

Tennessee Commercial Warehouse Gains Intra-Company Competition, Increases Efficiencies

AT A GLANCE

The Customer

- Transportation and logistics provider

The Challenge

- Disparate data sources
- Lack of real-time insight

The Solution

- Logi Info

The Results

- Implementation significantly faster than planned
- Increased visibility led to healthy intra-company competition
- Increased efficiencies

THE CUSTOMER

TCW, Inc., headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, operates nine inland terminals and two port locations. This network of terminals provides transportation services to customers throughout the southeast region and beyond. In business since 1948, the company holds both contract and common carrier authority serving all points within the continental United States.

“The new insight for our terminals has led to competition among them, which is the environment we wanted.”

Steve Thompson, Director of Information Technology
Tennessee Commercial Warehouse

THE CHALLENGE

“We had a vast array of disparate data sources from half a dozen different systems including MySQL, various SQL servers, and a Progress database, as well as our backend accounting system, Traverse. Our reporting consisted of a slew of Excel reports and it was a challenge for our management staff to merge the information together.

“The need to manually combine data using Excel meant our managers lacked real-time insight. It could be weeks before we’d marry all that data together. There was no way to analyze time-over-time, see trend lines, or be able to predict the outcome of the month.

“We wanted to bring our disparate data together with one uniform interface that was easy to use for our management team,” explained Steve Thompson, Director of Information Technology, Tennessee Commercial Warehouse.

THE SOLUTION

“We have a small IT team and needed a nimble tool. So as we began to look for a business intelligence tool, we ruled out Cognos, SAP, and similar tools that we felt were meant for large enterprises. We considered Pentaho and QlikView along with Logi Analytics. Logi surfaced as the best for ease of use as well as cost. Logi Info has an intuitive interface and is quick to learn.

“Finally, we were also pleased with Logi Info’s ability to pull in data from any system and we felt the capabilities would meet our needs long term,” stated Thompson.

THE RESULTS

“The ease of use of Logi Info Studio is great. By far, you don’t have to be a programmer to write these reports. This enabled us to take a couple of our managers who are power-users and allow them to write reports the way they wanted to. We’re also able to sit down with users and if there’s something they’d like to see, it’s very simple to make changes.”

Fast Implementation

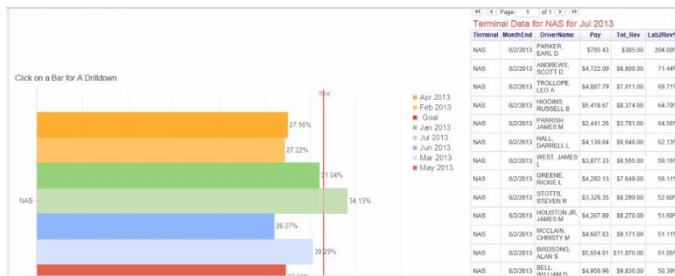
“When we first purchased Logi Info, we had a planned implementation timeframe of six months, and we felt like that was pushing it. But we found ourselves able to roll out 75 to 80 percent of our needs within three months. We were then able to use the rest of that time to develop some ancillary reports managers had requested that we previously never had time to get to.”

Coffee Board

"We call our new dashboard our 'Coffee Board.' Managers look at the dashboard first thing in the morning for a current status update to help provide direction. Our dashboard includes metrics around sales, such as what was sold, where it was sold, what lines of business it was sold in, and our profit margins. Being a multi-modal transportation and logistics company, we look at line-haul, inter-modal freight, and special haulage."

Intra-Company Competition

"Labor to revenue is another crucial barometer for the transportation logistics industry. Using Logi, we're able to display that metric for each terminal. Our terminals now have visibility into one another's metrics, which they never had before. It's great because there is now competition between our terminals in trying to see who can outperform the others. That's the environment we wanted."



Increased Visibility into Key Metrics

"Another important new capability we have with Logi Info is the ability to drill-down. We can look at a cross section of time and drill-down to a specific terminal to see how drivers are performing. This gives terminal managers the ability to manage drivers more proactively in helping them achieve labor to revenue goals we're looking for."

"We can now compare a driver who takes freight from A to B against another driver who takes that same freight the same distance on a different day. You can look at how long it took them, what their turn times were, how much it cost us. It becomes very easy for a manager to be able to manage the situation."

Enhanced Safety

"Safety is number one in our industry. In addition to the need to comply with government regulations, business is traded based on how safe your fleet is and how well-prepared you are. Logi Info has enabled us to increase our visibility into problems so we can take actions to improve safety. With our new Logi reports, we've been able to look at trends by visualizing our data using

gauges, then zeroing in on problems, such as tire blow-outs, to determine if driver abuse or equipment is the cause. We can then take the necessary actions to resolve the issue; such as having additional safety meetings with a particular driver."



Database Write-Back

"In addition to reading data from various disparate sources, Logi gives us the ability to write data back to a data source. We have a very old data source with no good option for connecting directly from Logi. However, we were able to create a Logi process that executed the necessary task for SQL-Insert statements so that our end users could enter the 'summary' data from the printed report. While we could accomplish this many different ways, it's very convenient for our business users to have one dashboard interface (same user/password) to review key metrics as well as provide capabilities for data entry to the same dashboard."



Increased Efficiencies

"TCW has a relatively small IT team, and especially with the recent economic downturn, we've had to be more efficient. Every tool we decide on needs to help us improve our efficiency. And certainly with Logi we're able to do more with less and without extensive training, because the interface is very intuitive," concluded Thompson.