Achieving Business Agility Through Data Virtualization

Keeping Up With Constant Change

Pfizer is the world’s largest research-based pharmaceutical company. The company applies science and global resources to improve health and well-being through the discovery, development, and manufacturing of medicines for humans and animals.

PharmSci, a group responsible for enabling which drugs Pfizer will bring to market, has a complex portfolio of projects that is constantly changing. The team needed an easy and simple method for obtaining information that allows people to make informed decisions on resource allocation.

Complex Project Portfolio

A diverse set of information needs to be put together to give the executives on the project team a full picture of the project portfolio including:
- Financial data
- Project data
- People data
- Pharmaceutical compounds data
- Project planning and scheduling data

This data is created and managed by different applications, e.g., project planning, financial tracking and resource management.

The Need for Speed

When Dr. Michael Linhares, Ph.D. and Research Fellow, joined the team, there was little in the way of effective information integration. “The process was very spreadsheet-centric and involved a lot of manual steps. We needed a solution that would allow us to pull information together in an agile way,” said Linhares.

Information Integration Requirements

To be successful, the solution to these data integration and reporting problems had to provide:
- A single, integrated view of all data sources.
- A flexible data federation/virtualization layer independent of changes on front-end and back-end management.
- A platform that supported fast, iterative development, allowing continuous process improvement.

Composite Software Data Virtualization Platform Selected

Pfizer’s solution is a federated data delivery framework implemented with the Composite Data Virtualization Platform. Data virtualization enables the integration of all PharmSci data sources into a single reporting schema of information that can be accessed by all front-end tools and users.

The Pfizer PharmSci Data Virtualization Solution Architecture is shown in Figure 1.

Powerful Features Drive Agility

These Composite features helped support the project goals:
- Ease of use in uniting data from multiple disparate data sources
- Superior speed for lite transformations
- Solution performance benefits from caching
- Rapid prototyping capabilities by showing sample result sets during model builds

Results

The most important factor contributing to the success of PharmSci is the agility and flexibility of the data virtualization architecture. New sources can be added quickly and combined with other data to provide the customer with information in the appropriate context. The ability to rapidly prototype solutions and provide results in a timeframe relevant to the customer is also key.

The implementation enabled:
- 90% reduction in time to create a new report using the data abstraction layer.
- 1000% faster time-to-value for new views and applications for the business on an annual budget that totals several $100,000’s.
- 200% ROI in three months elapsed time of the Composite Data Virtualization Platform solution use.
- 100% increase in key business analyst productivity by reducing the wasted effort of creating manual spreadsheets for one-time, non-recurring data integration projects.
- 5% improvement in Research and Development project delivery through faster deployment of strategic planning information to key line-of-business senior executives and managers.

Composite Software, Inc., is the data virtualization gold standard. www.compositesw.com