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Group

CRGroup helps Egg Farmers of Canada unscramble its data

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Jensen Lin

Programmer Analyst and
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Egg Farmers of Canada

Overview

Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) is one of Canada's leading agriculture organizations. This national not-for-profit organization manages the country's supply of eggs, promotes this staple food and develops national standards for egg farming, to ensure Canadians have a secure domestic supply of high-quality eggs.



A supply chain buried in paper

The Canadian egg industry as a whole contributes \$1.4 billion to the Canadian economy and employs almost 17,000 people. It represents an important source of employment in many rural areas.

In addition to managing the country's supply of eggs, EFC also manages the supply of eggs to industrial egg product processing plants to be used in various other consumer and industrial products through the EFC Industrial Product Program.

It's a lot of eggs, and a lot of paperwork to manage. Every pallet of eggs that enters a processing plant must be verified to track weight, egg sizes and number of eggs. Incidents that result in lost or damaged eggs, as well as defects, are tracked. Supplies that are involved in the movement of eggs must also be recorded. This data is vital to EFC's mandate to efficiently manage the national egg supply and maintain standards of quality.

By late 2000, EFC was still collecting all this data on paper – a slow and labor-intensive process. Generating reports for provincial egg boards, industrial product processors, egg farmers and the general public could take weeks. It was practically impossible to track the movement of eggs through the supply chain in anything approaching real time.

By 2009, EFC decided to automate this process with a software solution. To help find the right one, EFC turned to its longstanding business solutions partner, Corporate Renaissance Group (CRGroup).

CRGroup is a global firm that specializes in improving enterprise performance through innovative technology-driven solutions.

CRGroup analyzed EFC's tracking and reporting requirements and recommended Tableau. This graphical visualization and dash-boarding tool is designed to help organizations see and understand their data, and is ideal for generating detailed operational reports, on demand.

Tableau was chosen because it met EFC's key criteria. These included ease of use for the average business user, strong product support and easy upgrades, and the power to blend and relate data from various sources.



CRGroup is a Tableau Gold Partner, authorized to sell and deploy the software. It undertook the customization and implementation of Tableau to ensure it served the unique needs of EFC's operations.

"They know our whole business, they have been working with us for years," said Jensen Lin, a key resource in the management of data at EFC.

"CRGroup has always been there to give us feedback, input and help with more advanced issues to help us make the most of Tableau's capabilities. It's a huge value to know that someone with a proven track record like CRGroup understands your organization and has our back."

Extending data insights across the organization

EFC has instituted Tableau through various departments across its organization in stages.

The immediate application, and benefit, was automating the management of all that data from industrial product processors. EFC was able to eliminate the manipulation of data with spreadsheets, and cut the volume of emails and phone calls to verify data. This dramatically improved communication and transparency, reduced errors and saved a lot of time.

"We can manage the flow of eggs and supplies more efficiently by tracking it on demand," said Lin. "We can chart trends on a weekly basis and make more timely and informed decisions to more efficiently manage the supply chain."

With CRGroup's support, EFC has gone on to extend Tableau across its departments.

For example, tracking the flow of eggs to industrial product processors with Tableau has created the opportunity to report and blend data against EFC's financial system and streamline some of its financial processes, saving a significant amount of manual work effort.

With Tableau's easy-to-create dash-boarding and filtering tools, EFC's data is being used to support a more user-friendly and timely market information website for the public. The public can visit the site and easily carry out customized searches through years of data with a few clicks of a mouse, without EFC being required to go through a multitude of expensive custom upgrades to a legacy system. Tableau is also being used to support the data collection for EFC's national on-farm food safety program, Start Clean—Stay Clean™, and Animal Care Program.

Turning data into actionable intelligence

Best of all, EFC's business users can make productive use of Tableau, without having to rely on manual processes and spreadsheets.

"Tableau has dramatically reduced the amount of effort we must put into managing our data, which is just fantastic," Lin said. "Reports that took weeks to generate now take just a few minutes. We can spend a lot less time collecting data, and more time interpreting trends and acting on them. After discovering how flexible it was to apply the software to different parts of our organization, we are now looking at ways to make greater use of Tableau's data visualization capabilities, as well as storyboarding, to integrate more interactivity into our business operations."

About Corporate Renaissance Group

Corporate Renaissance Group is a global provider of innovative solutions that improve business management and performance. With over 4000 customers, Corporate Renaissance Group has established itself with expertise in business management applications. Corporate Renaissance Group delivers solutions by leveraging their expertise in Microsoft Dynamics, SharePoint, business intelligence, financial and costing principles, shared services and employee performance management. Corporate Renaissance Group is a part of the Microsoft Partner Network, headquartered in Ottawa, Canada, with offices throughout Canada, South Africa, India and the United States.

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