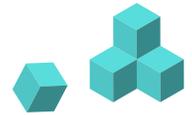


# The Co-Operative Bank Provides Accurate Reporting Across the UK



## Case study

# 3M

customer accounts

# 230

reports that were  
run manually are now  
automated

# 19

business centres  
receive fast, accurate,  
easy-to-digest reports

The  
**co-operative**  
bank

## Challenge

As part of the Co-Operative Group, The Co-Operative Bank can trace its origins back to 1872 and the formation of the Loan and Deposit Department of the Co-Operative Wholesale Society. In 1992 the Bank became the world's first bank to introduce a customer-led ethical policy, and is still the UK's only high street bank to tell its customers who it will and will not do business with.

The Co-Operative Bank currently holds more than 3 million customer accounts and offers everything from 24-hour banking via call centres, to credit cards and 'green' mortgages. It is also the bank behind smile, the first full Internet bank in the UK.

The Co-Operative Bank positions itself as a 'breath of fresh air' within the UK financial services industry for a number of reasons, not least its commitment to exceptional levels of customer service and unique, broad-ranging product portfolio. In order to maintain such competitive high standards and ensure that all customers have the best possible experience of dealing with the company, it is vital that the business's internal processes are well structured and run smoothly and efficiently.

The bank is headquartered in Manchester, England, but its operations are run out of 19 regional Corporate business centres across the UK, acting as hubs to manage the bank's core corporate customers. It is therefore essential that they have timely access to accurate information that will affect decisions made on both individual accounts and across the wider customer base.

Financial information by its very nature changes both frequently and rapidly, and so being able to continuously access and analyse the relevant data is essential if it is to be used effectively.

The ability to provide accurate reporting facilities, both ad hoc and application-based, are fundamental to the service they provide, to both customers and departments within the organisation. Providing staff with accurate and insightful information enables conclusions to be made efficiently and delivers benefits in reducing timescales on decision-based activities.

## Solution

The Co-Operative Bank has been an Information Builders (ibi) customer for more than 20 years, using ibi technology to create mainframe reports. The host-based reporting tool worked very successfully for the bank, allowing a far faster turnaround of information than was previously possible.

## The Co-Operative Bank

**Industry: Financial, Credit Union**

The Co-Operative Bank is the only UK high street bank with an ethical policy that gives customers a say in how their money is used. It has over 100 outlets in the UK and more than 3 million customer accounts.

The system, however, did not provide a distribution process for the bank – once created the reports had to be taken offline, sent to be printed, and then packed and shipped to the relevant departments. This could take up to five days from running the job to end users receiving the output.

>> **“We are seeing a remarkable increase in response time against scheduled reports. About 230 reports that used to be run manually are now run automatically and shipped out to clients. This saves staff time, but also means we can run them at ‘off peak’ times, freeing up the mainframe for more time sensitive operations.”**

**Stephen Williams, Business Information Manager, Co-operative Bank**

## Technology used

> WebFOCUS

The bank decided that it wanted to migrate to using a web-based reporting tool for greater efficiency. The ibi analytics platform provides various methods of delivering information in a timely and efficient manner. The two methodologies utilised web-based applications, or ibi’s distribution tool ReportCaster. This has considerably reduced manual processing overheads and enabled developers to concentrate on producing business critical information.

Stephen Williams, business information manager at the Co-Operative Bank explains how the firm came to choose ibi analytics platform: “Despite already having ibi in place, we were under a lot of pressure to move to SAS as they had a strong foothold in other parts of the bank. We decided however that WebFOCUS [part of ibi’s analytics platform] provided the better solution for us – SAS does not have the scheduling and distribution capability that was so important for us, and it was also never going to be an economic option. We had been working with ibi for more than 20 years so I was very confident that they would be able to deliver what we needed.”

## Benefits

The move to the ibi analytics platform went smoothly, particularly as the teams involved were already familiar with the ‘feel’ and workings of ibi. The successful transfer was supported by a bespoke training programme designed by ibi to provide appropriate and useful knowledge of the enhanced product.

The ibi analytics platform has enabled reports to be delivered directly from the mainframe in real time, in a format that is simple for end users to understand. The solution also allows the reports to be distributed via email to key staff within the Co-Operative Bank’s 19 business centres, giving them easy access to accurate, up-to-date information on a regular basis.

Reporting generally falls into two categories; firstly, event-based alerts that require immediate attention / action and secondly, general management information. Many processes which would have taken days now take minutes, and the new emailed format makes the information contained in the reports much clearer. Output in the department has increased dramatically as a result, and it has allowed other projects to take place that might otherwise not have been undertaken.

The team previously spent 80 percent of its time on routine reporting and just 20 percent on developing new applications – this has now been reversed, giving them far greater opportunities to support the business and enhance the experience of the users of the information.

Not only has the ibi analytics platform fulfilled its initial objectives, but it has delivered a number of other benefits for the Co-Operative Bank. “We are seeing a remarkable



increase in response time against scheduled reports,” says Stephen Williams. “About 230 reports that used to be run manually are now run automatically and shipped out to clients. This saves staff time, but also means we can run them at ‘off peak’ times, freeing up the mainframe for more time-sensitive operations.”

The ibi analytics platform is also enabling the delivery of a major new project within the Bank called Account Level Profitability (ALP), whereby profitability information is now readily available to Managers and staff within the Corporate business centres in an easily understandable format. This enables them to make better and more informed decisions. The ibi analytics platform was chosen for this project over Oracle’s Discoverer product, on the basis of its dramatically better performance and far more user-friendly interface.

“We moved to WebFOCUS [part of ibi’s analytics platform] almost two years ago and it was definitely the right choice for us,” says Stephen. “I think it’s fair to say that the family image that ibi projects is in fact a reality – it really does look after its customers and we have been delighted with the results of this implementation. Having seen that WebFOCUS not only works, but works better than anything we have ever seen before, there is definitely potential for rolling it out for use across other areas of the bank. I think we have the slickest information management and reporting system in the company and I am looking forward to applying what we have learnt here to other projects and departments.”

## About ibi

ibi is a data and analytics software company that embeds intelligence into – everything. From the beginning, ibi has known the importance of data and insights to make better decisions. We help organizations get their complex and disconnected data in order, so they can build, embed, and automate intelligence into everything they do. By preparing organizations for the future and turning them into builders – information builders – everyone can use enterprise trusted data at scale to drive their growth. Whether our customers use pre-built applications or build their own solutions for their data and analytics challenges, ibi powers their innovation and reinvention. ibi’s open platform and industry-specific building blocks accelerate speed to market, improve operational efficiency, and enhance their customers’ experience.

**ibi. build a better future.**

**Request a demo**

See ibi in action and  
imagine what you will build.  
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