

BIO CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY > **ICON INTERNATIONAL INC.**



BUSINESS IMPACT

- Generated better data with which to make forecasts
- Greater ability to identify changes and respond to them quickly
- Expanded possibilities for analysis
- Enhanced the value of Microsoft Dynamics to take advantage of its features
- Gained unique insight for strategic planning and decision-making

Leading Financial Services Company Goes Beyond Reporting To Improve Strategic Decision-Making and Increase Profitability

ICON International engages in corporate barter in North America with a wide range of companies and suppliers, helping major corporations maximize underutilized assets through a variety of methods, including purchasing excess inventory and assets that no longer meet their client’s strategic needs.

A wholly owned subsidiary of Omnicon Group, a publicly traded company (NYSE:OMC) and the world’s largest family of advertising, marketing communications and related firms, ICON is headquartered in Stamford, CT, and has a regional office in Toronto, Canada. Annual sales are nearly \$400 million

Business Needs

ICON wanted to find a user- friendly, more efficient analytics tool that would enable the finance department to provide high- value information and analysis to departmental managers and senior-level executives outside of the finance department. To achieve this business objective, ICON chose the BIO® (Business Information Optimization) “Business-Ready BI” platform. With BIO, ICON is now able to go beyond analysis and reporting to gain valuable, actionable knowledge that can be utilized across the organization -- from the CEO to the client service teams.

Technology Solutions

ICON partnered with BIO Analytics Corp, Stamford, CT, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, to implement BIO (Business Information Optimization) software that leverages Microsoft’s Business Intelligence platform to deliver self-service business information analytics. BIO delivers an easy-to-use and deploy solution that enables non- technical users to analyze, understand and act upon previously inaccessible operational and financial information derived from multiple software applications throughout and external to the enterprise.

“ Financial people need to move from being historians to becoming active partners in the organization’s decision-making process. The BIO solution enables us to drive organizational value by focusing on the company’s future, not just on reporting what has happened in the past. ”

*Jack Duffy
Vice President of Finance
ICON International Inc.*

Up and Running

One of the primary goals of the BIO implementation was to unlock the data that was in ICON's existing Microsoft Dynamics system. ICON's Jack Duffy, Vice President of Finance, wanted the ability to analyze sales and gross profits by customer and then provide company executives and client service teams with immediate and easy access to this information in order to impact their business decisions. He also wanted to give these non-technical users the ability to model this information any way they wanted to see it.

Duffy and his team first set up views of ICON's basic financial statements and then progressed to customer analyses. They began by tracking each of their contracts more closely – starting with the client, then the contract and then the specific projects under that contract.

Previously, ICON had to download general ledger transactions and then sort and analyze them in Excel – a very time-consuming process. And while the data was easy to download, Excel could only provide a one-dimensional view of the data, greatly limiting its usefulness.

With BIO's predefined links to all of the data stored in Dynamics, ICON is now able to analyze the data one way and then quickly and easily look at it in another way to answer any other question without affecting the integrity of the underlying data. In Excel, ICON had to highlight the data, sort it and re-subtotal it – a much more time-consuming process that had to be repeated to answer subsequent questions.

BIO has also enabled ICON to enhance the value of its existing Microsoft Dynamics platform to take advantage of data that just didn't get analyzed before. Within Dynamics, there are many different areas and fields on the screen that offered ICON different ways to cut and slice their data. However, until BIO, ICON didn't have a really good analytical tool that could take advantage of all of those features that exist in SL, such as sorting and selecting by such characteristics as customer size, industry type and geography.

Business-Ready BI

BIO's many predefined reports now give ICON executives and client services staff more timely information that is available right on their desktops. Duffy and his team have set up views, triggers and alerts in BIO that make these reports extremely useful tools for understanding the current state of the business, particularly for staff outside of the accounting department.

Client services staff, for example, are now able know the profitability for each of their clients and can identify and respond to changes in client behavior much more quickly.

What's Ahead

Although ICON is still relatively early in its implementation, Duffy and his team will soon be exploring greater integration of BIO with executive level report cards, working to define the most essential views that will have the most direct impact on the company's bottom line performance.

BIO ANALYTICS CORP.

BIO Analytics Corp. specializes in developing affordable, state-of-the-art, business-ready BI solutions. BIO for Microsoft Dynamics reduces the cost, complexity, and technology required to implement a Microsoft BI platform. BIO's business-ready framework is the most complete and adaptable business translation of Microsoft Dynamics. It is the only BI solution that includes an enterprise class visualization layer, BIO Vue, and 60 out-of-the-box operational, strategic, and financial views. Start with Microsoft Dynamics and extend BIO to other corporate data assets.

“**First you need to identify a clear business objective and then choose the tool that best helps you get to that goal as quickly as possible. I want something that works, is cost-effective and that I can implement very quickly. That's the beauty of BIO; it fits that role perfectly.**”

Jack Duffy
Vice President of Finance
ICON International Inc.