



StatSlice Helps Cantex, Inc., Upgrade QlikView and Provides Training for the Long-term Viability of a Critical System

The Background – Upgrades and Improvements Needed for Existing Business Intelligence Systems

Cantex, Inc. is a national manufacturer serving the utility and building construction industry. In their market, no core competency is of higher importance than that of efficient and consistent production. The goal: combine strong production with effective sales and marketing—all while maintaining desired profit margins. Given a large product line and wide geographic base of customers with varying needs, the challenges of managing the sales and production processes at Cantex are complex and require optimal data availability and analytics.

Data from production, shipping, and sales, without the proper data management structure, quickly became unmanageable and posed significant challenges for decision-makers. These managers are trying to interpret and analyze key performance indicators in the context of business dimensions such as **who** (which seller, which customer), **what** (which product, which product line), **where** (location of production, location of customer), and **when** (date of sale, date due).

Over five years ago, the company chose QlikView as the core business intelligence platform to support the management of its most critical business functions. The implementation was successful and played a significant role in helping business leaders to manage and measure their critical business processes. In fact, the deployment of this system was so straightforward that the system required very little maintenance and additional development in the ensuing years. It simply pulled critical data in and produced the requisite answers for decision-maker questions on a daily basis.

The Challenge

Their installed version of QlikView was several releases behind and they needed its new features and solutions. But it was integral in their day-to-day operations and downtime was a worry. In addition, their business had changed and they needed a new and better implementation to improve their business information and analysis.

The Solution

StatSlice was brought in, based on their experience in similar situations, to help the IT team upgrade, deploy the new systems, build new data management schemes where needed, and train company staff on how to fully utilize the new systems.

The Result

The upgrades went off without any problems and within time deadlines and budgets. Usability and response times improved. The training programs were helpful to utilize the system fully.

Industry

Manufacturing for Utilities and Construction Industry

For a while the QlikView platform faithfully served its mission with very little tweaking and tinkering. However, concerns were starting to surface...

- The QlikView system was now running several versions behind the latest release and was soon to be an unsupported product version by QlikView
- Some aspects of the business had changed, necessitating modifications to existing dashboards, plus entirely new ones, to accurately reflect current business realities
- The powerful and exciting new capabilities of QlikView were not being utilized

Faced with the importance of maintaining the health and viability of this strategic information system, their IT Director knew that an upgrade of QlikView and its supporting hardware would be required. He also understood the need to provide training to his team in order to use the new features and to also take some time to evaluate how the existing dashboards could be improved to better serve the business.

They carefully considered overall system performance requirements, the company's ability to operate at a more rigorous pace, and the abilities of the right consulting partner. Upon meeting with StatSlice, they outlined the necessary work and his criteria for success:

- Upgrade specifications and plans for optimal server hardware, operating system version and settings, QlikView installation prerequisites, and the expected workload
- An upgrade project plan to include preparation steps, outage estimates, and backup plans
- Training plans and delivery based on an agreed-upon list of learning topics
- Concepts and outline for a two-day training session with the technical team
- Additional recommendations for implementing new functionality based on the current state of the business and the new capabilities of the upgraded software

Success would be measured by faster user response times, a timely and on budget plan execution, adequate training, and a roadmap for future dashboard changes.

The StatSlice Approach and Solution

Though upgrades and training may not be at the top of the "most critical projects list" for the average company, the StatSlice consultants found the situation to present several challenges which made this issue very important. With the QlikView software running several years behind, there was no guarantee that the migration would flow seamlessly to the new software version. The probability of potential synchronization issues was high.

In addition, the existing system played a critical role in daily sales activities, leading to pressure to keep downtime to a few hours or less. To mitigate these risks, StatSlice consultants chose an approach that would move the upgrade process along quickly through an ambitious but safe methodology. It would be tricky—the QlikView software must be upgraded, data sources must be identified and converted, then connect all this to the supported business operations, and finally show the executives that everything worked as desired. StatSlice consultants built a project plan that incorporated lessons learned from similar situations and had the experience to work through everything that arose.

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The Results – Trouble-free Upgrade and New System Enhancements

The carefully orchestrated QlikView upgrade took place without any issues. The updated systems were delivered within the allocated time frame and budget. The window of downtime was small and did not result in any negative impact on day-to-day business operations. Response times on the new system were significantly faster.

Cantex knew they were missing out on some significant upside by not having the latest versions and synching these improvements with the rest of their business. They chose StatSlice because of their experience in helping businesses get the most from their business intelligence and analytics tools. StatSlice was the one-stop shop for QlikView upgrading, enhancing, implementing and training.

About StatSlice

StatSlice is a strategic data services consulting firm headquartered in Dallas, Texas specializing in data warehousing and business analytics. Strategic data services include the skills, processes, technologies, applications, and practices used to support business decision-making. They have a highly dedicated consulting organization with a reputation for excellent customer service and measurable success in implementation. They promote an environment that encourages resourcefulness, innovation, and creativity without sacrificing results. They continually stay on the cutting edge of the latest BI challenges and principles and are the team for your most challenging projects.

For More Information

For more information about StatSlice Systems products and services, call (214) 206-9290 or email us at info@statslice.com. Please visit us at <http://www.statslice.com>