

Leading Manufacturer Replaces Their B.I. System With MITS and Experiences a Significant Improvement



COMPANY BACKGROUND

Field Controls, founded by Ted Field in 1927, initially manufactured large, custom-built draft controls for commercial oil fired systems. Field Controls has since expanded its product line to include power venting, combustion air, and air purification products, and remains the worldwide leader in the manufacture of draft controls for oil, gas, and solid fuel applications.

HISTORY

Field Controls' legacy B.I. platform was a product named Analytics, considered by its users to be difficult to operate and of limited usefulness. Among other things, it was slow to generate reports or download data into Excel. Complicating matters was the unwelcome news that Analytics was being discontinued for upgrade support. It became clear to Field Controls that a new B.I. & Reporting solution was required, one that was easy to use and powerful enough to keep pace with the needs of a growing company. Wasting no time, Field Controls tapped their VP of Finance, Jeff Bramblet, to find a new solution. Jeff's selection to lead the project made good sense as he had led the search for a B.I. and Reporting solution for another company. His due diligence at that time had led his previous employer to implement MITS, a decision they had been very happy with.

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CHOOSING MITS - AGAIN

So rather than beginning the search process again from scratch, Jeff decided to simply call MITS to see if they could deliver another powerful solution, this time for Field Controls' manufacturing ERP, Infor.XA. When the word came back that MITS did, in fact, support XA, he presented his findings to his parent company, the Pettibone Group. "In our meeting with Pettibone, I outlined the cost of Analytics' ongoing support plus a possible upgrade versus the maintenance cost of MITS," Jeff explains. "Additionally I highlighted the fact that the MITS software licensing model was not user-based, an important area for cost savings. All things considered, the cost of switching was actually less than the cost of staying put - for us it made financial sense to go with MITS."

INSTALLATION

According to Jeff, the installation has been a snap. "The first time I worked with MITS, we specified things like drill-down paths that corresponded to our company's data," Jeff says. "But with Infor.XA, they've been able to develop pre-designed drill-down paths that you just slot in - the installation went much faster than last time." He is confident that a successful outcome at Field Controls will translate into MITS installs across the entire Pettibone group.

USAGE

According to Jeff, Field Controls' choice of the MITS solution has been a great decision for the company. "MITS has cut our workload a ton. We have faster access to important information and the days of waiting hours for reports are over. Also a big plus is the ease of use. New users can get in and just start clicking around. It's great for learning because there aren't a lot of barriers, and it's tough to do any damage to the system, in terms of deleting or changing data. It's the only B.I. tool that I've come across that actually gets used on a regular basis."

For Jeff, the automatic reports are one thing he looks at in the morning when he gets in the office. “First thing in the morning I check the automatic reports that MITS generates and immediately I have a pretty good idea of how the company’s doing. If any issues with sales or profit come up, I know about them and can address them immediately. MITS is an excellent solution for getting data into the hands of the decision makers quickly and easily.”

Ed Reynolds, Director of Sales for Field Controls, sees lots of positives from switching to MITS. “Prior to MITS, we didn’t have anything that would allow us to really drill down into the information by territory or customer to get a good look at performance - we’d just get top line stuff. And for reporting, our reps essentially received a commission report by invoice, and that’s all they got. Now I was able to figure out how to export that information into an Excel table and do some things with it, but that was manual and time consuming. As soon as MITS came out, it was a major win for us. I began using it extensively, drilling down into the sales data to communicate back to our reps on a timely basis where their results were against their KPIs, where they stand against last year, and where they stand against plan. Monthly I would pull a report from MITS and send it, along with the KPIs, to the reps. And literally for the first time, they’re getting monthly sales information. Now with the recently launched web-based version, they’re going to be able to go in and access this information on a real-time basis. If they have a meeting with a distributor, they can go into the MITS system, drill down, export the sales data into Excel or a PDF or whatever and boom – they have a report. As a company, we’re holding our sales force accountable for their performance, but if you’re going to hold them accountable, you’ve got to give them the right tools to be successful at their job. MITS is the right tool, for our sales force and for our company overall.”

“Looking at the customer perspective, we are now able to drill down to look at performance over multiple time periods, around product categories, specific products or overall totals. Before customer meetings, we drill down and look at our performance over a multi-year period, from a number of views such as location or product category. At this point I’ve now got a pretty good idea of what we’ve been doing together, and it’s something I can bring with me to the customer meeting to aid in the discussion.”

Ed relays a specific encounter with a customer: “I recently got a call from a distributor complaining that his rep hadn’t called on him for three years. So I went into MITS and looked up his account, and noticed that he only bought \$45 worth of product this year and only \$25 last year. So I explained to him that based on his purchasing history, the rep in question couldn’t devote the type of personal attention he was expecting. Instead I offered a couple of different sales solutions I felt could better service his needs. By the time he hung up the phone, the guy was happy. If I didn’t have MITS, he’d still be upset and I’d still be scratching my head trying to figure out what to do here.”

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“In any company, you make business choices, in terms of resource allocation, and having access to MITS allows us to reconfirm our priorities, allowing Field Controls to become more efficient and effective. It is certainly helping us target and understand where our wins and misses are.”

“In total, the launch of MITS has delivered real time customer data that allows us to evaluate, strategize and implement based on actual up to date information. The drill down capabilities and ease of use of this tool allows us to quickly and accurately access information and display it to meet our and our customer’s needs. The reporting aspects of the tool and dashboards are easy to use and provide relevant information. I find this tool invaluable for us as a company and our manufacturer’s representative in the field.”

About MITS

MITS helps hundreds of distributors and manufacturers leverage the data in their ERP and other business systems to make better decisions, every day and at every level of their organization. Established in 1996, MITS’ interactive reporting and business intelligence software combines industry best practices with the flexibility to meet the unique needs of every customer. From standard to custom reports, dashboards and scorecards, MITS drives sales growth, profitability, and operational efficiency for competitive advantage.

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