



North Star BlueScope Steel Selects BIRT to Improve Operational Efficiency and Leverage IBM Maximo

“When I saw a demo of tools Actuate provided, I knew right away it would increase visibility of our essential operations and help the management team run the business with improved operational efficiency and agility. Establishing a single reporting framework and dashboards became a top priority for our development staff.”

— Miguel Alvarez, NSBSL President

North Star BlueScope Steel LLC (NSBSL) is a steel manufacturer that prides itself on its safety, track record of on-time delivery performance and customer satisfaction. But NSBSL began to struggle to achieve these objectives without a standard business intelligence (BI) solution to empower its employees and management team.

NSBSL leverages IBM Maximo® Asset Management to manage asset life cycle and maintenance, work orders, inventory, purchasing and accounts payable. Critical business information resides in the Maximo system, as well as in multiple other enterprise applications.

Challenges

“We have a very hands-on, entrepreneurial culture, such that if an employee is asked to complete a task, they just figure it out and get the job done. However, this environment impacts our standardization efforts, and has

resulted in information remaining in silos throughout the organization” states Brian Baird, a Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional at NSBSL.

NSBSL executives and management wanted a unified view and understanding of the business operations. However, NSBSL did not have a solution that could collect this information and deliver it in an integrated, easy-to-use format. NSBSL employees had to follow manual processes which were time consuming and error prone in order to bring the information together for analysis. And management often did not know the source of the information collected and what assumptions were used when analyzing the data.

“We needed a solution that would empower people to do their jobs by providing the right information when they need it, where they are and in the form required to get the job done,” recalls Baird.

- > **COMPANY PROFILE**
Joint venture between BlueScope Steel and Cargill Inc
- > **INDUSTRY**
Manufacturing
- > **LOCATION**
Delta, Ohio
- > **CHALLENGES**
 - *Lack centralized and standard business intelligence*
 - *Need to provide easy-to-use, self-service BI capabilities*
 - *Enhance visibility into operations*
 - *Leverage data in Maximo and other related systems*
- > **SOLUTION**
Integrate Actuate’s open source based BIRT with IBM Maximo and other applications
- > **BENEFITS**
 - *Empower users with unified dashboards, self-service BI*
 - *Facilitate sound, timely business decisions*
 - *Speed time to market*



The Solution

NSBSL selected BIRT (Business Intelligence and Reporting Tools) technology from Actuate to provide a unified business intelligence (BI) framework for IBM Maximo and other mission-critical systems. “Actuate’s open framework, using BIRT, allows us to pull in data from any source and leverage our investment in Maximo, as well as any pertinent business data from our ERP and process systems. With the other BI tools we considered, it was much more difficult to pull data from multiple systems,” states Baird.

NSBSL selected Actuate based on the following criteria:

- Ability to leverage IBM Maximo investment with proven track record of integration
- Interactive dashboards for all staff levels
- Ease of use and minimal/zero training
- Flexible development options and access to any data source
- Strong customer support and collaboration

NSBSL is replacing multiple, disparate reporting solutions with a single, standard BI framework comprised of value-added functionality from Actuate and the open source BIRT reporting platform (Actuate BIRT). NSBSL will deliver actionable BI to its users through interactive dashboards with KPIs and operational reports.

Business users can take advantage of easy-to-use ad hoc reporting to manipulate existing or create new reports, without relying on IT or expecting users to develop high-level technical skills.

A Phased Approach

NSBSL will roll out the Actuate BIRT solution to its users in multiple phases. In the first phase, NSBSL is partnering with Actuate Professional Services to develop an enterprise deployment strategy, and integrate Actuate BIRT with Maximo version 6 and the ERP system to deliver intelligence wherever the user is working - from the Maximo user interface, Microsoft SharePoint, the Actuate Information Console, or a component in a dashboard (see fig. 1).

In the future phases, NSBSL will replace its other reporting solutions with Actuate BIRT, enabling NSBSL to display data from multiple sources on a single interface—from IBM Maximo to real-time feeds on electricity usage, weather or other systems.

NSBSL will make the solution available to all of its 350 employees—from executives, purchasing, operations and quality engineering managers—to external users such as third party vendors and customers (see fig. 2).

“We wanted to gather all business intelligence in one framework. No other solution brought everything together like Actuate and BIRT.”
 - Brian Baird, CMRP,
 Application Development and Support Engineer

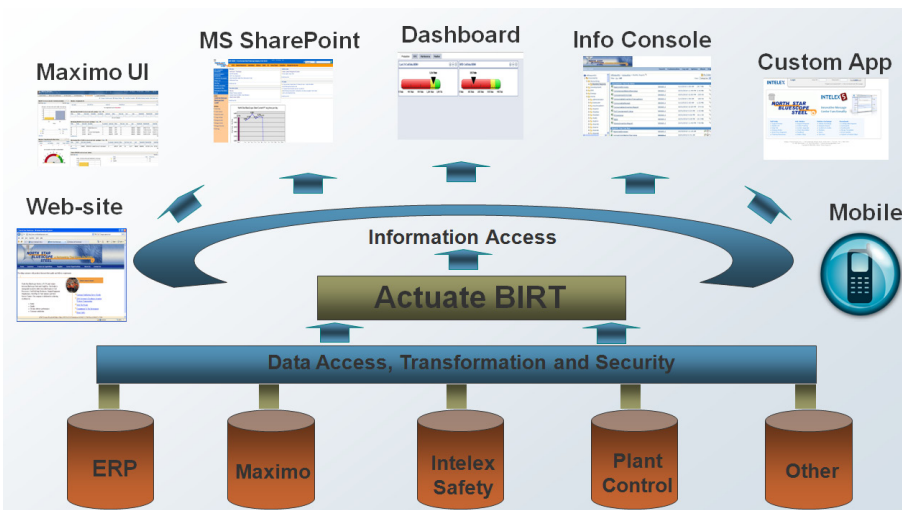


Figure 1: BI Framework with Actuate BIRT: Multiple Access Points and Data Sources, without a Data Warehouse



Benefits

Empower business users with dashboards and ad hoc reporting through a unified BI framework. NSBSL plans to arm its employees with actionable information based on their roles and security levels. Ad hoc reporting enables them to find concise answers from large quantities of data—fast. And the Actuate solution will provide insight throughout the extended enterprise, from suppliers to customers to partners.

Facilitate sound, timely business decisions by giving management insight where and when they need it, using the BIRT Interactive Viewer and dashboard technology to filter information. Management can access rich intelligence in patterns and benchmarks that can be used to optimize the manufacturing process and avert errors. Users can determine which perspective helps them do their job better, and IT will not have to change or add data sources or data sets to meet their needs.

Reduce time to value since BIRT requires minimal training but produces powerful results. The Actuate solution provides ad hoc reporting and the ability to modify Maximo reports without SQL or database skills, reducing reliance on IT. According to Baird, “Our engineers learned how to write reports in BIRT from an Actuate road show. Actuate BIRT is rich in functionality yet still easy to use. And, our users just get it.”

“The BIRT designer is straightforward to learn and has a large on-line user community, active on BIRT Exchange, that got me up and reporting on several databases quickly.”
- Matt Morris, Reliability Engineer, NSBSL

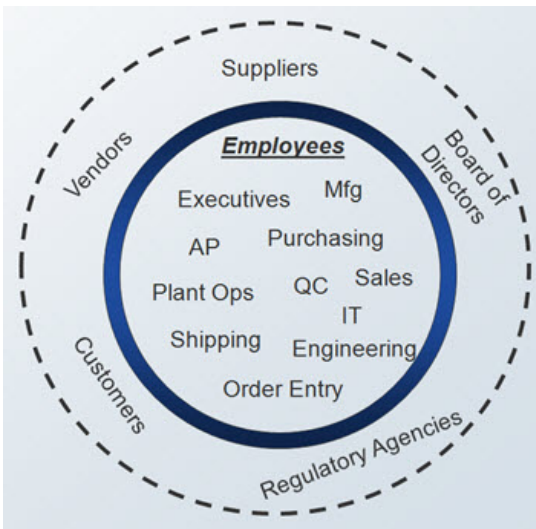


Figure 2: Securely delivering information to a broad community of users

Provide standards and promote regulatory compliance by having ready access to data required by auditors. Actuate will help NSBSL standardize business and reporting processes to prepare for and satisfy the needs of auditors. “BIRT will be the standard for any reporting done at NSBSL. Everyone will use the same solution and speak the same language,” states Baird. “This ensures that the data is accurate and that we are delivering a single source of the truth, regardless of what database or application the data resides in.”

Next Steps

NSBSL plans to continue its phased rollout, upgrading from Maximo version 6 to version 7. The Actuate BIRT framework ensures smooth migration without disruption in Maximo reporting. NSBSL will complete conversion of its ERP reporting to Actuate BIRT to further unify the reporting process. NSBSL also plans to push BIRT content to mobile devices and meet EHS, OSHA and regulatory compliance requirements. According to Baird, “BIRT has provided the flexibility, ease-of-use and powerful functionality that NSBSL needs for its standard business intelligence solution. We are excited to expand our use of Actuate BIRT and improve operating efficiency going forward.”

About NSBSL

North Star BlueScope Steel (NSBSL) is a 50-50 joint venture between BlueScope Steel (Melbourne, Australia) and Cargill Inc. (Minneapolis, MN). The facility is strategically located to deliver hot rolled bands to coil processors, cold roll strip producers, original equipment manufacturers, steel pipe and tube industry and steel service centers. The technology used at NSBSL allows a rapid conversion of scrap steel into hot rolled coils. The company is dedicated to achieving excellence in safety, quality, on-time delivery performance and customer satisfaction.

Actuate - the people behind BIRT

Actuate founded and co-leads the Eclipse BIRT open source project. ActuateOne is a unified suite of products for rapidly developing and deploying BIRT-based custom Business Intelligence applications and information applications. Applications built with ActuateOne provide one user experience regardless of task or skill level; are supported by one server for any deployment including cloud and are built with one BIRT design that can access and integrate any data source - including high volume print streams. ActuateOne adds rich data visualizations, including interactivity, dashboards, analytics, and deployment options to web and mobile BIRT applications, helping organizations drive revenue through higher customer satisfaction and improved operational performance.

Actuate has over 4,600 customers globally in a diverse range of business areas including financial services and the public sector. Founded in 1993, Actuate is headquartered in San Mateo, California, with offices worldwide. Actuate is listed on NASDAQ under the symbol BIRT. For more information, visit the company's web site at www.actuate.com or visit the BIRT community at www.birt-exchange.com.



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