

Redwood Business Solutions

Making web-based report distribution a reality.

At A Glance

Industry

- Media

Environment

- IT based on VMS, NT and UNIX
- VISTA Publishing Intelligence
- author2reader® from VISTA
- Cognos Business Intelligence Tools

Key Challenges

- Administrative nightmare when new reports were requested
- Home-grown tool lacked functionality
- Too many copies of large reports were printed

The Solution

- Publishing of all documents to a central secure Web server
- Highly automated report viewing system that allows staff to access, view and if necessary, print documents

Key Benefits

- Vastly reduced printing costs
- Faster, easier report distribution - formerly the job of one FTE IT Administrator to control
- Reports are automatically archived and available - easy to compare two different days
- Savings on end-user licenses for the viewing of OLAP generated reports



A world of information at Elsevier Science

Leading international publisher, Elsevier Science, is undertaking a large-scale modernization of its order processing system incorporating Redwood Software's enterprise information delivery solution, Report2Web, as the vehicle for report distribution. This solution was chosen to allow users worldwide to gain rapid access to business-critical corporate reports.



As the Science division of world leading publisher Reed Elsevier, Elsevier Science is the market leader in the publication and distribution of scientific, technical and medical literature to research libraries and professionals. The company currently operates in eight countries worldwide and employs 3,000 staff. As part of the company's corporate drive towards deploying Internet and Intranet technology, it recently embarked on a project using Redwood Software's Report2Web to interface with VISTA International's author2reader applications framework and Publishing Intelligence solution, and replace Elsevier's in-house report viewing system.

business critical system. It is used for processing all orders and controlling our product distribution. A project to implement author2reader, VISTA's new applications framework, was initiated and this prompted us to also consider the way we were distributing essential corporate documents around the world."

"Most staff only need to view corporate information and do not require any analysis functionality. With Report2Web, the reports can be made available to staff via the Intranet."

Mark Herring
Systems Engineering Consultant,
Elsevier Science



Mark Herring, Systems Engineering Consultant at Elsevier Science, outlined the needs for the project: "VISTA is our most

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Administrative Headaches

The VISTA system is critical to Elsevier Science's continued success. The system generates hundreds of documents including invoices, statements and monthly financial reports ranging in length from 1 page to 30,000 pages. These reports are supplemented by the Publishing Intelligence solution, a powerful business intelligence tool specifically designed for analysis of the business critical information contained within a publisher's systems. Once the information is compiled and extracted via Publishing Intelligence, the generated reports and documents are then distributed to up to two hundred employees all over the world. At the time, Elsevier had no standard method for mass report distribution; procedures included both printing centrally and distributing by post, and electronic distribution via ad-hoc in-house procedures.

Herring explains: "One of our report distribution systems did provide online terminal-based electronic viewing of reports but it was a bit archaic. More and more staff wanted access to the reports though and the in-house system was unable to meet their demands."

This ad-hoc report distribution system had evolved within the company over a period of years. The system was unstructured and user-driven, and as a consequence, staff were compiling personal report archives and stockpiling paper reports needlessly. This system also provided no way of ensuring that data was quickly available to everyone who wanted access to it.

The procedure for distributing reports was becoming an administrative nightmare for Elsevier Science. Whenever a member of staff requested a copy of a document valuable time was spent locating, reprinting and redistributing the report to someone who perhaps only needed access to a few pages out of the entire 30,000 page document. Elsevier Science recognized the need to incorporate a new, improved information distribution system

together with its plans to implement author2reader and Publishing Intelligence.

Moving Information Distribution Forward

Having considered the deployment of a solution over a number of years, Elsevier Science began the search for a report viewing tool and an improved report distribution solution. The company needed a solution that could store the information generated by the company's disparate platforms and make it readily available to staff globally in an electronic format - ideally using a Web front-end.

The company also wanted to avoid the need to visit individual user desktops or carry out extensive user training when implementing the chosen solution. A key priority to Elsevier Science was that every member of staff could benefit from the right level of access to its corporate information from anywhere in the world. However, the large-scale, long-term implementation project required to install a chosen solution on desktops in five countries worldwide was clearly not feasible. A low-cost, centralized deployment was essential, as was creating one central management system to allow the company to carry out any system alterations or problem solving procedures from the UK.

An existing relationship with Redwood Software and the opportunity to become its UK pilot site for a new enterprise information delivery solution led Elsevier Science to Report2Web. The solution met all the company's requirements with implementation taking place extremely quickly. "Report2Web was up and running almost immediately. We were particularly impressed by the Redwood Software documentation which meant that installation took place without any problems. Any minor problems which followed were quickly resolved by the excellent support team at Redwood Software," said Herring.

Report2Web is now installed on an NT server and provides a highly automated report viewing system that allows staff to access, view and if necessary, print documents stored in the central repository. Users are also able to identify and download only those sections of a document that they want to see, avoiding the need to print every page. With faster, easier information distribution, Elsevier Science expects to make substantial savings.

Additional Business Benefits

Part of the new VISTA system will see Publishing Intelligence rolled out for key members of staff. Publishing Intelligence uses Online Analytical Processing technologies (OLAP) and has been developed by VISTA using Cognos Business Intelligence tools. Prior to Report2Web, Elsevier Science was considering the purchase of Cognos client tools for each member of staff who needed access to Publishing Intelligence reports. Herring explains: "Most staff only need to view corporate information and do not require any analysis functionality. With Report2Web, the reports can be made available to staff via the Intranet." Elsevier Science now only installs Publishing Intelligence on those computers that require the additional functionality to manipulate reports and drill down. The company is also introducing Report2Web's additional document viewing functionality as part of its change management system. With 80 to 100 different forms globally, ranging from letter templates to invoices and statements, the approval process involved with making any changes to forms was handled manually. With Report2Web in place, staff will have an electronic system to view documents to see where and when changes have been made.

Herring concluded: "Report2Web has a bright future with Elsevier Science. Once the system is fully rolled-out, we are confident that our goal of company-wide information sharing will be within reach."