MI Monthly Dashboard Sustainment

Ministry of Defence

Client
Ministry of Defence - Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S)

Industry
Central Government

Service Offering
Dashboard Development
Data Modelling
ETL
Database Consultancy

Technology
QlikView
Microsoft Power BI
SQL Server
SSIS
N-Printing
Jira
Agile Delivery

Defence Equipment & Support is a joint-defence organisation within the UK Ministry of Defence, formed after merging the Procurement and Logistics divisions in 2007. DE&S has a civilian and military workforce of over 21,000, and operates as a single top-level budget.

Client Need

After creating a number of MI tools in QlikView for Executive Reporting across Finance, Commercial and Performance departments, DE&S needed additional BI support to further develop tool functionality to the reporting level that they required. Specifically, DE&S needed solutions in three main areas:

- Monthly updates and improvements to Executive Dashboards were needed to achieve the full capability of their existing QlikView MI Tools. Supporting, maintaining & improving these tools required the development of agile working methods and ETL processes.

- Improvements to their existing repository schema in their internally-hosted MS SQL database were needed, to facilitate existing and future MI tool development.

- Knowledge transfer to existing DE&S staff was required, to ensure future provision of monthly Executive Dashboards

Contact Us

📍 201 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LW

📞 0844 335 0345

🌐 www.eyecademy.com

✉ info@eyecademy.com

@eyecademyUK

Why Eyecademy?

Our experience in both front-end BI development and data visualisation with market-leading tools, as well as with back-end data modelling and ETL, ensured that we had the skills to undertake this long-term project. With previous successful engagements across clients of similar size and profile specifically in the Public Sector, our commitment to a settled, on-site team, with clearly defined Account Management and Service Delivery escalation points assured DE&S that the project would run smoothly with regular communication throughout delivery.

Solution

Addressing DE&S's need for improvements to their Executive Dashboard suite, we integrated 12 KPI's from multiple data sources, including databases, spreadsheets and flat files, into one dashboard that could be utilised by multiple business teams across the UK. In the back-end, an uninterrupted and secured connection was created between QlikView and DE&S's databases, and ETL applications for QVD's and QlikView Scripting variables were created. Dashboard designs were exceptionally improved, using scoreboards and a greater range of drill-down visualisations to facilitate greater accuracy and usability for business users. We developed new metrics, attributes, filters, reports and dashboards to create advanced chart types and complex calculations, to allow users to further manipulate the data to meet their business needs. Pre-production testing was implemented by allowing QA teams to access and test dashboards before distribution. Stakeholders were involved throughout the project to ensure their reporting needs were met.

We also undertook the redevelopment and migration of DE&S's database system from SQL Server 2008 to 2016, and implemented a streamlined ETL process with a new staging database using SSIS. Ongoing knowledge transfer to internal teams was conducted to establish both best practice and sustainable project maintenance.

Furthermore, as part of the rollout of MoDNet, MoD's new Office 365-based internal communication system, most of the BI reporting was successfully transferred to Power BI in an additional project to our engagement. We actioned a successful migration of reporting from QlikView to equivalent or enhanced Power BI modular reports. This migration included the creation of a Power BI data model template, introducing Power BI best practices for query builds, utilisation of JIRA to manage BI Hub team workloads, and the creation and implementation of an agile development and release cycle.

Results

On completion of this project, we provided DE&S with a robust and functioning monthly MI dashboard suite, which was successfully handed over entirely to their in-house team and incumbent SI provider. After our engagement, DE&S was provided with;

- Easier and quicker access to rich data analysis and insight at Executive level through monthly updated dashboards, across both Inventory and Finance departments.

- Improved processes to implement future enhancements and additional requirements through a cyclical 2-week BAU/Development programme

- Successfully upgraded ETL packages and database to the latest MS SQL Server release

- Project future-proofing through utilisation of industry best practice in both Dashboard Design and Data Quality, and successful knowledge transfer to in-house staff to continue to project.

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