

Biblionet Groningen Provides 66 Libraries Instant Access to Volumes of Reports with Datawatch|ES

Biblionet Groningen, a library organisation made up of 66 localized public libraries serving all the residents in Groningen Netherlands, selected Datawatch|ES for its enterprise reporting and data analysis needs.

The Service and Knowledge Centre in the city of Groningen supports the libraries of Groningen with a number of services from personnel management to educational support and the purchase of media to financial administration. Biblionet Groningen develops new products, services and concepts as a result of internal and external developments and the outcome of market research. Approximately 80 people work at the Service and Knowledge Centre.

Biblionet Groningen delivers services to more than 400 institutions, covering schools, community centres, hospitals, healthcare and prisons.

All the libraries have some reporting and analysis requirements in common:

- Visitor numbers: Flexibly measured over different time scales.
- Demographics: Are the visitors juniors, adults or seniors?
- Geography: Do visitors use the closest facility or travel further afield?
- Loans: Flexible measurement of statistics on object (book, CD, DVD, video etc.) loans over differing time periods.
- Object sharing: Which objects are being loaned from one library to another?
- Returns and fines: How many people are late paying their fine for returning a book late?
- Accounts: Debt control reporting for late return fines etc.
- Book turnover: e.g. which books have not been loaned out for more than 2 months?

TIME TO END COSTLY MANUAL PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS

Historically, the reports were being requested by each library for the required time scale. The reports would then be manually printed and distributed to each library by road, on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Biblionet Groningen wanted to replace this time consuming, labour intensive, procedure with a solution that would allow them to provide all 66 libraries instant access to their reports. In addition, they wanted to offer a facility to filter and summarise according to the individual library's own requirements, plus the ability to download the reports into Excel, or save as a PDF. Biblionet Groningen also had the requirement to make certain reports available to libraries by e-mail notification.

Hans van Dijk, Biblionet Groningen's head of Information & Communications Technology, taking all of these factors into account, decided he should research into report mining tools that worked with text-based reports, rather than relational databases. He also required a browser-based solution, so that all report viewing and administration could be carried out via a web interface.

THE REPORT WAREHOUSE ALTERNATIVE

Hans, whilst investigating Datawatch's desktop Monarch report mining software, found Datawatch|ES which is a "report warehouse" solution, with Monarch technology embedded within. This solution fully answered Biblionet's service needs: report mining on text-based reports via the web. Another key reason for Biblionet's decision to proceed with Datawatch|ES was the subscription pricing which enabled Hans to remain within his budget



"I believe the adoption of ES will play a key role in helping Biblionet Groningen to fully achieve its role as an effective and efficient Service and Knowledge Centre."

Hans van Dijk,
Head of Information
& Communications
Technology, Biblionet
Groningen

restrictions, without compromising on facilities. Hans contacted Datawatch after being impressed with what he read about the solution on their web site. Soon thereafter, Biblionet purchased Datawatch|ES.

REPORTS FROM VUBIS TRANSFORMED DIRECTLY INTO EXCEL

"Our main library systems is called VUBIS," stated Hans van Dijk. "This is a product of GEAC, a worldwide vendor of library systems. The reports that come out of this system are text based reports which are perfect for Datawatch|ES solution to mine, providing us with a very flexible solution. The ES Spreadsheet module transforms report data into a live Microsoft Excel file and will allow us to incorporate data, from external database tables or views, into a report. As the solution fully supports Excel templates and all the features of Excel, it means we have the ability to load data using pre-defined templates, to take full advantage of pivot tables, charts, multi-sheet workbooks, macros and so on."

Biblionet Groningen signed up to a subscription deal for Datawatch|ES Base package with 5 concurrent users, ES Spreadsheet, the ES Subscription notifications module (which alerts users via automatic e-mail when a new report has been stored in Datawatch|ES, with a hyperlink to the new report), Maintenance and 2 days consulting for installation. Datawatch|ES was completely customised and become the standard portal for Biblionet and all its libraries.

Hans van Dijk continued, "The enterprise subscription pricing option was an attractive alternative for our library. It ensured that this area of our IT costs became predictable, and didn't require a large initial payment that would have exceeded our current budget levels. It was yet another positive factor that led us to adopt the Datawatch|ES enterprise reporting system, and enabled us to start using the product, without waiting for new budgets."

DATAWATCH|ES OFFERS BIBLIONET KEY BENEFITS

Datawatch|ES will now provide the reporting distribution platform for the local libraries, where they'll find all the necessary information about their business. Datawatch|ES simplifies the process of information delivery quite drastically. The electronic web report portal significantly improves the delivery time and lowers the costs as it replaces the physical distribution. Biblionet have estimated they will also save a part time job, making the return-on-investment even faster and more obvious. In addition, ES will bring some extra capabilities to the end users, allowing them to select subsets of data. It will also offer more analysis functions to allow them to better utilise the findings. This information will ultimately provide the best information when investigating operational and service improvements in the libraries. The use of models allows Biblionet to be very flexible and decreases the manual processing to an absolute minimum.

Biblionet have now decided to form a Management Information Team (MIT), which will advise on management reports. The existing reporting systems didn't allow them to combine information from different systems. Some of these reporting systems were also lacking possibilities to create summaries that would have allowed the user to look at the information from a different perspective. Additionally, historical information was not always stored and available for analysis. The MIT will act as a consultancy body, defining which information should be made available to the library managers, so they can make effective business decisions. Key performance indicators will be defined in addition to targets.

"We left the subscription option and bought the software on a regular basis after three months," concluded Hans. "Datawatch|ES will help us address the above issues allowing report consolidation, report summaries, archiving and the joining of information coming from different sources. I believe the adoption of ES will play a key role in helping Biblionet Groningen to fully achieve its role as an effective and efficient Service and Knowledge Centre."



Information Made Easy™

www.datawatch.com

© 2004 Datawatch Corporation. Datawatch|ES is a trademark of Datawatch Corporation. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners.