



RBC vaults ahead with SAS® Business Intelligence

As Canada's largest bank, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) has succeeded by building and maintaining trusted relationships with its millions of customers around the world.

Industry

Financial Services

Business Issue

Royal Bank of Canada wanted a more efficient process of providing information and custom reports to its business users.

Solution

SAS® Business Analytics Framework, including Data Integration, Analytics, Query and Reporting.

Benefits

RBC can quickly, easily and flexibly find and extract the right information from internal and external data sources and get it to users in an efficient manner across the bank's banking, insurance and investment lines of business.

Ted Brewer, Vice President of Customer Information Management, RBC, applies the same thinking when he picks technology vendors. "I like the idea of having fewer, rather than many, trusted partners. And we consider SAS to be a trusted partner," he says.

According to Brewer, the adoption of SAS® 9.2 as the de facto standard business intelligence tool in support of the various lines of business at RBC was driven internally by users. Previously, his department had been using and supporting too many different software tools, causing inefficiencies and slowing down the process of providing information and custom reports to its business units.

"People, process and technology – that's how I set priorities. As long as I have the trusted technology, I can put the people in place who understand how to leverage and use it," Brewer says. "And as busy as we are, I like the idea of having a few rather than many trusted partners."

Due to the volume of requests, for example, Brewer has had to limit access to the data on the business analytics side. By making SAS the primary method of access, his Customer Information Management team is able to function as a "center of expertise" in support of banking operations, as well as the bank's insurance, credit card and wealth management lines of business.

"It's not like we have one application that runs exclusively on SAS. The story

is our ubiquitous use of SAS – we use it for many of our highly leveraged business reporting solutions," he says. "It's not an exaggeration to say that use of SAS business analytics will – in some way, shape or form – affect or influence about half of the bank's 55,000 employees."

Typical applications supported include customer management, performance management, campaign management, channel management, marketing analytics, decision support, and service pricing – each of which involves producing numerous reports. Adding to the complexity, RBC's enterprise data warehouse consists of 55 terabytes of data. This includes internal customer information, as well as data imported from third-party sources such as Statistics Canada, government census data, customer prospect list-providers and credit card bureaus.

Extracting and finding the right information, and getting it to users, can be a challenge so Brewer and his team are quick to praise SAS software for its flexibility, ease-of-use and speed of results.

"The thing about SAS is that it's used everywhere – from reporting on the results of a marketing campaign to what's going on in the product portfolio," says James Moore, Senior Manager, Client Decision Management. Moore himself relies on SAS to enable managers at each of RBC's banking, insurance and investment groups glean insights from customer data.

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Vice President of Customer Information Management, RBC

“One of the advantages of SAS is that it’s easy to understand – from beginner to intermediate to advanced,” says Andrew Lau, Manager, Information Solutions. “For example, SAS can be used to easily extract information from external data sources and populate information into a spreadsheet like Excel, or any other format or tool in use by a business unit.”

Natalie Forget, Manager, Client Insight Solutions, says that every report generated by her team uses SAS, and that demand for information is constantly increasing. “Not only do users want more and more reports, they want them faster,” she says. “For example, when a

credit card is used fraudulently a bank manager needs to get the customer’s transaction information right away, or if the ATM network were to go down, a senior executive will want to know the impact of such an occurrence as soon as possible.”

Brewer’s team is preparing for a future that includes expanded use of newer SAS technology, including: SAS® Enterprise Guide, which will allow them to further customize solutions by using special add-ons; and SAS® OLAP Server, a powerful multidimensional database designed to handle large volumes of business intelligence data.



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