RFI GROUP'S BEYOND ANALYTICS PLATFORM:

Delivering competitive insights to the banking and finance industry.

"Yellowfin has empowered RFi Group to provide the banking and finance industry with the best analytics platform on the planet."

Reinis Grauds
GROUP BENCHMARKING CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER RFI GROUP

Background

RFi Group conducts some of the largest and most comprehensive financial research in the world, surveying over 350,000 consumers annually. The insights gleaned from this research give RFi Group the knowledge that underpins the advisory, benchmarking and payments consulting services it provides its financial clients. That information is also sold to RFi Group's clients, providing them with an understanding of trends within the banking and finance sector, as well as the ability to compare performance against competitors across a range of KPIs and metrics.

RFi Group would cleanse research data on a monthly basis, then use an in-house solution, leveraging Microsoft SQL Server BI edition and custom code to deliver reports to clients via email as static Excel and PDF files.

However, as the amount of data and frequency of data RFi Group collected increased, this arduous process and outdated mode of information delivery became increasingly unacceptable.

"From the perspective of RFi Group, delivering insights to our clients in this way was becoming excessively resource intensive, disparate and slow," said RFi Group Benchmarking Director, Charles Higby. "We also understood that searching through emails to retrieve static file-based reports made it difficult for clients to find desired information quickly or easily explore data to uncover new insights. RFi Group wanted to deliver a more gratifying, insightful and immediate experience where customers could interactively explore live data via intuitive reports, visualizations and dashboards. We wanted to dramatically improve our customer offering."

To deliver on this vision, RFi Group began a search for a Business Intelligence (BI) platform that could provide its clients with a single source of truth – an online portal through which customers could quickly and securely access live reports underpinned by the latest available data.

"RFi Group procures a significant amount of data," said RFi Group Benchmarking Chief Technology Officer, Reinis Grauds.

"To allow clients to access all of that information in a single spreadsheet was never going to work as a realistic and desirable long-term solution – it far exceeds what a spreadsheet or PDF were ever designed to do. A secure online, multi-tenant platform was the logical evolution for our products and services. We needed a flexible BI partner that could provide a secure, easy-to-use Web-based platform for our clients, with strong collaborative capabilities and mobile device support."

After evaluating a plethora of BI tools, RFi Group decided to partner with Yellowfin.

The Solution

Higby said that Yellowfin was chosen to underpin RFi Group's new online analytics portal for three key reasons: Platform flexibility and governance, range of out-of-the-box product functionality, and flexible business terms.

"After an extensive assessment of Business Intelligence software vendors, the decision to partner with Yellowfin was an easy one," said Higby. "Yellowfin's BI platform ticked every box in terms of functionality and ease of use. It was also clear the firm possessed an agile and responsive team with whom it would be easy to do business. Additionally, Yellowfin's flexible partner revenue share model allowed RFi Group to deliver on its vision of rolling out an online analytics portal that would be accessible to its entire client base."

Grauds noted Yellowfin's ability to facilitate independent end-user data analysis and exploration, as well as minimize implementation and management requirements placed on IT resources, was critical.

"RFi Group selected the Yellowfin BI platform to provide its customers with next generation benchmarking analytics on the device of their choice," said Grauds. "The intuitive interface has removed the need for specialized IT skills when creating a report package, putting the power in the hands of our consultants and clients – where it deserves to be."

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From a feature – function perspective, Grauds said that Yellowfin was chosen in equal measure for its unique end-user product capabilities and its ability to meet IT demand for robust governance and security mechanisms.

"Business users love Yellowfin's extensive collaboration features that empower them to share data, discuss trends and vote on collective decisions," said Grauds. "Yellowfin's PowerPoint-esc presentation module, Storyboard, and Facebook-like newsfeed, Timeline, are particularly impressive. In addition, clients can generate deep contextual insight quickly with Yellowfin's powerful location analytics capabilities. Yellowfin lets you combine traditional business data with spatially significant information to create insightful multilayered maps. RFi Group's financial clients can quickly uncover location-based customer trends at postcode granularity.

"From a system administration perspective, Yellowfin's multi-tenant features mean that RFi Group's clients can securely explore their data, safe in the knowledge that only the right people are able to view their critical business information. Yellowfin was also able to integrate seamlessly with existing security protocols, enabling us to implement strong two-factor authentication and work with our existing LDAP for credential management."

RFi Group has deployed Yellowfin as a multi-tenant installation into a multiple server environment with discrete databases for each client. RFi Group has Yellowfin running on Microsoft SQL Server, as are its client databases. Security Servers are Linux-based for reverse proxy, LDAP and audited two-factor authentication.

Benefits

Partnering with Yellowfin has enabled RFi Group to deliver its *RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform* – an online portal where its clients can quickly and easily access the most up-to-date consumer-based financial research via intuitive reports, visualizations and dashboards. For RFi Group, emailing clients static PDFs and Excel-based reports in zip files is a thing of the past.

"Yellowfin has empowered RFi Group to provide the banking and finance industry with the best analytics platform on the planet," said Higby. "We know that security is paramount for our clients, which is why RFi Group engaged with a penetration specialist to test Yellowfin's security. Yellowfin has been built from the ground-up to present data securely – and that's exactly what the test proved."

Grauds said that by partnering with Yellowfin to integrate its BI solution into *RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform*, organizations in the banking and finance industry could now explore, share and act on critical competitive insights faster and easier than ever before.

"Yellowfin provides a device independent, functionally rich, easy to use, secure and flexible presentation layer through which RFi Group's banking and finance clients can consume and act on the most up-to-date insights," said Grauds. "The solution will improve the consistency, depth and timeliness of insights for our clients, allowing them to drill into interactive reports and fully explore their data while better retaining organizational knowledge. Our clients love the collaboration functionality."

Speaking of collaboration, Higby highlighted that getting the *RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform* to market had been a team effort.

"We view Yellowfin as a partner in every sense of the word," said Higby. "They have been easy to work with and very responsive."

The *RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform* comes with a series of out-of-the-box reports available to new customers, with clients able to work independently or in collaboration with RFi Group to develop additional customized BI content.

Clients of *RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform* are harnessing the solution to explore metrics relating to three core areas, including industry trends, macro-economic trends and anonymous or 'blinded' peer benchmarks.

"*RFi Group's Beyond Analytics Platform* is a great example of moving up the chain of analytics from diagnostic to predictive analytics," said Head of Retail Risk for ANZ, Jason Humphrey.

For more information on Yellowfin, visit www.yellowfinbi.com