

Reducing Year-End Reporting Time by Three Weeks using Tableau Visual Analytics



FOUNDED: 1995
 HEADQUARTERS:
 ANGERS, FRANCE
 WEBSITE:
 WWW.CPVO.EUROPA.EU

YEAR-END REPORTING
 COMPLETED
3
 WEEKS FASTER

“Yielding valuable insight every second”—that is how The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) summarizes the value of the Tableau visual analytics solution. The Angers, France-based public authority grants intellectual property protection for new plant varieties in Europe. It relies on Tableau for financial reporting business intelligence (BI) and to monitor the activities of plant breeders’ rights. Since implementing the best-in-class solution for visual analytics 18 months ago, the CPVO has reduced the time needed to prepare the year-end accounts by three weeks. The CPVO also uses intuitive mapping to visualize plant growing patterns and provide online access to public CPVO data.

Power to the plants

The CPVO, an agency of the European Union, headquartered in France, has one mission: protecting plant breeders’ rights. The agency allows intellectual property rights to be granted for plant varieties for a period of either 25 or 30 years.

The CPVO’s reporting needs covered two crucial areas of the agency: financial reporting and rights management. The CPVO needed to provide business users with self-service access to financial data and insight, no matter where the information resided. The second, longer-term need was to manage the end-to-end plant variety rights. For example, the CPVO wanted to better support breeders across the entire plant variety rights process, from application to examination and decision.

Prior to using Tableau’s visual analytics solution, the CPVO’s business intelligence was stunted. A previous implementation of

SAP Business Objects gave the organization a certain degree of insight into financial performance and outcomes. However, according to James Moran, head of the Administration Unit at the CPVO, it wasn’t very popular. “Business Objects was tough to understand,” he says. “If you changed one line item, it changed something else. Because the system was so difficult to use, it was unpopular and restricted our financial reporting.”

Tableau wins hands-down over InfoBuilders and QlikView

The choice of analytics platform quickly came down to three potential BI solutions: Tableau Software, InfoBuilders and QlikView. According to Moran, Tableau was considerably easier to use, more responsive, and more flexible than either of the other tools. “We had more control using Tableau,” he says. “The security measures mean that only people with the

“For the first time, secure, visual BI is available to everyone. Data discovery, data visualization, and powerful dashboards are all within easy reach now.”

— James Moran,
Head of Administration Unit,
CPVO

appropriate permissions get to see the data. Using QlikView it was also easy for the end-users to draw the wrong conclusions from the data.”

Live for 18 months, Tableau is used by the CPVO principally to underpin financial reporting. The best-in-class solution for visual analytics enables any member of the team to perform their own data discovery, ad-hoc analysis, and dashboard creation. Instead of relying on a small group of business intelligence specialists, the experts are now self-sufficient and get better answers more quickly.

Tableau gives the CPVO the flexibility to combine financial data from multiple sources and find new insights with quick table calculations and forecasting. Moran and his team can then share this enhanced data and quickly create their own custom dashboards in minutes with drag and drop.

“Tableau has transformed our organization,” says Moran. “In the past, financial reports and the audit process typically involved a pile of spreadsheets, auditors’ review comments, and rounding errors. Now, using Tableau we are able to reduce the time needed to prepare the year-end accounts by up to three weeks.”

Visual analytics in support of plant breeding rights

The success with financial reporting is fuelling the use of Tableau to support agile, visual BI in plant rights. Geographic data is crucially important to the CPVO, and the organization uses the geocoding

and mapping functionality to identify where fruit, vegetable, agricultural, and ornamental breeders are located and where they are potentially growing their plant species. For example, the CPVO can now quickly plan the location for a forthcoming fruit breeders’ seminar by visually identifying where the hub of breeding activity lies.

Plant breeders apply for rights that can last for up to 30 years, depending on the crop or the species. Some breeders’ rights are coming to an end; others might decide to waive their rights after a few years. Using Tableau, the CPVO has answers to questions it never knew before – such as how these rights are surrendered, how breeding activity is changing and developing in different regions and countries, and whether fruit breeding rights are usually held for longer than, say, vegetable rights.

As a public organization, the CPVO is legally obliged to publish large amounts of its financial and plant breeding data on the web. With this in mind, the organization is considering the use of Tableau Public Premium to quickly and easily share Tableau visualizations with the world and still protect the underlying data.

“Tableau yields valuable insight every second,” says Moran. “For the first time, secure, visual BI is available to everyone. Data discovery, data visualization, and powerful dashboards are all within easy reach now.”

837 N 34TH ST, STE 400
SEATTLE, WA 98103
(206) 633-3400

tableausoftware.com

