

## CASE STUDY

# GeoPost UK Chooses Open Source Solutions from Infobright, Jaspersoft and Talend to Drive Business Intelligence

GeoPost UK is a leading express parcel carrier and part of LaPoste, Europe's second largest postal group. Operating as the DPD and Interlink Express brands in the UK, the business has more than 130 depots, 4000 employees and delivers millions of parcels a year. Based near Birmingham, at the heart of the UK roads network, GeoPost UK's headquarters is a state-of-the-art facility capable of processing more than tens of thousands of parcels per hour. The company has thousands of customers, ranging from multi-nationals to individuals, high street and online retailers.

## Business Challenge

GeoPost UK's senior management team, depot and account managers ran and planned the business (day-to-day and long term) using Excel generated reports. Spreadsheets were manually produced, manipulated and reformatted to produce the required information. As the business has grown, the reports have deviated considerably – departments wanted different reports, formats changed and data was processed multiple times to give specific information.

*“Whilst reporting had become more complex and time consuming than we wanted, my real concern was data integrity,”* recalled Vernon Adams, GeoPost UK's Head of Technology Architecture and Strategy. He continued *“As different business operations extracted and interpreted data in different ways, we were starting to see conflicting reports, with the same data being used to produce different results. If it continued, there was potential for key business decisions to be made using data whose accuracy couldn't be guaranteed. It was obvious that we need to address the situation quickly and decisively.”*

## The Solution

GeoPost UK decided to completely revise its information management. Realising that the business needed to analyse data right down to the individual parcel level, Vernon began promoting a dashboard concept which could display the business' key metrics. *“Given that we process hundreds of thousands of parcels a day and each has around 10 touch different touch points, it was clear that we needed a Business Intelligence (BI) solution”* recalled Vernon.

Vernon and his team invited several key BI vendors to present their ideas to the company's



## INDUSTRY Parcel Delivery

**ORGANIZATION**  
GeoPost UK

**SOLUTION**  
Management Reporting and Dashboard System

**RESULTS**  
Using open source solutions from Jaspersoft, Talend and Infobright, GeoPost implemented the system at a cost of 75% less than alternative approaches.

***“Using proprietary software, the project was estimated at £1.5 million: we couldn't see the value, when the Open Source alternative would give cost savings of more than 75% for the project.”***

**Vernon Adams**  
Head of Technology  
Architecture & Strategy,  
Geopost UK

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Board using GeoPost UK's own data for the project. *"We needed to involve the Board,"* outlined Vernon, *"Not just to sanction the cost, but because the project – and the dashboard – was a major departure from anything we'd undertaken previously: getting the Board to understand the implications and resulting benefits was vital for its success".*

But the results from the BI vendors failed to impress, as Vernon explained *"We were looking at costs of around £1.5million, but the Board just didn't see the value, particularly as the cost excluded ongoing license and support costs".*

Instead, they initially opted for a solution based on MySQL and Jaspersoft's BI software. Vernon and his team were already familiar with MySQL and Jaspersoft's solution was sufficiently flexible to integrate with their dashboard concept. Results were initially promising, but progress stalled as data volumes increased and presentation times slowed. With the IT team under pressure to deliver results, Vernon was introduced to Open Business Associates (OBA), the management consultancy for Open Source.

OBA analysed GeoPost UK's approach, existing implementation and then recommended a solution that could be deployed in parallel with the existing dashboards, import scripts and data warehouse. OBA also recommended that GeoPost implemented Infobright's high performance analytics database, as its column structure would dramatically improve analytical query times and simplify data warehouse operations by reducing or eliminating the need for aggregate tables.

To speed the process further, OBA replaced the manual scripts with Talend's ETL software, which not only saved time, but allowed data to be changed and updated more easily and quickly. Its graphical data automation facility enables real time reporting - one of Vernon's long-term goals for the new management reporting system.

Using the Infobright solution has made a significant contribution to the success of the project according to Vernon: *"We can now collect and process data put it into the new dashboard and know that it's 100% accurate. There's no longer any potential for discrepancy or questions about data integrity – as everyone from the Board to depot and account managers are using the same information".*

GeoPost UK has now deployed the new reporting dashboard to more than 600 users across the organisation. *"The business has embraced the new system,"* commented Vernon, adding: *"There's now a standardised interface through the business, through which we can analyse our operations far more effectively. The Board, depot and account managers and the sales teams can drill right down to the individual parcel or delivery route level - in a way that simply wasn't possible previously. As a result, we're better placed to make changes and alter the way we operate to increase profitability and further improve our customer service."*

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## The Future

Over the coming months, Vernon and his team will deploy the new dashboard reporting system throughout GeoPost's UK operation. There are also plans to further standardise reporting, include dynamic user dashboards and instant updates, as well as using the dashboard for more extensive data modelling and forecasting.

### About Jaspersoft

Jaspersoft provides the most flexible, cost effective and widely deployed Business Intelligence suite in the world, enabling better decision making through highly interactive, web-based reports, dashboards and analysis. Leveraging a commercial open source business model, Jaspersoft provides end-to-end BI capabilities at a fraction of the cost of other vendors. The BI suite includes pixel-perfect enterprise reporting, ad hoc query, dashboards, OLAP and in-memory analysis, and data integration. Jaspersoft is the only BI vendor that enables companies to adapt to the new, virtualized world by providing a complete spectrum of on-premise, multi-tenant SaaS and cloud-based deployment options for both embedded and standalone business intelligence. **For more information visit: <http://www.jaspersoft.com> and <http://www.jasperforge.org>.**

### About Infobright

Infobright's high-performance database is the preferred choice for applications and data marts that analyze large volumes of "machine-generated data" such as web data, network logs, telecom records, stock tick data and sensor data. Easy to implement and with unmatched data compression, operational simplicity and low cost, Infobright is being used by enterprises, SaaS and software companies in online businesses, telecommunications, financial services and other industries to provide rapid access to critical business data. **For more information visit [www.infobright.com](http://www.infobright.com) or join our open source community at [www.infobright.org](http://www.infobright.org).**

### About Talend

Talend is the recognized market leader in open source data management & application integration. Talend revolutionized the world of data integration when it released the first version of Talend Open Studio in 2006. Talend's data management solution portfolio now includes operational data integration, ETL, data quality, and master data management. Through the acquisition of Sopera in 2010, Talend became also a key player in application integration.

Unlike proprietary, closed solutions, which can only be afforded by the largest and wealthiest organizations, Talend makes middleware solutions available to organizations of all sizes, for all integration needs. **Visit us at [www.talend.com](http://www.talend.com).**

### About Open Business Associates

Open Business Associates (OBA) is the management consultancy for open source. The company provides business consulting and systems integration services to develop, design, deploy, implement and support enterprise open source solutions. In addition to business solutions for BI, BPM, CRM and ERP, the company also offers infrastructure solutions such as analytical databases and enterprise systems management. Technical expertise, proven methodologies and fast, effective project deployment are central to OBA's approach. The company operates in many different market sectors and its global customers include KPMG, Toyota, GeoPost UK, JCDecaux UK and America's Automobile Association. For more information, visit: [www.openbusinessassociates.co.uk](http://www.openbusinessassociates.co.uk)

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