

## CASE STUDY: SUN BANKS ON DATA VISUALIZATION TO WIN CUSTOMERS

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Sun National, a subsidiary of Sun Bancorp, offers consumer and business services to customers in more than 70 community banking centers. The bank's portfolio includes electronic banking, retail and business accounts, and business, personal and wholesale commercial loans.

The bank sought a way to differentiate itself because "the financial industry is dominated by huge banks with \$28 billion in assets, and we're a \$3-billion asset bank," says Louise

O'Donnell, Sun National's vice president of management information services. Financial institutions generally offer the same products, so the bank wanted to understand its customers better as a way to set itself apart from the competition. "A picture says a thousands words," and finding the best key performance indicators for analysts would help them evaluate their businesses, she says.

The bank then chose data visualization software as its best bet, going through a 2-year study to find the best product that fit in its environment and within its budget. "We needed something to get the biggest bang for our buck," O'Donnell says.

Persuading upper management of the need for a data visualization app was a challenge with the bank's budget constraints, so the adoption process was methodical. O'Donnell and her IT staff conducted in-house case studies with software including Business Objects, Cognos and Advizor Solutions, dedicating about 45 days to each software product. The testing cycle consisted of bringing software in, building a demo and sharing it with different user groups.

As part of its criteria, the MIS department wanted data visualization software that fit into Microsoft SQL Server, so it selected Advizor's Analyst Edition software for its dashboard and analysis capabilities, which would allow users to monitor their departments through key performance indicators, drill down to underlying data, then publish their views and findings. Sun National also chose Microsoft Analysis Services and Reporting Services. As part of its push to data visualization, Sun National built a data warehouse to centralize its data, "so there's one version of the truth," O'Donnell says. To populate the SQL Server data warehouse and Analysis Services data marts, the bank uses Microsoft Integration Services to extract data from core systems, apply business rules, and aggregate and load the data.

The data marts are organized by business unit, including customer, retail and lending, and function, such as ATM. Analysts then select a dashboard to see their information, rather than

viewing data in standalone spreadsheets and systems. They can now identify trends and anomalies across customer and sales information, as well as monitor cash flow projections and profitability trends.

“They can create 65 reports which can be sorted 65 different ways,” she says. Analysts only have to drag their mouse and highlight certain areas to drill down. “There’s a lot of trending...and [data visualization] complements the knowledge we really want to know about-particular products, customers and behaviors.”

The bank’s analysts aren’t the only ones who have benefited from data visualization software. O’Donnell and her staff have been spared from producing reports for almost 25 departments, including deposit operations, accounting, small business loans and human resources. MIS—a three-member staff—would write queries when an analyst made a request and send data to him or her. If the analyst wanted to see more details, MIS would have to run the query again, a process that could take about several hours. The data visualization makes it possible to fulfill such requests in minutes.

O’Donnell claims Advizor data visualization software has reduced its workload “easily by 20 to 30 percent.” Prior to the Advizor implementation, trending was difficult to track, but now between Advizor and the data warehouse, Sun National has 3 years worth of information for trending. “Life is so much easier now to fulfill our informational needs,” she says.