

DATA PRODUCT MINDSET POWERS DASHBOARD REINVENTION

PROBLEM: HIGH-VISIBILITY ANALYTICS TOOL WASN'T PULLING ITS WEIGHT

Our client, one of the world's largest manufacturers of paper and building products, relied on a dashboard system to manage approximately \$400 million in maintenance and miscellaneous operations expenses across several multibillion-dollar production facilities. In our efforts to help them update and expand the maintenance dashboard, it became clear that their data environment and processes did not support a next-level iteration of their maintenance analytics dashboard.

- **Accuracy issues:** Existing reporting was connected to multiple fragmented data sources that were missing key information. Insights were often contradictory and the process to resolve discrepancies was inefficient, driven largely by ad-hoc conversations. The business needed all actuals to tie to its future central FP&A system (Infor d/EPM).
- **Fragmented views and reporting:** Because different facilities had different ERP systems, teams were using multiple reports and dashboards to look across production facilities. And business users complained about the "clunky" user interface. Unless you were highly trained on the dashboards, getting an accurate and holistic view was a time-consuming and arduous process—and not always a successful one.
- **Major transition on the horizon:** Over the next few years, a number of facilities will be phasing out their current systems and adopting Infor M3 for Accounting and ERP. During this transition, they'll need a solution that can pull together a complete view of financial transactions from across the different segments, so everyone is on the same page and speaking the same language.

SOLUTION: FROM DISCONNECTED DASHBOARDS TO A SCALABLE DATA PRODUCT

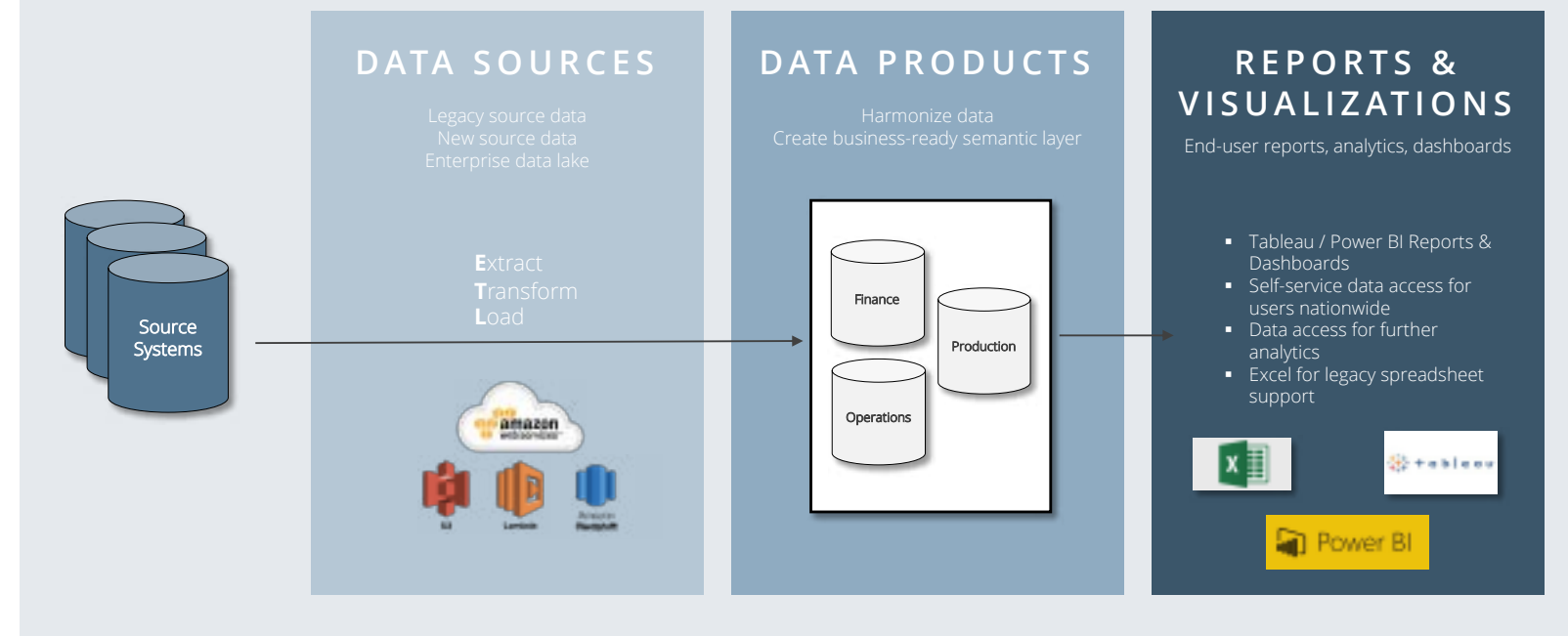
Creating a more powerful version of the maintenance dashboard required resolving the underlying disconnects in the client's data environment. It also demanded a multidisciplinary team of business analysts, program managers, visualization specialists, and data engineers using an Agile approach that focused on delivering business in an iterative manner. First step: Work with the business to gather requirements, ask users how they used the dashboards, and develop a backlog of user stories to inform the creation of the new analytics products.

From there, our visualization specialists used the information to build wireframes that showed the business what was possible. With client approval in hand, our data engineers got to work. Using Amazon Redshift, they built a unified and scalable data layer and robust data model that integrates data from four Accounting/ERP systems. From this single source of truth, the business can easily develop future analytics products (beyond just maintenance) and greater self-service capabilities.

- The model has 13 different dimensions focusing on the key activities—vendor service agreements, purchase orders, contracts, etc.—in the maintenance life cycle at each facility.
- The model contained four facts to ensure an accurate depiction of financial spend, including fact tables for forecasting and commitment values.
- The model utilized a modern, flexible cloud platform (Redshift) with the latest technology (Glue, S3) to source, transform, and further refine data for increased quality.

FOCUS ON DATA PRODUCTS

A standalone solution that the business can reuse to create dashboards and other analytics products



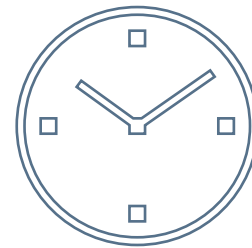
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The Aspirent team also assisted in the roll-out campaign for the new analytics product to help end-users better understand and trust the data layer behind it and to drive adoption. We showed them how to navigate the new dashboard, how it would improve visibility and accuracy of insights, and how they could save time and effort for the business—and themselves by using it. We also implemented a change management system to evaluate user adoption and track dashboard usage to targets.

RESULTS:

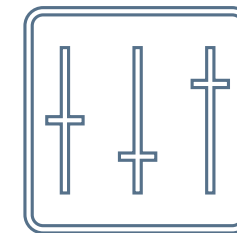
By looking beneath the surface-level dashboard enhancements that were initially on the table and applying a product mindset to the delivery of business insights, the Aspirent team enabled the client to achieve:



Trusted insights in less time: The new dashboard product replaces the manually intensive legacy reports of old, providing an accurate and **easy-to-access single source of insights** for maintenance expense reporting and decision-making. Fragmented reporting and data discrepancies are now a thing of the past.



Rapid adoption: In just the first two weeks, **nearly 100 users** flocked to the revamped maintenance dashboard—from executives seeking cross-facility insights for decision-making purposes to facility managers and FP&A professionals requiring more granular details on spend in their areas of responsibility.



Sustainable foundation for future applications: The maintenance data product is built and primed for analytics development. If new dashboards are requested—examining contracts, material requests, new commitments vs. maintenance spend, etc.—the foundation can be **quickly and efficiently expanded** because it's grounded in an adaptable, data-rich, and trusted data model.