Allconnect: Using SAP® BusinessObjects™ Software to Improve Data Analysis and Decision Making

allconnect.
One less thing to worry about.

Implementation Partner

decisionfirst™ technologies

Overview

Company

Vision

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Solution

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Future plans

Company
Allconnect

Industry
Consumer products

Products and Services
Wide array of home services related to video, telephone, Internet, and other communication service options

Web Site
www.allconnect.com

SAP® Solutions
SAP® BusinessObjects™ Edge Business Intelligence software, version with data integration; SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence® software; SAP BusinessObjects Dashboards software

Implementation Partner
Decision First Technologies Inc.

How can you take your business to the next level when you are struggling to manage massive amounts of data across all areas of your company? Allconnect – a leading consumer services company – resolved this problem by deploying SAP® BusinessObjects™ software. "With a sophisticated platform for business intelligence and data analysis, we can **harness the true value of all the data** in our environment," explains David Frame, senior vice president of merchandising and analytics for Allconnect.

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A market leader with momentum

Allconnect, a leading consumer services company based in Atlanta, helps consumers make wise, cost-effective decisions by explaining the options, service plans, and service providers available across a broad array of home services. These services include home phone service, cable, satellite, high-speed Internet, and communication bundles. Through its integration with a variety of service providers, Allconnect allows consumers to order or switch services with a single phone call or online transaction.

Established in 1998, Allconnect now has about 750 employees and has helped millions of customers choose and activate services. The company has also won numerous awards. In 2010, it was recognized on *Inc.* magazine's Inc. 500/5000 list, was named one of Atlanta's 50 fastest-growing privately held companies by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, and was included on *Georgia Trend* magazine's Fast 40 list.

750

Employees

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Developing a growth strategy

As one of the largest third-party aggregators and distribution channels for residential phone, Internet, and video services, Allconnect is in an enviable position. That said, with most customer acquisitions occurring via its partnerships with other businesses – including some of the largest electric utilities – the company needed to find new growth opportunities. According to Frame, "We realized that we needed a much more precise understanding of our products, consumers, sales practices, and business partners if we were to continue growing at a rapid pace."

With this goal in mind, Allconnect devised a strategy to drive sales and expand the business by being smarter about the data it gathered on its agents, consumers, products, and partners. "We had collected a variety of data relating to each of these categories, but we needed to take our analysis to the next level in order to improve our results," continues Frame.

"We needed to help our agents be more successful by identifying what features and products sell well to what customers and in what regions."

David Frame, Senior Vice President of Merchandising and Analytics, Allconnect

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Paving the way for true business analytics

Allconnect had pushed its existing business intelligence framework to the limit. Employees found themselves producing one report after another to answer a series of questions. When this proved insufficient, they turned to database analysts for new reports. The result? Slow responses to pressing business questions.

For frequently asked questions, the company used a trove of spreadsheets and Microsoft Access databases to work around its reporting limitations. However, key terms and metrics were not always defined consistently across these data sources, leading to confusion and rework. Moreover, the monthly closing process was painfully drawn out, with nearly a week dedicated to matching financial and operational data across spreadsheets. "We needed to analyze and react to data much more quickly," says Frame.

Decision First Technologies Inc., a software provider and professional services company that specializes in delivering end-to-end business intelligence solutions, helped Allconnect evaluate and test its options. According to Frame, "Decision First had extensive industry knowledge and 10 years of experience implementing successful business intelligence projects. It clearly understood our objectives and the available business intelligence solutions."

Allconnect chose SAP® BusinessObjects™ Edge Business Intelligence software, version with data integration; SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence® software; and SAP BusinessObjects Dashboards software.

"We were impressed with the software's intuitive nature, the ability to easily combine data from a variety of sources, and the minimal demands on our IT staff. Plus, SAP was able to demonstrate a clear vision for business analytics."

David Frame, Senior Vice President of Merchandising and Analytics, Allconnect

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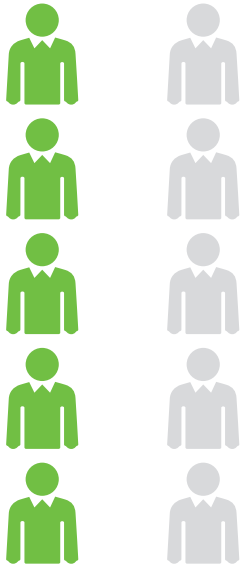
Tapping into a one-stop shop for expertise

Decision First dispatched an experienced local team to manage the initial implementation, which included consolidating multiple data sources by using the data integration functionality within SAP BusinessObjects Edge Business Intelligence. The team also designed and built semantic layers, developed reports, and built out a set of primary dashboards. It also deployed XWIS software from Antivia alongside SAP BusinessObjects Dashboards to promote employee self-service. At the same time, Allconnect redesigned its data warehouse to take better advantage of SAP BusinessObjects software by ensuring that all customer relationship management and call center information could be accessed and analyzed via the dashboards.

The Decision First team also shared best practices and conducted on-site training to help Allconnect employees understand how to extract maximum value from the new software. As soon as the software was deployed, Allconnect employees could use six semantic layers along with four primary dashboards to gain insight into sales and operations, referrals, product mix, and market share.

In the first month of usage, the company averaged eight concurrent users per hour. Just a few months later, adoption significantly increased to about 50 concurrent users per hour. “This level of adoption is a clear sign of the value we saw immediately upon implementation,” says Frame.



50

Concurrent users per hour within months

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Finding new ways to service customers and partners

With an enhanced business analytics platform in place, Allconnect's data analysts, call center supervisors and agents, and product managers can make better and faster decisions. Product, sales, and operations dashboards in all call centers enable supervisors and sales managers to understand call volumes and agent productivity. With the ability to drill down to the root cause of issues, these managers can address issues that impede sales while identifying best practices for improving performance across all agents.

Those in charge of partner relationships and client services gain keener insight into the value of each partnership based on referrals, revenues, and customer satisfaction. With a deeper understanding of how product demand and market share is changing over time, product managers can suggest the optimal mix of products and incentives.

Because supervisors, sales managers, and product managers can gain these insights without depending on the analytics team, the company's leadership team can focus on identifying opportunities to move the business forward.

"As we dig more deeply into our data, we're gaining insights that enable us to improve and grow our business."

David Frame, Senior Vice President of Merchandising and Analytics, Allconnect

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Reaping a bundle of benefits

Allconnect has realized a number of benefits since implementing the SAP BusinessObjects software. Overall, with easier access to more information, the company's employees are more productive. Specifically, the company is driving more sales in the call center. In the first six months of 2011 alone, Allconnect grew revenue per order and revenue per consumer by 15%. The company is also on track to deliver additional growth for the last six months of that year.

15%

Increase in revenue per order and revenue per consumer

Allconnect's implementation of the SAP BusinessObjects software has provided better sales information to sales leaders, allowing them to improve agent performance. It has also given the company better insight into product-specific performance, including order completion rates, and it allows the company to see if it is achieving its product merchandising targets. Plus, it can now better serve consumers and in turn provide its partners with a greater amount of quantitative information about the consumers it serves on their behalf. Combined, all of these improvements strengthen Allconnect's partnerships and, more important, its bottom line.

According to Frame, "We're deriving greater and greater value from our data now that we can better access it. This has opened up new opportunities we had never considered, such as creating data-specific offerings for our partners."

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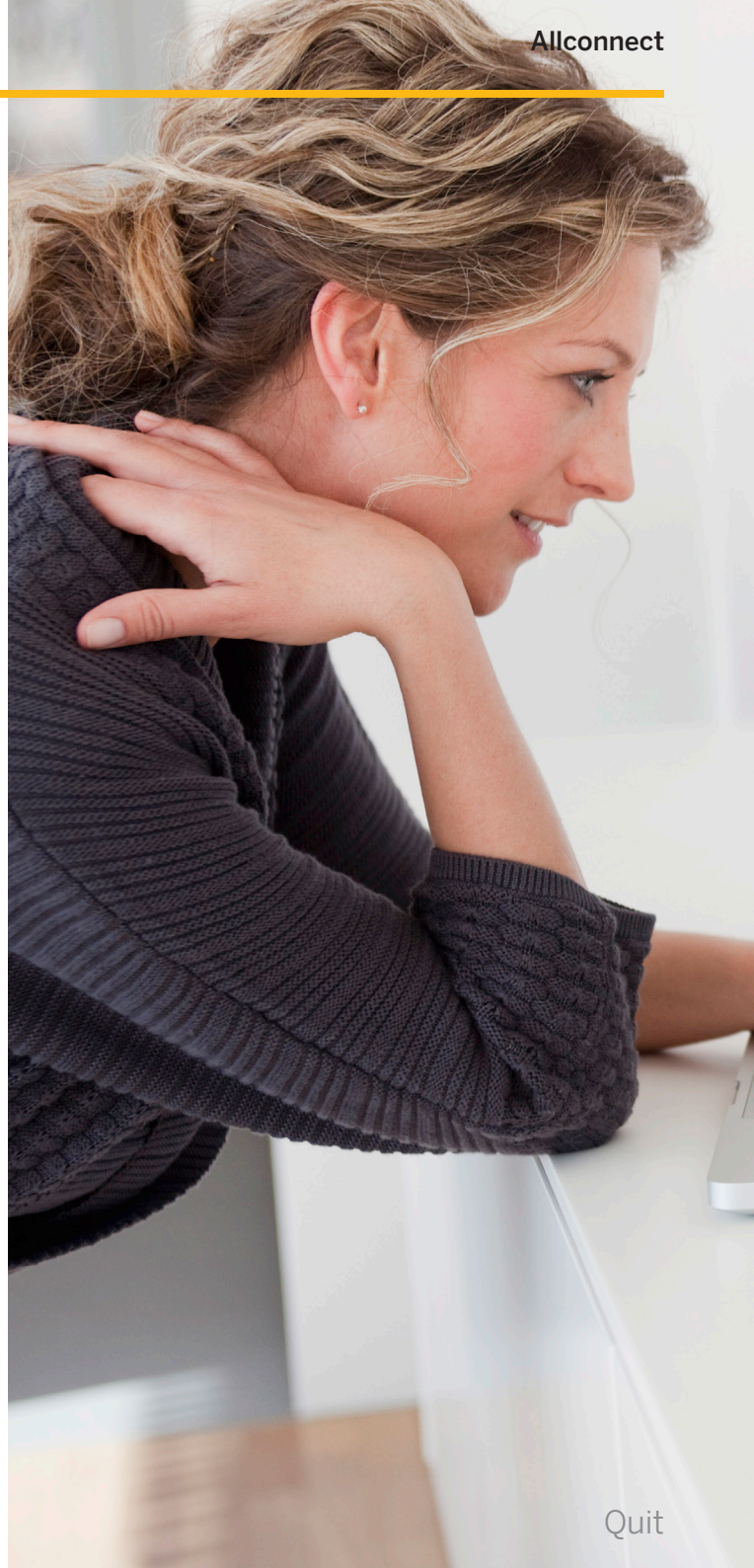
Anticipating an array of improvements

Having already realized tremendous value from its SAP BusinessObjects software, Allconnect plans to develop additional dashboards and more data dimensions to provide employees with views into training, finance, and corporate data.

Fully satisfied with the value of SAP BusinessObjects software, it also anticipates deploying additional SAP software. Once the SAP BusinessObjects General Ledger Rapid Mart, SAP BusinessObjects Accounts Payable Rapid Mart, and SAP BusinessObjects Accounts Receivable Rapid Mart packages are in place, Allconnect expects to significantly reduce the time it spends on matching financial and operational data. And it anticipates major improvements in its corporate performance management when it implements the SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation application.

"As we continue to broaden the reach of our business analytics platform, we feel confident about taking our company to higher and higher levels."

David Frame, Senior Vice President of Merchandising and Analytics, Allconnect



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