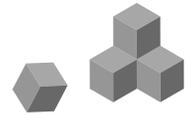


# Sunset Transportation improves real-time decision making



## Case study

### Challenge

Sunset Transportation offers logistics management and brokerage services to mid-market organizations throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. As a third-party logistics (3PL) company, Sunset helps clients manage shipping, freight audit, and payment processes. However, what gives the company an edge over other 3PL providers is not just its ability to efficiently move goods, but also to move the data associated with each shipment.

To that end, Sunset leverages a new analytics portal built on the ibi analytics platform from Information Builders, Inc. (ibi) in Amazon Web Services (AWS) Cloud. The environment combines order data, in-transit tracking information, and shipping metrics into a self-service environment that empowers clients to not only understand their full transportation history, but also make real-time decisions to keep shipping costs down.

“We leverage a lot of internal and external data, and we needed a robust analytics platform that could be embedded into a larger application,” says Todd Burdell, director of Business Operations at Sunset Transportation. “WebFOCUS [part of ibi’s analytics platform] delivers the holistic client experience we need. By mining the data with WebFOCUS, our clients can continually improve their operations and realize ongoing savings.”

Sunset selected AWS to host this new analytics environment due to its proven ability to deploy and scale quickly while maximizing flexibility for the future. “With AWS, we don’t have to invest in traditional hardware,” Burdell adds. “And it’s easy to scale the environment as usage increases.”

As Sunset’s analytics needs expanded, Burdell and his team determined that the company’s existing business intelligence (BI) platform lacked the enterprise capabilities needed to take client analytics to the next level. “We gave our incumbent vendor the opportunity to scale their use cases, but they couldn’t match the breadth of ibi’s platform,” Burdell says. “Our previous solution certainly has a place here. It generates internal revenue metrics for our operations teams. However, it doesn’t have the capabilities we needed for scalable customer-facing and on-demand analytics.”

Sunset also evaluated Yellowfin, Tableau, Looker, and Birst before selecting ibi analytics platform as the most capable platform for developing the new portal. “WebFOCUS [part of ibi’s analytics platform] has advanced functionality to create our own content, establish our own designs, and visualize data with advanced metrics and charts,” Burdell explains. “WebFOCUS [part of ibi’s analytics platform] can access and collaborate with transactional systems, messaging systems, and databases. We are accessing data directly from our Snowflake data warehouse as well as from a traditional RDBMS, and consuming external data through RESTful APIs. WebFOCUS also features strong integration with Esri for digital mapping. In transportation, that’s huge.”



### Sunset Transportation

### Industry: Transportation & Logistics

Based in St. Louis, Missouri, Sunset Transportation offers logistics management and brokerage services, in conjunction with freight audit and payment services, to companies throughout North America.



## Solution

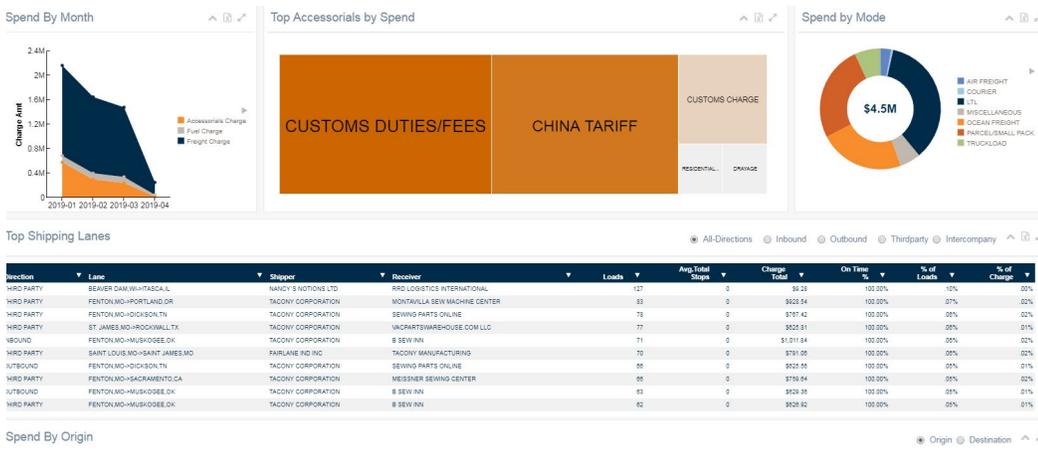
Using ibi analytics platform, Sunset created a customer-facing portal called LOGIK that recently launched with two dashboards: Shipment Metrics and Live In-Transit. The Shipment Metrics dashboard displays financial metrics, such as spending and volume by shipment mode. Clients can visualize real-time shipping activity, monitor origin and destination density, and review historical metrics to determine the most cost-effective lanes, including accessorial charges for freight services beyond normal pick-up, transport, and delivery.

### Technology used

- > Omni, WebFOCUS
- > Professional Services

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Todd Burdell, Director, Business Operations, Sunset Transportation



The Shipment Metrics dashboard allows users to toggle between spend and volume. Origin and destination density maps provide insight into top lanes.

The Live In-Transit dashboard plots shipment data on an interactive map, enabling customers to monitor shipments from origin to destination. An Order Tracking and History tab lets them filter the data by direction, status, and carrier. Ad hoc analytics allow users to display shipment-level details and export their data out of the cloud database to create their own metrics. Burdell says it’s all part of Sunset’s philosophy of data transparency.

“Not only do we not hide data from our clients, we allow them to extract their data at a very detailed level. They can see current shipments, planned shipments, as well as their entire history with us, to make sure they are keeping their costs in line.”

For example, clients can drill down to line-item details for every shipment, in every mode. It’s easy to monitor location details, costs, and commodity information on detailed tracking maps.



giving clients a 360-degree view of their shipping and logistics activities. Sunset is also considering using ibi's electronic data interchange (EDI) solution as a replacement for their current EDI translator tool. This would allow Sunset to process electronic transactions related to shipments, bills of lading, and load tendering, while simultaneously cleansing and enriching the data within an automated workflow.

As part of a six-week engagement, ibi Professional Services helped Sunset deploy a Snowflake data warehouse, and then created extract, transform, and load (ETL) processes to load transportation data, financial data, and freight audit and payment data. The consultants set up the database tables and created ETL processes with ibi's DataMigrator tool, part of the ibi data platform.

As transactions are committed to Sunset's Microsoft SQL Server database, the data flows directly into the data warehouse as well, enabling portal users to view them almost immediately. A native Snowflake adapter ensures outstanding performance and efficiency for ibi analytics platform queries.

"ibi did a great job of creating the ETL procedures and unifying the data," Burdell says. "In addition, Snowflake is perfect for Sunset; we don't have to throw IT resources at it, or hire a DBA to make sure the database is balanced, updated, and scaled to support a growing load."

In other words, rather than spending time planning, deploying, and maintaining database infrastructure, Burdell and his team can focus on projects that move the business forward, such as creating and enhancing the analytics portal that will increasingly differentiate the company in the years ahead. "Most of our prospects evaluate more than one 3PL as part of an RFP process," Eggleston concludes. "They often tell us what makes our solution stand out: it allows them to take action before their freight has even left the dock."

## 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**

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imagine what you will build.  
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