

Foster's Group Limited Aligns Global Business Operations, Financials to Support Global Growth



Foster's Group Limited
Melbourne, Australia
www.fosters.com.au

Industry:

Consumer Products

Annual Revenue:

US\$3.7 billion

Employees:

6,200

Oracle Products & Services:

Hyperion Financial Data
Quality Management
Hyperion Enterprise

Key Benefits:

- Reduced time required to enter monthly trial balances in small business units from three days to 10 seconds
- Reduced database size by 75%, from 10 GB to 2.5 GB
- Loaded top 100 brands into system for detailed global reporting
- Reduced size of data extract from 90,000 lines of data to 4,500 lines of data
- Streamlined acquisition reporting and integration process
- Eliminated multiple spreadsheet templates and staging modules

"Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management has truly streamlined our financial processes, making it possible to quickly integrate new acquisitions and spin off companies that no longer fit our strategy. These capabilities are critical to our finance staff." – James Hicks, Business Reporting Project Manager, Foster's Group Limited

Foster's Group Limited is a global multi-beverage company, delivering a diverse portfolio of premium beer, wine, spirits, cider, and non-alcoholic beverages. The company employs more than 11,000 people worldwide and produces the world's most famous Australian beer: Foster's Lager. Foster's supplies more than 38,000 customers—ranging from wholesalers and importers to restaurants—in the Asia-Pacific region; owns an extensive California wine portfolio; and sells six million cases of beer in the Americas annually.

Seeking to increase its global market share through strategic acquisitions and strong business performance, Foster's required a system that would enhance its internal controls and deliver a more consistent reporting process. Using Oracle's Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management, Foster's created a system that enabled the company to minimize data integrity risks and standardize its reporting processes.

Seeking Global Advantage

In addition to accounting for one-third of Australia's alcoholic beverage sales, Foster's is committed to becoming the world's leading premium-branded beverage company. To that end, Foster's recently launched Project Vivify to unite the company worldwide as a single team with a common high-performance culture.

"An overall goal of Vivify was to standardize and simplify," said James Hicks, business reporting project manager, Foster's Group Limited. "We planned to re-write our chart of accounts to reflect the changing ways in which we do business. And we wanted to

“Hyperion solutions have saved a lot of time for senior finance staff in our various divisions. Now that there’s one standard way of doing things, they can redirect themselves from report assembly to strategic decision-making.”

James Hicks
Business Reporting Project
Manager
Foster’s Group Limited

enable brand and category reporting while also making sure that different divisions were reporting in a consistent way.”

Less Manipulation, More Time for Analysis

The addition of Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management has dramatically increased the efficiency of Foster’s data transfer activities, allowing more time for analysis. The Hyperion business intelligence application pulls data from regional data warehouses and legacy general ledgers, validates it automatically, and then loads it into the database.

The results are noticeable. Small business units that previously spent three days manually entering monthly trial balances are now able to load them automatically within 10 seconds. A division that pulled 90,000 lines of ledger data to produce monthly reports now pulls just 4,500 lines of data. In addition, Foster’s has reduced its database size from 10 gigabytes to 2.5 gigabytes—despite loading its top 100 brands into Hyperion for brand reporting.

“Oracle’s Hyperion solutions have saved a lot of time for senior finance staff in our various divisions,” Hicks said. “Now that there’s one standard way of doing things, they can redirect themselves from report assembly to strategic decision making.”

Mergers Made Easy

With mergers and divestitures continuing to play a key role in Foster’s growth strategy, Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management enables Foster’s to quickly incorporate the financials of newly acquired companies. In 2005, Hyperion helped streamline the company’s acquisition of Southcorp Limited—the company’s largest acquisition to date.

“Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management will help us to quickly integrate new acquisitions and spin off companies that no longer fit our strategy,” Hicks said. “These capabilities are critical to our finance staff. The Southcorp acquisition was probably the largest our company has ever done, but we mapped in its entities exactly the way we wanted.”

Detailed Reports Give Executives Confidence

Foster’s has used its new Hyperion platform to standardize reporting processes and to enable reporting by region as well as by brand. A single chart of accounts ensures consistent definitions and accurate reporting across the enterprise.

“Two years ago, our monthly board finance report consisted of two double-sided pages of financials,” Hicks said. “With our enhanced Hyperion suite, we produce detailed documents that include KPI monitoring as well as brand reporting on our top 10 brands globally. Our executives are now much more comfortable going into quarterly business review meetings knowing that the financials are reported consistently both at the divisional level and at the group level.”

Why Oracle?

Oracle’s Hyperion applications enable Foster’s finance employees to drill down to see the accounts that make up any Hyperion account number. This greater transparency of data is enabling faster, richer analysis across the company.

“Our accountants have embraced Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management because it lets them do things they could never do before,” said Malcolm Pulling, Group Hyperion & FDM Administrator, Foster’s Group Limited. “Before, they were constantly referring back to other spreadsheets as they loaded information into Hyperion Enterprise. Now they can just open a PDF report to see where their figures came from.”

Implementation Process

Foster’s anticipates that its new chart of accounts will ease compliance with increasingly stringent global financial standards. Once Foster’s fully rolls out Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management, its management team will audit the company from the top down with full knowledge of every number’s origin.

“Our goal is to standardize on Oracle’s Hyperion applications so that no one has to manipulate data in Hyperion Enterprise,” Hicks said. “That could eliminate the need for local audits. Even when we transition to Hyperion Financial Data Quality Management will continue as a critical tool for pulling information out of regional data warehouses and legacy general ledgers for reporting and analysis.”

Foster’s Group Limited owns, markets, and distributes an international portfolio of beer, wine, spirits, cider, and non-alcohol brands. Headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, Foster’s has operations in Australia, Asia and Pacific, the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Africa.