins increased by \$20 million (5% margin improvement).

**INPUTS** 

PROCESSING

**OUTPUTS** 

### **Value Creation Initiatives**

### **Revenue Drivers**

- 1. Sales Analysis Analyzed sales data, sales team performance vs targets and key customer accounts to incentivize the sales reps
- 2. Missed pickups Analysis Developed automated reporting to analyze missed pickups by drivers resulting in lost revenue
- 3. Dimming & Reweighing Reporting Compared dimensions and weight of shipment provided by customer to actual values to identify shipments that required rebilling. This minimized revenue leakage.
- **4. Service Quality Reporting** Tracked key customer service metrics including on-time delivery, appointment service, scanning compliance, damaged/lost shipments claims, etc.
- 5. Operations Reporting & Analysis Tracked all operational metrics including on-time dispatch, route compliance, time to load/unload, dock aging, etc.
- **6. Pricing Analysis** Analyzed pricing per volume of shipment against cost and suggested changes in pricing for lanes

### **Cost Drivers**

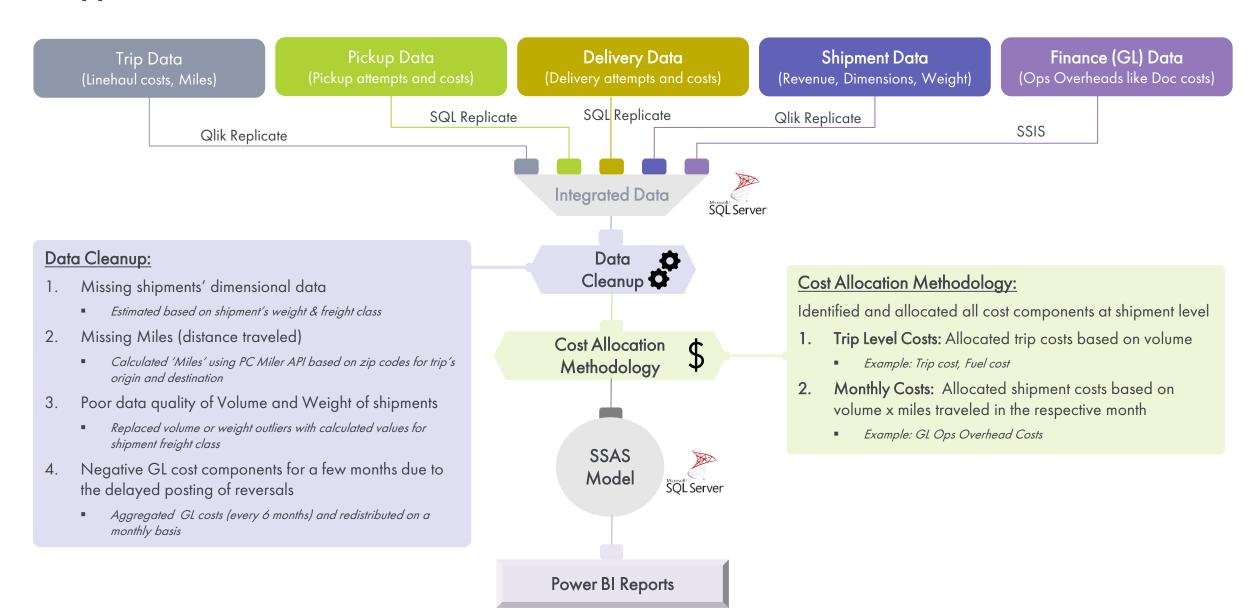
- 1. Value Chain Planning Reporting Provided visibility into value chain metrics to the executive management and investors
- 2. Linehaul Profitability Analysis Analyzed profitability at a granular level and identified low profitability lanes to be discontinued
- 3. Pickup and Delivery Costs Analysis Analyzed various cost components involved in pickup/delivery and identified operational inefficiencies across terminals, customers and drivers
- **4. Truck Utilization Analysis** Analyzed truck utilization (volume) and recommended changes to shipment routes to maximize utilization and reduce costs
- **5.** Labor Productivity Reporting Tracked dock labor productivity metrics including shipments scanned and weight handled per hour, idle time, % rehandles, etc. against targets

### **Working Capital Drivers**

- Equipment Reporting Provided visibility into service status and location of trailers, trucks and tractors to track damaged/lost equipment
- 2. Driver Settlements Reporting Tracked settlement and driver payments to reconcile with driven miles
- 3. P&L Reporting Provided visibility into expenses (COGS, SG&A, overheads, etc.) related to shipments to identify irregular expenses

- Assessed existing data architecture, built a comprehensive view of systems and data flow, and recommended changes to improve efficiency, scalability and process automation in the architecture
- Integrated data from disparate source systems (shipment data, dimensions data, GL (Finance) data, pickup & delivery data, trips data, etc.) into a single database in SQL server using Qlik Replicate and SSIS. Established linkages across all datasets at shipment level and added automated data clean-up processes to address data quality & missing data points
- Built a consolidated SQL Server-based Data Warehouse (DW) ensuring a single source of truth for all reporting
- Created seven data cubes on SSAS for the key business functions including operations, drivers, equipment, sales, pricing, partners, and finance
- Deployed a reporting suite in Power BI and configured infrastructure to enable automated self-serve reporting and to drive data-driven decision-making across various stakeholder (executives, functional heads, service center managers, operators, and drivers)
- Automated the governance and maintenance of DW with failure notifications, refresh notifications, run time monitoring, etc. to ensure accurate reporting

## Approach



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## Sample Output: Shipment Profitability Analysis

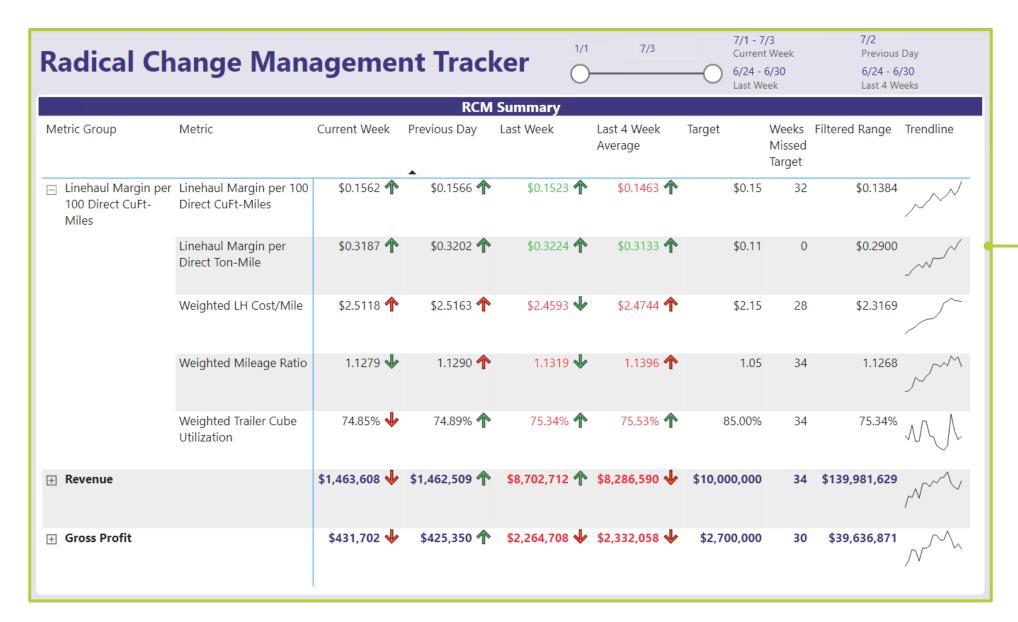




Summarizes key profitability metrics (Revenue, Cost, Margin)

## Sample Output: Initiatives Tracker

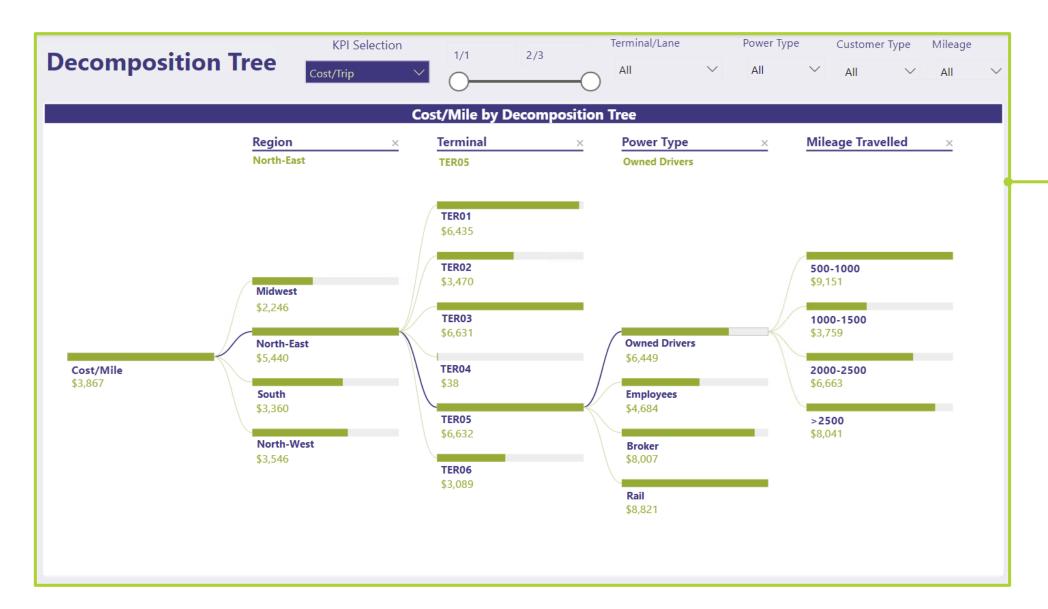
### ILLUSTRATIVE



Change Management Report tracks progress of key initiatives against targets on a daily basis

## Sample Output: Root Cause Analysis to Identify Drivers of Low Profitability

**ILLUSTRATIVE** 



Decomposition tree identifies the root cause of margin variance by region, terminal, power type, trip miles travelled.

# Sample Output: Customer Profitability and Pricing Adjustments

ILLUSTRATIVE

		4/2	7/19	Cost Component		t Lane		Power Type		ustomer Cate	gory	Customer	
Customer	Summa		1/13	All		∨ All	~	All	V A	II	~	All	
			0										
					Custo	mer Details							
Customer	Inactivity period	Share of Revenue (%)	Total Revenue	Total	Cost	Total Margin	Margin (%	#Shipments	Pounds	Revenue per CWT	Revenue per shipment	Revenue per Working Day	
Customer - 001	<1 Week	11.10%	\$10,491,961		\$7,893,861	\$2,598,099	24.8%	23,014	43,518,57	74 \$24 🔕	\$456	\$174,866	
Customer - 002	<1 Week	4.48%	\$4,234,172		\$2,954,743	\$1,279,429	30.2%	10,447	13,350,42	24 \$32 🕕	\$405	\$70,570	
Customer - 003	<1 Week	3.48%	\$3,285,035		\$2,257,935	\$1,027,100	31.3%	7,229	8,855,61	13 \$37 🕕	\$454	\$54,751	
Customer - 004	<1 Week	3.44%	\$3,248,542		\$2,091,587	\$1,156,955	35.6%	8,563	7,793,51	19 \$42 🕕	\$379 🕕	\$54,142	
Customer - 005	<1 Week	3.06%	\$2,890,772		\$2,032,576	\$858,195	29.7%	5,645	9,092,91	10 \$32 🕕	\$512	\$48,180	
Customer - 006	<1 Week	3.01%	\$2,843,657		\$1,901,805	\$941,853	33.1%	11,584	4,366,61	14 \$65 🐼	\$245 🕕	\$47,394	
Customer - 007	<1 Week	2.70%	\$2,552,688		\$1,728,117	\$824,571	32.3%	6,286	6,554,68	39 \$39 🕕	\$406	\$42,545	
Customer - 008	<1 Week	2.19%	\$2,069,793		\$1,429,344	\$640,450	30.9%	9,157	5,215,57	78 \$40 🕕	\$226 🕕	\$34,49	
Customer - 009	<1 Week	1.84%	<b>\$1,743,169</b>		\$1,275,726	\$467,443	26.8%	8,555	3,722,55	50 \$47 🕕	\$204 🕕	\$29,05	
Customer - 010	<1 Week	1.71%	\$1,615,713		\$1,315,468	\$300,245	18.6%	10,897	2,748,74	14    \$59 🕢	\$148 🚫	\$26,929	
Customer - 011	<1 Week	1.25%	<b>\$</b> 1,181,9 <mark>89</mark>		\$826,237	\$355,752	30.1%	2,794	3,872,19	98 \$31 🕕	\$423	\$19,700	
Customer - 012	<1 Week	1.21%	\$1,142,114		\$793,965	\$348,149	30.5%	2,794	3,386,01	12 \$34 🕕	\$409	\$19,03	
Customer - 013	<1 Week	1.19%	\$1,119,894		\$594,911	\$524,983	46.9%	3,444	888,05	51 \$126 🐼	\$325 🕕	\$18,665	
Customer - 014	<1 Week	1.00%	\$945,950		\$667,258	\$278,6 <mark>92</mark>	29.5%	6,060	2,064,44	10 \$46 🕕	\$156 🚫	\$15,76	
Customer - 015	<1 Week	0.96%	\$908,003		\$797,164	\$110,84 <mark>0</mark>	12.2%	2,358	2,530,97		\$385 🕕	\$15,13	
Customer - 016	<1 Week	0.92%	\$874,121		\$656,015	\$218,106	25.0%	1,143	2,959,91		\$765 🐼	\$14,56	
Customer - 017	<1 Week	0.85%	\$805,659		\$592,550	\$213,109	26.5%	1,356	2,551,83		\$594	\$13,428	
Customer - 018	<1 Week	0.84%	\$790,399		\$597,292	\$193,107	24.4%	1,895	3,195,46	59 \$25 🚫	\$417 🕢	\$13,17	
Customer - 019	<1 Week	0.83%	\$781,850		\$571,916	\$209,934	26.9%	2,826	860,09		\$277 🕕	\$13,03	
Customer - 020	<1 Week	0.79%	\$744,726		\$496,366	\$248,360	33.3%	1,293	2,526,72		\$576		
Customer - 021	<1 Week	0.76%	\$722,148		\$561,514	\$160,634	22.2%	1,582	984,01	18 \$73 🐼	\$456 🐼	\$12,036	
Customer - 022	<1 Week	0.75%	\$707,947		\$364,033	\$343,914	48.6%	2,014	2,094,65		\$352 🕕	\$11,799	
Customer - 023	<1 Week	0.74%	\$695,597		\$579,476	\$116,12 <mark>1</mark>	16.7%	2,679	3,642,17		\$260 🕕	\$11,59	
Customer - 024	<1 Week	0.73%	\$686,380		\$610,269	\$76,111	11.1%	2,273	1,756,25	59 \$39 🕕	\$302 🕕	\$11,440	
Customer - 025	<1 Week	0.71%	\$669,928		\$428,408	\$241,520	36.1%	1,558	1,683,33	35     \$40 <b>(</b> ]	\$430	\$11,16	
Total		100.00%	\$94,500,227		\$67,217,564	\$27,282,663	28.9%	262,041	299,239,55	\$32	\$361	\$1,575,004	

Identifies customers with low margins to re-evaluate pricing and improve margins