

BKB | South Africa | Agriculture | Intelligent Business Applications

BKB benefit from cutting-edge technology, enabling optimal employee, supplier, and customer service

Which technologies?

- Microsoft Power BI
- SharePoint
- Microsoft Azure
- SQL

Which services?

- Business Analysis for BI Blueprint
- Implementation and support for Power BI and SharePoint
- Mobile application development and Support
- Deployment and support of an Azure chatbot
- Deployment and Support of SQL
- Project Management

Which partners?

- Microsoft

'Dimension Data has performed extensive software and development work for us and we consider them a strategic digital partner.'

Jaco Maas, Operations
Director, BKB

Vision

Why BKB wants to bring data to the surface with the touch of a button

BKB is one of the largest agricultural products providers in Africa. Almost two thirds of South Africa's wool trade passes across BKB's floors contributing to their average annual turnover of ZAR3.5 billion.

They are in the unusual position of having their buyers and sellers often being the same people. By having a view on which products, and the volume of those products their buyers consume, as well as what those same buyers sell to them, their understanding of sales trends and sales opportunities is greatly enhanced. This is across all BKB business verticals and within different regions according to individual suppliers and/or buyers. Essentially, efficient methods of rapidly disseminating targeted information to their internal and external stakeholders were required.

By having a view on which products are sold, their corresponding volume and their prospective buyers, BKB now has a sales analysis which enables them to identify where they can grow market share across all BKB business verticals.

Transformation

How Power BI and a chatbot help BKB to take care of their customers

The BI solution provides meaningful data about BKB's financial metrics and cross-sale opportunities across their business in an instant. Self-service reporting and analytics have facilitated greater and immediate insight into business trends and more effective, quicker decision-making abilities. In addition, BKB identified a chatbot as a proficient way of swiftly allocating targeted marketing information to their various stakeholders – based on the data provided by the BI solution. Both BKB's internal and external stakeholders can find information about BKB's products and services very quickly using their chatbot.

'Using Power BI solutions residing on Azure, Dimension Data successfully enabled us to monitor meaningful financial statistics and trends in our business at the touch of a button, greatly reducing the time required to make and execute important business decisions.'

Jaco Maas, Operations
Director, BKB

Until the Power BI solution was implemented, it took almost two weeks for the key financial metrics of the organisation to be extracted from their data sources and have financial reports compiled. This information is extremely important to BKB's understanding of sales trends and sales opportunities among their businesses, in different regions and with individual buyers. Overall, it helps BKB increase cross-sales to their current customer base. Historically BKB customers have been familiar with only one or two of their hundreds of products and services which made it challenging for BKB to market a wider range of options to their customers. The development of a chatbot became a business priority for BKB as an efficient method of rapidly disseminating targeted marketing information to their stakeholders. One of the interesting uses of the chatbot is that it gives farmers the ability to schedule shearers to shear their sheep online through BKB's website.

Results

What BKB's Power BI and chatbot solution looks like

Because the BI solution enables financial reports to be pulled in an instant, the time taken to prepare management reporting was eliminated. The team continues to enhance the BI system as part of the managed services offering which has reduced the need for BKB to invest in large BI projects upfront. In addition, proactive daily checks minimize job execution errors, server downtime and the overall health of the underlying data. The online search engine via the chatbot enables internal and external customers to find BKB products and services resulting in cross-sell suggestions – increasing BKB's sales to its current customer base.

Using Microsoft tools, Dimension Data built a data warehouse which extracted the relevant data from BKB's different ERP systems. Cubes were built on top of the data warehouse with the intelligence required to extract the appropriate data for the various reports required by BKB. The data in turn was presented to users on Power BI dashboards, enabling key users to instantly access key financial metrics used by the organisation to ascertain its financial health. The cross-sell report particularly was new for BKB. The chatbot was also built using Microsoft tools.