



Spotlight On MERCER



DOUG RAUSCH, MANAGER OF CRM & BI PRODUCT TEAMS

Mercer is a global consulting, outsourcing and investments company that is the global leader for trusted HR and financial advice, products, and services. Doug Rausch, manager of CRM and BI product teams for Mercer spoke with us at the 2011 U.S. Tableau Customer Conference about how Tableau is helping the HR consultancy give business leaders a holistic view of what's happening in the company at a high level all the way into the details.

TABLEAU:

What made you check out Tableau?

DOUG:

We were looking for some tools at work to have better graphical capabilities in our dashboards. We have a few products in-house and they really weren't keeping up with the times. I checked Tableau out, downloaded it, started using it, and that was it, you know, and then I was hooked.

TABLEAU:

Why did you want to look at your data graphically?

DOUG:

We're moving from more of a P&L-centric type business to looking more at our clients and our client profitability. And so that lent itself to a much larger dataset, and really giving our leadership kind of a view of the data at a high level, and directing them to where to focus. So, that really shifted us from this more PDF listing of information on a report to having a need for more interactive, graphical tool.

TABLEAU:

And Tableau was well received at the company?

DOUG:

We started with a couple of desktop licenses, and started to sell the product internally by building some dashboards that were standalone. We would show our senior execs. They'd be interested; they'd show it to the next in line. And very rapidly within a year or two, we went from a few desktop licenses to actually rolling out secured dashboards to 300 top leaders of the firm. And so we evolved from that desktop view to the server view and started to push analyses out to the server.

TABLEAU:

What's been the overall impact of Tableau on your company?

DOUG:

It's helped people get to the underlying answer much more quickly. People can go from a very high-level view of the firm to the employee details within two or three clicks. So, it's gotten people much quicker speed to answers to business problems they're looking for. Our business leaders obviously know their business quite well, and they know where they want to direct their analysis. Tableau has helped really create very simple but powerful dashboards that allow our business users to navigate where they want to go.

TABLEAU:

What's been the overall impact of Tableau on your company?

DOUG:

One of the things that we built pretty early on in using Tableau was a productivity analysis tool that allows our business leaders within three clicks to go from a business total view of utilization down to the individual employees, and to compare employees to each other, to look at employees compared to their targets, and to see trends over the past 13 months, in addition to showing additional details around which clients they're working on. And so within this one view it really gives the business leaders a holistic view of what was happening at the high level all the way into the details, and that — that's the

dashboard that really has been a big game changer for us, and that our business leaders really see the value in — in the tool by just playing around with it and clicking two or three times to get down to the details they need to see.

TABLEAU:

And internally, how has Tableau impacted your IT group?

DOUG:

As an IT group we're much more agile and efficient. I've had meetings just recently with a new group that we were doing some analysis for where we downloaded Tableau and had an analyst up and running, using it, building a dashboard within an hour, and presenting to leadership within a week.

“Tableau really is so easy to use...

...Our analysts can pick it up within a couple hours; our end users can pick it up within 10 or 15 minutes.”

TABLEAU:

What are the benefits of deploying Tableau?

DOUG:

Tableau is simple to deploy. That's a huge benefit. And, you know, we have other products in-house that take a team of people to understand the nuances, get it installed, upgrade it, and migrate content. With Tableau, it's really been so easy to use, it's been so easy to upgrade. And it's such a lower cost of ownership for us, yet producing the same high quality output that our other tools do.

TABLEAU:

Does it take long to train people to use Tableau?

DOUG:

Tableau really is so easy to use. Part of the beauty is that Tableau is just very simple. Our analysts can pick it up within a couple hours; our end users can pick it up within 10 or 15 minutes. It kind of gets out of the way from the business leaders to figure out what they want to do as a business leader as opposed to trying to learn a new technology.

Tableau Software helps people see and understand data.
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