TIMEXTENDER | **ifolor.** PHOTOS FOREVER

Ifolor AG Experiences a Rebirth of Its Business Intelligence Solution

International online photo service provider, Ifolor AG, gives customers the ability to personalize and customize unique photo products. However, with growing bouts of digitalization and constant changing of sales channels, Ifolor AG required a data platform that could allow them to easily, quickly and more effectively gather important customer information.

SUPPORTING PERSONALIZED AND ELEVATED PHOTOGRAPHS

Ifolor AG was founded in 1961 as Photocolor Kreuzlingen AG, one of the first photographic laboratories that allowed customers to create photo projects from the comfort of their home. The company offers their customers tangible photo memories through their various products such as photo books and photo calendars. Since the conception of their business, Ifolor AG has gone on to become the first European photo laboratory to achieve top quality certification and has grown their customer base by giving great possibilities for photo customization, design and product ordering.

THE NEED FOR SPEED (AND EASE)

Ifolor AG's overall goal with changing their legacy business intelligence solution was to be able to work in a customer-centric way. The company wanted to find a platform that could face the challenges of the growing digitalization and, at the same time, make data and information access easier so that staff could quickly and independently make quality business decisions.

THREE RESOURCES RESULT IN ONE POWERFUL SOLUTION

A project was developed and completed with the help of three dynamic partners: the BI-specialists from IT-Logix AG, the testautomation suite BiG EVAL® from Bolt Data Solutions and the analytic platform Discovery Hub® from TimeXtender. With these resources, the project resulted in a unique and impressive result. Ifolor AG's BI team realized the full power of automation when using Discovery Hub® to quickly and efficiently handle all the repetitive work necessary to develop a data estate.

"By using data warehouse automation we succeeded with a very small team to develop an agile, future-proof BI landscape. Without automation this wasn't imaginable!"
- Sören Schubert, Project Manager BI, Ifolor AG

The implementation of this new data landscape was not the only area where automation proved to be an incredible asset. With fully automated and controlled documentation provided by Discovery Hub®, Ifolor AG is able to easily trace, manage and anonymize personally identifiable information, allowing the project team to put strong emphasis on data privacy and adhere to regulatory principles. And with data lineage and impact

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RETAIL & CONSUMER GOODS

CUSTOMER BACKGROUND
- International online provider for quality, customizable photo projects
- Actively operating in 15 countries and remains market leader in Finland and Switzerland
- Known for their simple, convenient and personalized photo project offerings

CHALLENGES
- To manage constant changing of sales channels and growing digitalization of tasks
- Updating an inefficient solution from the ground up, quickly and securely
- Being able to capitalize on customer data received and utilize it for value-adding projects

SOLUTION
- TimeXtender's Discovery Hub® was implemented to provide secure management of Ifolor AG data estate
- A new data architecture with a platform that works easily with Microsoft Stack
- Solution built with a tabular analytics model with SQL Server Analysis Services and Microsoft Power BI

BENEFITS
- High data quality in efficient release cycles
- Overview of the business and optimal foundation for managing data sources
- Stable integration of internal and external data sources
- Implementation possible in approx. half of the estimated time

analysis, the company can find where data comes from, how it is being used, and who has access to it, adding an extra level of security for sensitive customer data.

Additionally, the developers at Ifolor AG also found that their day-to-day maintenance tasks were simplified with the use of the platform, allowing them to focus their attention on more challenging data issues. Christian Kupferschmid, Head of I.T. Operations at Ifolor AG, reported that, "Having TimeXtender enables us to implement the Extract/Transfer/ Load process much quicker than what it would take if we do it manually." Improved speed in completing tasks is one important benefit that Ifolor AG's team found, but they also relished in the new freedom to work on more dynamic projects.

The testautomation suite BiG EVAL® was also a key factor in freeing developers and testers from cumbersome, repetitive manual testing tasks. Ifolor AG was able to automate several test cases that compare and validate the data of the staging area, the core data estate and the tabular model against the data of the source systems. This ensures that no records get lost, duplicated or falsified due to implementation issues in the transformation or business-logic. During the implementation and every publication of a new release, the BiG EVAL® software ensures that the functions of previous releases continue to work correctly by executing regression tests automatically.

"Developers can actually concentrate on the value-adding parts like discussing a requirement together with the stakeholders with the business for example."
- Raphael Branger, Senior BI Solution Architect, IT-Logix AG

BUILDING A FUTURE-PROOF DATA ESTATE WITH MICROSOFT BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE STACK AND DISCOVERY HUB®

"One of the prerequisites of the project was that, whenever possible, we wanted to use the Microsoft Stack", says Sören Schubert, Project Manager at Ifolor AG. "Therefore, it made sense to us that we use Power BI to give users access to self-service BI".

Since Ifolor AG already utilized Excel as a BI-tool, it was an obvious choice to enhance this with SSRS and Power BI so that there was an even stronger focus on Microsoft in the Technology stack.

The new business intelligence system landscape at Ifolor AG consists of Discovery Hub® including a modern data estate that is fed with data from a variety of underlying Microsoft Dynamics AX instances, as well as web tracking and App-Store data. On top of that, they have a tabular analytics model with SQL Server Analyses Services and Microsoft Power BI, with reporting services and Excel as front-end tools.

It was decided at a very early stage that a data architecture platform would be needed as an additional tool. TimeXtender's Discovery Hub®, with special certification in the Microsoft field, was selected as this tool.

A CONTINUOUS PARTNERSHIP

With the implementation of Discovery Hub® for their data architecture needs, Ifolor AG was able to complete a huge data overhaul, quickly and securely. With the power of automation and AI technologies, Ifolor AG has been afforded a more streamlined, simplified data analytics solution, one that allows them to best harness the quality of their important customer data.

\\ **We now have to think about difficult problems most of the time because the easy ones are already solved. By gathering all this data, I can enable all my colleagues to ask the questions and then get quality insights and make the right decisions out of that.**

- Sören Schubert, Project Manager BI, Ifolor AG

You're in good company

TimeXtender's Discovery Hub® provides companies with instant access to data, enabling them to make quality business decisions with data, mind and heart. Because time matters.

To learn more about Discovery Hub® and how the power of automation can move your business forward, visit:

www.timextender.com

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