

BÄKO HANSA Managed Sales Planning with K4 Analytics

The baker trade in transition

Appetite for bread, rolls, cakes and pastries is still high in Germany – 56 kilos of bread and baked goods were consumed per household in Germany in 2022, according to the Central Association of German Bakers (Zentralverband des Deutschen Bäckerhandwerks e.V.). However, the industry is undergoing radical changes – the number of bakeries is decreasing, and individual bakers in particular are on the decline.

Increased requirements for controlling

This development also presented planning challenges for the cooperatively organised wholesaler BÄKO HANSA eG, part of the BÄKO Group. ‚We are supplying fewer customers, but, at the same time, are making more sales – which is mainly due to price increases arising from the still tense situation of the raw materials markets‘, says Jens Köhler, Head of Finance, Controlling and Human Resources at BÄKO HANSA eG. ‚We have to plan precisely based on this and keep an eye on the planned goals‘.

BÄKO HANSA eG, with more than 280 employees, provides over 1,000 clients in the north and northeast of Germany with everything bakers and confectioners need for their daily work – regardless of whether the bakeries are small or large. In addition to the main items such as flours, raw materials, frozen and fresh goods, the supply range also includes cleaning agents, packaging, beverages, machines and accessories as well as services such as branch order picking.

Planning software instead of Excel

In order to meet the increased requirements, the wholesaler wanted to optimise the sales planning previously implemented in Excel, because it is not only the basis for budgeting, but also an important component in the planning of the purchase of goods and their offers as well as the development of business strategies.

It was important for BÄKO HANSA eG to find a solution that is capable of integration with Qlik Sense® Cloud: the cloud-

‚Instead of checking and merging several days of Excel lists, we now have current budget figures based on Qlik® data with just a few clicks, with which we can efficiently implement our annual planning‘.

Jens Köhler, CFO, Controlling and Human Resources,
BÄKO HANSA eG

based analysis and reporting solution is used as the primary BI software by around 50 employees – especially in sales, purchasing and finance – for the mapping of business KPIs in areas such as logistics, purchasing, controlling and finance.

The project should be supported by an experienced IT partner. Jens Köhler and Patrick Kuderer, Head of IT, learned of EVACO during a webinar on ‚Integrated Planning with BI Tools‘.

‚As a partner, EVACO impressed with its holistic consulting approach, which includes both data analytics and reporting as well as planning‘, says the IT department head. ‚In addition, EVACO is a Qlik® Elite partner, so they are very familiar with our BI solution and offer various planning solutions‘.

K4 Analytics convinces with Qlik® integration capability

BÄKO HANSA has chosen K4 Analytics, an intelligent dynamic solution for business planning, budgeting and forecasting. From a technical point of view, K4 Analytics can be seamlessly integrated into Qlik Sense®.

In addition, the software offers a write-back function, data can be updated directly in the platform, which enables faster decision-making.

Analogous to a target concept created by BÄKO HANSA eG, EVACO implemented a K4 analytics-based planning solution within ten weeks. ‚We worked very closely together and exchanged ideas on a weekly basis in Jour-Fixes, so that the solution was further developed and tested step by step until it was a perfect fit‘, says Patrick Kuderer, describing the project approach. ‚In addition, we involved the Sales Manager and some sales representatives as internal pilot users in the development process to ensure that we take the requirements of sales sufficiently into account‘, adds Jens Köhler.


Patrick Kuderer and Jens Köhler were (and are) particularly impressed by the uncomplicated cooperation on equal footing – BÄKO HANSA eG has not often had a positive experience of this kind with IT partners.

The approximately 30 field and office employees were already able to work with the new planning tool without any difficulties after a brief joint training session.

SUCCESS WITH:



 reduced planning efforts

 increased quality of budget figures due to the elimination of manual efforts

Relaxed planning instead of Excel juggling

K4 Analytics obtains the actual data from the merchandise management system of BÄKO HANSA eG from Qlik®. Based on the data of the first three quarters and an automated projection of the fourth quarter, which takes place in K4 Analytics, the consultants plan the expected sales for the following year at the end of September.

The data input takes place directly in Qlik® via an Excel-like input screen. Sources of error such as incorrect entries are eliminated by the definition of permitted values stored at the cell level.

„In addition, we work with annual contracts that are also shown in Qlik®, adds Jens Köhler. „By integrating K4 Analytics with Qlik®, we will be able to automatically incorporate this information into the planning‘.

By entering the planning data in Qlik®, BÄKO HANSA has the option of performing deviation analyses at the push of a button in order to be able to check its own planning quality and subsequently optimise it.

The greatest added value for BÄKO HANSA eG lies in the quality of the planning data and the time savings. „Because the data comes from a central source and has uniform validity, i.e. corresponds to the status on the reporting date, our budget figures exhibit a better quality than previously‘, says Jens Köhler. In addition, he no longer has to manually prepare and merge 20 Excel lists; this can now be done with just a few clicks. „Instead of preparing data for two days, I can retrieve data in minutes and work with it‘.

In the future, K4 Analytics will also be used by the purchasing management to plan price increases and trade margins. In addition, an application is envisaged with which the sales representatives can determine individual customer potentials.

„The potential of our data is enormous – with K4 Analytics and Qlik®, we now have the right tools to make the added value of this data usable for our company management‘, says Jens Köhler.

In addition, the regional cooperative is highly convinced that K4 Analytics provides a solution that could also help other BÄKO companies. „As a cooperative, the basic attitude of learning from each other and joining forces is fundamental for us‘, concludes Patrick Kuderer. „That's why we want to share our experience with the entire group in terms of IT and optimisation through digitisation‘.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

CLIENT: BÄKO HANSA eG

SECTOR: Wholesale / Baking

REGION: Germany, Hamburg

FUNCTION:

Controlling, Purchasing, Specialist Consultant, Sales, Management Board

BUSINESS-VALUE DRIVER:

Integrated planning for optimising business management

CHALLENGES:

- Replacement of the Excel-based planning process
- Planning on a unified database
- Integration of the planning solution with Qlik Sense®

SOLUTION:

Implementation of K4 Analytics, integration with Qlik Sense® as a central database, provision for 20 sales and office staff.

RESULTS:

- Reduced planning time and expenses
- Direct plan data entry in Qlik®
- Increased quality of budget figures due to the elimination of manual efforts
- Further use of the planning data in Qlik®



„By using K4 Analytics, planning is no longer an isolated process, but is carried out in combination with Qlik®-based data analytics, which opens up completely new possibilities for us in terms of integrated planning‘.

Jens Köhler, CFO, Controlling and Human Resources,
BÄKO HANSA eG