

Redwood Business Solutions

Making web-based report distribution a reality.

At A Glance

Industry

- Education

Environment

- Sun Solaris for the Oracle based applications
- Intel based server (2 x Xeon 2.8 GHz processors; 2GB memory; 80GB disk space)
- Oracle Applications (Financials, HR, Payroll) 11.5.9
- Windows 2000 Advanced Server

Key Challenges

- High costs incurred with printing and decollation of print files
- Delays incurred through manual distribution of month end reports

The Solution

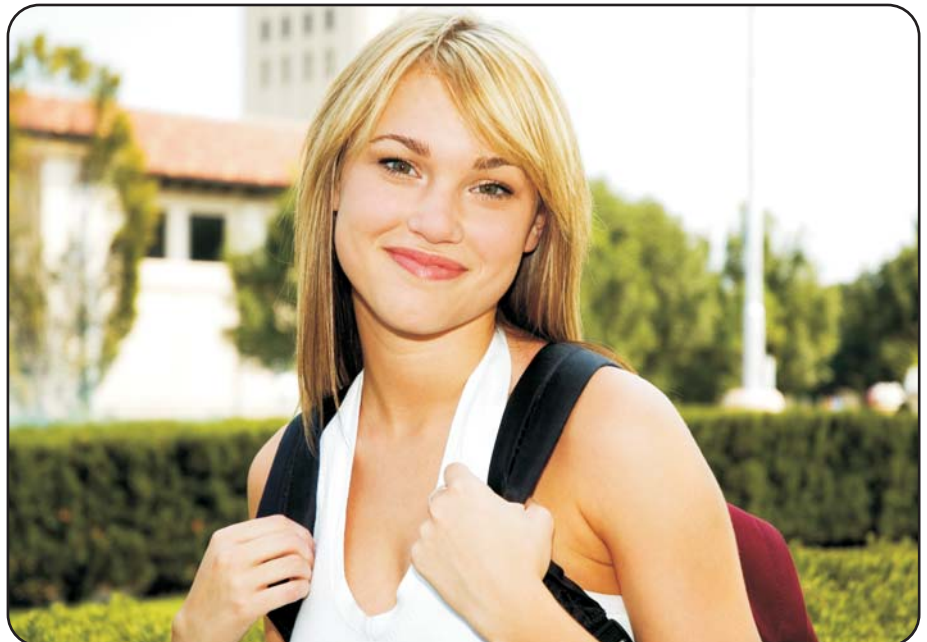
- Web publishing of Oracle Applications reports
- Automate splitting and delivery of output files
- Electronic Excel spreadsheet conversion

Key Benefits

- Improved delivery time of management reports
- Reduced printing & distribution costs
- Eliminated human overheads associated with manual decollation

Imperial College London Discovers Report2Web And Makes Measurable Savings

After Imperial College replaced their non year 2000 compliant Finance system and legacy HR/Payroll systems with Oracle Applications, their key objective was to reduce the volume of financial reports being produced. Report2Web enabled the College to deliver financial information in a timely manner and make measurable savings.



Founded in 1907, Imperial College is a world leading science-based university whose reputation for excellence in teaching and research attracts 12,000 students and 8,000 staff of the highest international quality. Innovative research at the College explores the interface between science, medicine, engineering and management and delivers practical solutions that enhance the quality of life and the environment - underpinned by a dynamic enterprise culture. Famous names associated with the College include: T H Huxley, one of the greatest scientists of the 19th century; the author H G Wells; and Sir Alexander Fleming and Sir Ernst Chain, discoverers of penicillin.

Imperial College is consistently rated in the top three UK university institutions. With a large student population working alongside administrative, research and lecturing staff, there are huge challenges

managing and maintaining the diverse range of budgets and grants that support the College on a daily basis.

With the impending millennium deadline and legacy systems struggling to provide the necessary financial information, Imperial College implemented a suite of Oracle Applications that offered integrated accounting services to budget holders throughout the institution. Finance administrators and project

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Chris Metcalfe
Head of Technical Solutions,
Imperial College



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managers monitor progress through monthly status reports. They relied upon information contained in the 3,000 individual output files that are generated in a typical month. Decollating and distributing this information to its intended recipients was a major headache.

Oracle Applications Information Distribution Challenge

Chris Metcalfe, Head of Technical Solutions at Imperial College, explains the problem: "Our users had become used to receiving paper-based reports from the legacy systems, and this continued after we implemented the Oracle based applications. In a typical month we were creating 400,000 pages of output. All of this needed to be sorted, printed and distributed which was time consuming for the IT department, especially when some reports as large as 300 pages had to be decollated manually for individual recipients. Getting these reports delivered to the people who needed to see them

was a very manual process which resulted in significant delays in getting the reports to the end users."

"Imperial College needed to find a more efficient way of communicating this information. We were able to make changes to our data gathering and Oracle reporting processes which made report production much quicker but we had not resolved how we might overcome the printing and distribution problems until a Report2Web CD turned up in the post one day. This was a fully operational version of the product which demonstrated its capabilities with a variety of report formats. I was immediately interested because it offered a completely different approach to solving our report distribution problems."

Report2Web was easily and successfully installed and soon demonstrating how it could benefit Imperial College. "With end users dispersed across eight geographic locations, we wanted to give users a web-based interface to view their reports. Ease of use was important; as was web browser neutrality. This was one of the few times when the decision to purchase was easy, there was no hesitation in deciding to buy Report2Web. The product met our needs. It resolved the problems we were having with paper distribution and more..." comments Metcalfe.

"With the introduction of Report2Web we now have over 1,600 users, compared to only 300 direct recipients of the paper reports. Direct distribution using Report2Web has resulted in a huge saving for the College."

Reduced Print Delivery Costs

Report2Web has enabled Imperial College to consolidate the number of reports that they distribute to end users from 3,000 to 1,200. Using Report2Web's Burster technology, the high level reports are broken up automatically for distribution to individual budget holders. Not only has this eliminated manual decollation but

has also reduced the time taken to distribute the reports to about 12 hours. End user feedback has been very positive. Text based searching across files reduces the amount of time it takes to find specific pieces of information. Excel spreadsheet conversion enables figures from reports to be automatically pulled into workbooks. In addition users like the fact that the solution offers a high level of security, which allows or restricts access to financial information depending on the recipient.

"We've seen huge improvements with Report2Web. Our users can now see the month end reports the same day they are created. Email notification makes sure that they know there is a new report to look at the moment it's published" comments Metcalfe.

"Since we moved onto a solely web-based distribution solution, the return on our investment in Report2Web has been less than 12 months. We used to spend £35,000 a year on printing services. This saving combined with reduced delivery, storage and a significant reduction in staffing costs means that Report2Web has more than paid for itself."

Scaling to Match Future Business Needs

At the moment Report2Web is used to distribute reports to over 1,600 end users. This audience is scheduled to expand significantly in the near future as Imperial College finds other applications where they can replace paper based distribution with electronic report publishing. Metcalfe has no doubts about Report2Web's capability of handling the additional volumes: "We've just upgraded our Report2Web server platform to improve the service to our 1,600 users. We already have over 900,000 reports online and anticipate this load growing significantly. We have no doubts that Report2Web will be more than capable of scaling to handle our future demands."