



Success Story



KCOM Group (LSE: KCOM) is a UK communications and IT services provider. Kingston Communications, a subsidiary business unit, serves local residents and businesses with Internet and telephony services.

Business Challenges

- Reconciling inconsistent reporting data
- Complexity and delays querying billing systems
- Lack of visibility into product activity
- Multiple versions of customer metrics

Business Value

- Consistent and accurate data
- Self-service analytical ability provided to end users
- Elimination of low-profit bundles/packages/tariffs
- Re-deployment of staff from report writers to analysts

Accurate Data Enables Cost-Saving Insights

As the UK telecom environment has grown more competitive, it has become critical to gain visibility into timely and accurate customer and product data. KCOM's Business Intelligence team realized that time being spent on report construction and reconciliation would be better spent on analysis. KCOM leveraged Scorecard Systems' Subscriber Analysis Application to provide insight into in-depth, auditable customer and product activity.

KCOM was established in 1903 as the council department providing local telephony to residents of Kingston-upon-Hull as a public service. As a monopoly, KCOM historically did not have a great need to perform in-depth analysis of its customers and their products.

Since joining KCOM in 1994, Ben Wrigley, Manager of Business Intelligence, has watched the company take an increasing interest in tracking customer activity, to the point that every department had its own reporting team.

These teams produced a wide variety of reports for management using different business rules and data sources, with the obvious result that the numbers did not match – a common theme in subscriber reporting.

"I personally would spend hours or days reconciling different sets of

effectively the same numbers to try to reach a single version of the truth," says Wrigley. Different departments would often meet to try to establish a consensus on the numbers, rather than to determine actions to be taken as a consequence of the results.

KCOM's initial introduction to Scorecard Systems' team left them pleasantly surprised at the depth of their telecom knowledge and experience.

"I felt they had been looking over my shoulder for years and really understood the pain involved in producing what seem like simple metrics, but which in fact are extremely complex," says Wrigley.

Scorecard described the pitfalls of typical approaches to unit reporting and explained how business rules should be applied to produce correct customer counts and activity.

KCOM made the decision to deploy the SAA to finally create a fully reconcilable reporting system in tandem with a project to build a new data warehouse. The existing data warehouse was outdated, and users were turning to direct extracts from the billing system to build their reports.

The BI team felt that it was the perfect time to fix the multiple-version reporting issue and add the additional reporting capabilities that the SAA provides. "We had wanted to track product migrations, but had not been able to do so effectively," says Wrigley. A business case was built and approved that demonstrated the benefits of a broader set of easily-accessible, accurate information.

"We're now managing our cost base much better and driving huge savings into the business."

BEN WRIGLEY, MANAGER OF BI

The business rules workshop conducted by Scorecard provided immediate value to KCOM in exposing the organization to industry-standard metrics and business rules. KCOM's business users quickly agreed on a new set of reporting standards.

"Scorecard gave us visibility into the business rules used by our peers, but allowed us to customize as necessary for our local market," says Wrigley. After approval of the business rules by senior management, the BI team constructed data extracts to feed the SAA.

Scorecard then worked with KCOM to map and relate 5,000 billing system codes for upgrade/downgrade analysis. Other data dimensions and hierarchies were also defined. Wrigley's team's solid understanding of this area allowed this work to be done quickly and without any issues.

With data now flowing through the SAA and data ware-

house, users have a self-service environment to access the customer activity results. The solution was implemented to fit with KCOM's architectural standards, using industry-standard database and reporting tools, allowing either internal or Scorecard resources to deploy additional functionality.

Analysts in each department now have the ability to access consistent, fully-traceable data that provides a complete picture of customer and service activity, including very detailed insight into value-added services and bundles. The system retains historical data to allow for trending at a very granular level.

The SAA has provided the analysts with a much deeper level of detail than could previously be obtained. As a result of this detail, numerous discrepancies were found in the way customer tariffs were being provisioned.

Tariffs are now increasingly being evaluated for cost effectiveness and customer impact. Duplicate or unprofitable tariffs are being phased out or consolidated. "What used to take us weeks to analyze, now takes minutes," says Wrigley.

The improved visibility has helped KCOM better manage its cost base and has driven major process changes, with estimated annual savings well exceeding the cost of the SAA implementation.

KCOM hopes to expand its data warehouse by adding revenue, usage, and commission calculation functionality, and anticipates leveraging Scorecard Systems' tools and resources again. "Scorecard lived up to my expectations—and I have high expectations!" says Wrigley.

About Scorecard Systems

Scorecard Systems is the leader in reporting and analysis solutions for telecommunications companies, and has been helping telecom companies produce accurate subscriber metrics since 1996. Scorecard supports landline and wireless carriers, cable, satellite, broadband, and internet providers around the globe.