

Analyzer™ helps **sbarro**® slice pizza **DATA**

The Sbarro name is synonymous with delicious Italian food that customers can count on for quality and taste. The company's 8,000 employees continue Gennaro and Carmela's tradition of providing authentic Italian dishes and flavors in over 1,000 Sbarro restaurants around the world.

Executive Summary

Sbarro is famous for its slices of pizza, but there are many more Italian favorites on their menu. With transactional-level data about their menu items and more coming in from the point-of-sale systems across all corporate stores, there was a lot of opportunity for analysis. Sbarro tried to use the existing reporting functionality in their existing systems, but struggled with long load times and complex report development. Sbarro found Strategy Companion's Analyzer resolved these issues and provided some unexpected new capabilities.



Business Challenges

- Reduce the data replication and the time delay before users had access to the data
- Give users the ability to customize views of their data through filtering, sorting, drilling, and visual analysis
- Ability to access and share reports from anywhere in the field
- Simplify the management of user reporting, especially new report development and changes to existing reports

Customer Quote

"Strategy Companion was with us all the way. Whenever we had any questions, they quickly jumped on a call and helped us work through it - even if the question wasn't related to their products."

Sbarro Company Background

Sbarro is the world's number one Italian fast casual restaurant. It has over 1,000 corporate and franchise-owned locations in 44 countries around the world.

Sbarro's roots go back to Naples, Italy where Gennaro and Carmela Sbarro began thinking about owning their own business. The couple and their three sons immigrated to the U.S. in 1956 and opened the first Sbarro Italian Delicatessen in Brooklyn, N.Y.

In addition to pizzas, Sbarro's traditional Italian cuisine includes entrees, pastas, salads, sandwiches, and homemade desserts - tastes to fit every palate. All of their menu items are carefully prepared in each local kitchen using fresh ingredients.



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Overview

All of Sbarro's corporate-owned stores run on the same point-of-sale (POS) system. This system tracks all customer transaction data, including every item sold, the location, time, the employee who sold it, the price, and promotional or bundling information. Additionally, the POS system tracks employee data such as clock-in and clock-out times, and inventory data such as the amount of cheese and flour on hand, as well as the cost associated with the inventory items.

The variety of transactional data generated by the POS systems has the potential to provide Sbarro's management team with a broad array of insights. In fact, all of the detailed transactional data from every corporate store's POS system is replicated to Microsoft SQL Server maintained by Sbarro's Application Systems team.

A series of reports that the team created in SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) are then updated with the data from the previous day, providing information on sales, cost of sales, inventory status, and other topics. These reports are then sent out to corporate executives, vice presidents and directors of operations, and store managers.

Customer Quote

"They were so excited! They asked to see different views of the reports and in just a few clicks, we had a completely new view. The response was overwhelming!" said Ms. White.



The Business Challenge

Although the SSRS reports provided great insight into store-level activity and sales, they were static and could only display the view they were created with. If an executive wanted to compare sales between two regions, he had to ask the Application Systems team to create a new report and wait for that request to be completed.

In addition to SSRS, the Application Systems team was also supporting a well-known Business Intelligence (BI) product from another major software vendor. Wanting to leverage their investment in this product, the team began using it to create interactive reports. However, they soon discovered that this would not work well for their needs.

Once the data from the previous day was available in SQL Server, it kicked off a process to extract the data into a text file to be loaded into Sbarro's existing BI system. Unfortunately, the lengthy extract process delayed the availability of reports significantly.

The team also struggled with any requests which required changes to the underlying data presentation structure. Since a traditional database structure was not being used, it was difficult to work with and less flexible. One change request required a number of modifications to be made in the existing application. "This made it difficult to be creative and display the data in a format the users liked," says Camille White, Director of Application Systems for Sbarro. What the business decision-makers really needed was more flexible and interactive access to current information.

The Solution: Strategy Companion's Analyzer™

Camille White joined Sbarro just as the reporting problem reached its peak. The exasperated executives' first order for Ms. White was to find an interactive reporting tool that worked. "There were no formal business requirements, but I knew from the complaints they needed quick access, the ability to make changes easily, and a way to share views with other team members," says Ms. White.

As she and her team members searched for a solution, they considered both trying to develop something in house and finding a pre-built solution. Knowing the difficulty of creating an application from scratch and the limited availability of resources, Ms. White and her team decided to narrow the search and look for a pre-built reporting and analysis tool. "We sell pizza first and foremost. We are not an IT company," says Ms. White.

The team knew they needed a solution that would leverage the data they had on SQL Server without the need to replicate. They also needed a tool that gave users the flexibility to easily change the reporting views by slicing and dicing the data, drilling down, filtering, and creating visualizations of the information, such as interactive charts and graphs.



Analyzer™ was able to provide Sbarro's decision-makers with what they really needed - interactive and flexible access to current data.

Using the Internet in their search, they quickly discovered Strategy Companion's Analyzer. From the Strategy Companion website, they were able to download a trial version of Analyzer. In no time at all, the Application Systems team created a demo version for the executives to preview. "They were so excited! They asked to see different views of the reports and in just a few clicks, we had a completely new view. The response was overwhelming!" said Ms. White. The decision to use Analyzer was easily made.

As the team prepared to set up Analyzer, they asked Strategy Companion if they could recommend a consultant to help configure SQL Server Analysis Services. The team at Strategy Companion was able to refer a local partner to help with implementation. In addition, this consultant also trained the Sbarro application developer, helping him understand the hardware and software requirements, as well as how to configure SQL Server Analysis Services and how to build reports using Analyzer.

The project took three months from start to finish and most of that work was spent on the backend. The consultant and the team decided to acquire and set up new hardware. Then they needed to set up a new database, configure Analysis Services, and build and test reports. Sbarro launched their new Analyzer system to their Directors of Operations in January of 2010 and completed a full rollout to the field by May of 2010.

Now all of the data coming from the POS systems at the corporate-owned stores can be accessed in Analyzer directly through SQL Server. The team created basic reports in Analyzer that users interact with and customize to suit their needs. These reports show transactions down to the item level, including hundreds of menu items that can now be analyzed individually. They are able to look at average price and cost of these items, as well as understand sales by hours in the day. They are most excited to have easy and quick access to sales data as they try out new recipes and test new product and promotional concepts.

Analyzer has opened up new areas for analysis, too. With the employee data, the HR team can evaluate employee turnover. This is something they haven't been able to easily do in the past. Citing an early win, Ms. White says that with Analyzer, executives were able to see a key opportunity for more business and quickly react to it. These kinds of wins only made Sbarro's executives and managers more interested in utilizing the system, and user adoption has continued to grow.

"We now have over 100 users interacting with reports in Analyzer. They are thrilled to be able to follow their thought process, make changes to their report view, and easily analyze data in ways they've never been able to before!" says Ms. White.

At Sbarro, slicing data is now as easy as slicing pizza pie.

Analyzer™ Features

- Support for multiple data sources including Excel, Access, Oracle, SQL Server, MySQL, relational tables, SQL Server Analysis Services - Tabular xVelocity in-memory and multidimensional cubes
- Mobile BI support for iPads, iPhones, Android smartphones and tablets, BlackBerry smartphones and tablets, Windows Phone 7, and MS Surface
- Powerful and intuitive BI analysis with an easy to use drag-and-drop interface
- 100% zero-footprint browser client containing multiple reports and dashboards
- No special OLAP or MDX knowledge or coding of any kind is required
- Instant report drilldown, filtering, slicing, dicing, and much more
- Wide choice of advanced analytical capabilities
- Advanced visualizations ranging from 3D charts to color themes, heat maps, and more
- Dynamic, interactive analytic charts featuring 2D/3D, chart drilldown, optional linking to pivot tables, zoom-in/out, custom color palettes

