Delphis NV / Team Lines

Directly Connecting Microsoft Excel to Oracle OLAP for Delphis to Enable Secure, Standardized and Ad Hoc Logistical and Operational Reporting

Product
Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP

Customer

Key Customer Requirements
- Direct Excel connectivity to Oracle OLAP for efficient data analytics and reporting
- Pre-built reporting and ad hoc analysis capabilities
- Ironclad data security and easy user management
- Fast response times for data queries

Customer Environment
Database: Oracle Database 11g OLAP Option on Oracle Linux (centrally located)
Clients: Windows PCs running Microsoft Excel 2010, 2007 and 2003 (enterprise distributed network)

About Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP
Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is an easy to install driver for your PC that utilizes the MDX query language. It directly connects familiar applications like Microsoft Excel to your Oracle OLAP database for powerful ad hoc query and analysis. Learn more or download a free evaluation at www.simba.com/oracle.

About Simba
Simba Technologies Inc. is the recognized world leader in standards-based data access and analytics products and solutions. Simba works with leading companies globally to deliver first class data connectivity solutions. Simba is an industry pioneer in relational and multi-dimensional data connectivity, as well as MDX query language technology. For more information, visit www.simba.com.

> *No other solution offered us the combination of security, performance, functionality and ease-of-use as Simba's Excel connectivity solution for Oracle OLAP. Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP makes it possible for us to query our Oracle OLAP data directly from Microsoft Excel. We've been able to securely provide our extended agent and user base with an easy way to perform self-service BI analysis and reporting on harmonized data that drives greater efficiency organization-wide.*
>
> *– Team Lines, Head of Controlling Department*

Delphis NV (www.delphis.be) is a leading oceanic shipping company that provides multi-modal container transport throughout the world. With its extensive fleet of owned and chartered container vessels and its strong European and Asian operations network, Delphis is considered to be one of the world's leading sub-4000 Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) container specialists.

Delphis is active in chartering – where it buys, builds and rents vessels. It is also a leader in feeder shipping – collecting and then transporting containers to central container terminals for shipping on larger vessels. Delphis operates primarily in Europe and Asia. It manages an extensive agent network in ports to help facilitate shipping operations.

Delphis' operational feeder shipping business is managed by its subsidiary Team Lines (www.teamlines.de). Team Lines runs several agencies all over Europe, taking care of operations and sales in their region.

Oracle Infrastructure for Logistical Support
Delphis uses Oracle Database to store operational data. It engages Concept to Solution (www.concept-to-solution.com), a technical consultancy with deep expertise in Oracle data warehouse environments and business analytics, to manage and develop its data warehouse solutions.

During the process of migrating from Oracle Database 10g to 11g, Concept to Solution identified that Delphis could attain greater efficiency by incorporating new analytics processes and tools into its business.

Delphis/Team Lines uses Oracle Database OLAP Option to store logistical data on which it performs a series of operational and financial analyses. Key analytics include vessel fuel consumption, scheduling and on-time analysis, as well as tracking how many containers are moved and to which ports. Delphis combines this data in its analysis and reporting with financial data stored in non-Oracle systems. It also stores and tracks sales and customer data, which it factors into certain reports and forecasts.

Delphis had been using Oracle Business Intelligence Discoverer as its primary ad hoc query, reporting and analysis tool on its

Oracle-stored data. Discoverer's capability and functionality proved useful for Delphis' user base, including its Business Intelligence (BI) power users. However, 90% of Delphis' users were using Discoverer and then exporting to Microsoft Excel. Concept to Solution recognized this inefficiency and sought a complementary solution that would short cut this process via the Multi-Dimensional expressions (MDX) query language. Enabling a MDX connection to Oracle OLAP would allow Delphis' base users to query their data directly from Excel PivotTables.

MDX is PivotTables' native language and has been widely adopted in numerous other BI and analytics software applications as the de facto query language of choice. In addition to increasing the efficiency of Delphis' logistical analysis, Excel PivotTables connectivity to Oracle OLAP would provide an easier, more

familiar, powerful and readily available way for Delphis' shipping agents to access and analyze important data pertaining to their port operations. Providing secure access to specific data that pertained to specific ports and specific agents had been a high priority that Delphis wished to fulfill.

Attaining Direct and Secure Microsoft Excel Connectivity to Oracle OLAP
Concept to Solution assessed Simba's MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP product and found that it is the only way to attain direct Microsoft Excel PivotTable connectivity to Oracle OLAP.

Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP is an easy to install, client-side driver that directly connects familiar OLAP (OnLine Analytic Processing) applications like Microsoft Excel or SAP BusinessObjects BI Suite to an Oracle OLAP database for powerful ad hoc query, analysis, dashboarding and reporting. Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP supports connectivity to Oracle Database OLAP Option.

Gaining direct Excel connectivity via Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP was a significant catalyst to speed up and complete Delphis' Oracle Database 10g to 11g migration. Once on 11g, Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP would provide the direct Excel PivotTables connection to Oracle OLAP that Delphis needed to short cut its logistical reporting. Furthermore, it also would provide the security and user control that Delphis/Team Lines deemed to be critically important to extend analysis and reporting to its agents in port.

Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP uses security set within the Oracle Database to manage data access. It does not add duplicate security layers. By using Oracle security, Oracle database administrators can easily manage user-level security and access permissions to data. Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP simply passes Oracle-level security and authentication challenge to the front-end application and user. This ensures that users are only able to access and see data at the level for which they have been granted in the database. Because the driver enables direct connectivity to Oracle, no mid-tier server or mid-tier security is needed. In Delphis' case, this would mean that agents would only see data relevant to their port.

Effective Results with an Easy Solution
For Team Lines' agents, Microsoft Excel is also a much easier tool to use to access and report on data. Excel is readily available, has a familiar interface, provides advanced multi-dimensional data analysis functionality via PivotTables, and integrates with the rest of the Microsoft Office

Suite for comprehensive presentation and reporting.

The solution rollout has greatly improved the frequency and topicality of relevant business information for Team Lines' agencies. It has also changed report distribution – before all reports were centrally distributed from Team Lines' head office in Hamburg once a month. The new solution provides comfortable self-service reporting, which is updated daily.

Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP provides users with the means to use virtually any standards-based OLAP reporting tool of their choice to access, analyze and report on data. By enabling a direct connection between a user's BI tool of choice and their Oracle OLAP data, users are able to prepare and save fixed reports and easily refresh views with the most current data, or perform fast and accurate ad hoc query and analysis.

Enabled by Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP, Concept to Solution has prepared a series of standard Excel reports and data dashboards accessible to Delphis' users that display the most current logistical data. These fixed reports accelerate analysis with predefined formatting and data parameters. Standardized reporting also ensures data harmonization so that all business groups are working from the same data views for reporting consistency. Users are also able to perform ad hoc queries and analysis on their Oracle OLAP data using Excel PivotTables. The solution has cleaned up and eliminated many fragmented spreadsheets and spreadmarts for more efficient and accurate BI analysis and reporting.

Using the solution, Delphis has been able to automate a portion of its data reporting, eliminating manual data gathering to support its logistical analysis. Delphis also gains the capability for distributing fixed reports to agents and users via Microsoft SharePoint, since Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP fully supports Excel thin-client deployment (Excel Services) and integration with the SharePoint platform.

Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP has delivered Delphis with high-performance fixed reporting and ad hoc analysis capabilities directly on its Oracle OLAP data. In doing so, Delphis has achieved greater reporting efficiency organization-wide, and it has achieved greater control over data that its users use for self-service BI and reporting.

Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP Benefits:

- ✓ Enables direct, live connectivity from Microsoft Excel to Oracle Database OLAP Option
- ✓ No mid-tier server needed
- ✓ Fully integrated with Microsoft Excel
- ✓ Entire solution consists of an easy-to-install, client-side driver
- ✓ Easy to deploy and maintain
- ✓ Fully secure, using Oracle-level security
- ✓ Low Total Cost of Ownership
- ✓ Requires no training
- ✓ Eliminates spreadmarts
- ✓ Enables easy, integrated reporting with entire Microsoft Office Suite
- ✓ Added support for other standards-based multi-dimensional BI tools in addition to Excel
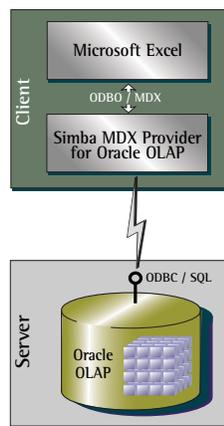- ✓ Leverages the tools you have without the need to purchase, learn and support new products

Figure 1: Simba MDX Provider for Oracle OLAP Architecture