

Using Report Automation to build your bottom line



Case Study: inVentiv Advance Insights

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The pharmaceutical industry is facing a definite tightening and decline, the industry is consolidating and there has been talk of health care reform. Like many other companies who provide specialist services to healthcare and pharmaceutical industries inVentiv Advance Insights is facing a shrinking client base. Competition for new business is rife. Research budgets are shrinking and clients are demanding more for less.

Until three years ago, we produced all of our reports manually. We first looked into report automation because of its ability to save time, but since implementing E-Tabs Enterprise we have seen the cost savings go directly to our bottom line. Outlined below are two examples detailing how we have benefited from implementing report automation and how we are utilizing it to improve our gross margin.

Project 1

inVentiv selected a classic first case to trial report automation: a project carried out for 11 different brands twice a year using our Rapid RecallSM service, to provide insight on the interaction between the sales rep and the physician. The magnitude of the reports was incredible. We were producing 2 different reports each for the 11 brands. Just one sales report was 144 pages, and the marketing report was 54 pages each time, leaving a total of 2178 PowerPoint pages that had to be produced every six months after the results were in, but before they became obsolete and it was time to start the next wave of reporting. It was an astonishing amount of work to complete in a very short time.

Before implementing report automation:

- ▶ We were spending multiple man-months per wave to manually populate, quality check and produce these final deliverables
- ▶ The resources to produce these reports utilized the entire team of staff for over a month at a time
- ▶ We were losing out on potential projects and new business because we didn't have the capacity to take on more work in our busiest months
- ▶ It was a grueling manual process. At that time we were using a crosstab package that did not have exportable data, so we were literally entering data from a paper hard copy into Power Point

After implementing report automation:

- ▶ We saved 50% of direct labor hours on the project
- ▶ We had the capacity to take on extra work and projects because we had more time and available resources
- ▶ Our reports were consistent. We were able to produce 11 different brand reports and 264 different sales regions reports spanning the 11 brands all to an exact set format
- ▶ It more than paid for our investment in the automation software in the first reporting period alone

After the success of automating our first project with E-Tabs Enterprise, we began actively looking for projects and processes where report automation would be advantageous. We received a request for a proposal to carry out a monthly tracking study across Rapid RecallSM and MPA®, our syndicated promotion tracking service, which provides insight into pharmaceutical company promotional activities by region.

Project 2

At first glance accepting the project meant we had to produce over 600 pages of reporting once a month. In fact, we had less than a month to produce the reports because after data collection the results needed to be coded, the cross tabs needed to be run and the data needed to be processed, leaving us with only 2-3 weeks in which to produce 60 reports and be ready for the next month's data, a task that was almost impossible without report automation. Furthermore we had to find available time and resources in which to add value and strategic insight to the report so that we were not just dumping data onto our clients once a month.

As is the nature of the market research industry, our client did not initially have a firm plan for exactly how they wanted their reports formatted. The process we followed before locking down the template gives us an indication of what it would have been like to produce the reports without report automation.

Before implementing E-Tabs report automation:

- ▶ We used significant man hours a month for data population alone, excluding report writing and coding
- ▶ We had data inaccuracies
- ▶ We missed deadlines
- ▶ There was a lack of consistency across reports
- ▶ The time available to add analysis and put together insightful conclusions was very limited

After implementing E-Tabs report automation:

- ▶ We saved over 60% of our man hours on data entry, populating the decks and setting up the reports
- ▶ Our reports were delivered on time every time
- ▶ The data was accurate and our reports were consistent
- ▶ We had time to add value and insight to the client's reports

Even if data entry was not a manual process, sorting the data alone would have taken time. E-Tabs Enterprise allows you to do both. We use Enterprise to sort by net and by subnets, leaving us with a descending order of nets within the subnets. We have fixed categories so we can also

ensure categories like “other” will always appear at the bottom. We found E-Tabs Enterprise to be incredibly flexible. There isn’t a chart I know of that it can’t handle.

Currently inVentiv Advance Insights produces an average of 15 reports a month. In our busiest periods since automating our reporting process we’ve produced as many as 27 reports a month. We consider ourselves heavy users of E-Tabs and the benefits we’ve experienced since automating our charts and reports have not been limited to simply saving time and money.

We’ve seen increased levels of employee satisfaction:

- ▶ Automating our reporting process has made our staff’s jobs more rewarding, more satisfying and less stressful
- ▶ Elevating staff from lower level tasks to higher level tasks has allowed them to add their thoughts and conclusions

Our clients are satisfied:

- ▶ Their reports are consistent, accurate and reliable
- ▶ We can turn around projects quickly and no longer have to turn down projects because we don’t have the resources available
- ▶ We have become more competitive
- ▶ We have the time to add value to our client’s projects providing additional analysis and insightful conclusions

We’ve seen the benefits in terms of profitability:

- ▶ We’ve had direct cost savings go directly to our bottom line, improving our gross margin
- ▶ We’ve had the capacity to take on new projects and additional clients without having to add headcount, getting more done within our existing headcount

The current state of the pharmaceutical industry has meant it’s difficult for clients to justify spending. There is no longer room for “nice to know research” and this has left many research firms in a difficult situation, balancing their need to make a return and their need to either shrink their prices or add value to client offerings in order to retain existing clients.

At InVentiv we are drawing on the efficiencies created by report automation and improving our client offerings. We recognize that it’s not the PowerPoint slide that adds value to the final report, it’s the insight and conclusions that turn that data into actionable information. It’s no longer enough to just provide the report. That report needs to be transformed into actionable information for the client. We need to ensure they get more for every penny that they are paying, and that more comes in the form of the knowledge and insight from our recommendations.

Automating our reporting process improved the accuracy of our reports and slashed project turn around times - making inVentiv more competitive. Our analysts now have more time to add valuable insight and conclusions to reports and we have seen that return in the increasing levels of client and staff satisfaction. Reports are more consistent and our clients are more secure because they already know what they can expect from us. We are developing our operating efficiencies throughout the company and we are using E-Tabs Enterprise, because as you have seen from the numbers it really does make a difference to our bottom line.

About inVentiv Advance Insights

inVentiv Health assists pharmaceutical and healthcare companies in successfully commercializing products in every step of the life cycle. Our Advance Insights multidisciplinary teams use a range of strategic planning, market analytics, research, market segmentation and managed markets strategies to build innovative solutions that address the challenges faced by our clients. Our unique ability to see the big picture has allowed us to build a roster of over 350 leading pharmaceutical, biotech, life sciences and healthcare clients including all the top 20 global pharmaceutical manufacturers.

For more information visit www.inventivhealth.com