

## Case Study mac2 Data



### Summary

Selecting Yellowfin as the front-end Business Intelligence (BI) platform for mac2 Data's cloud-based business analytics solution – deployed on a cluster of servers utilizing Amazon Web Services' (AWS) EC2 compute platform and its petabyte-scale data warehouse service, Redshift, as the data source – has enable mac2 Data:

- To target the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) market with world-class BI by removing the traditional barriers to entry
- To deliver SMEs the same enterprise-grade BI features and functionality available to large corporates with big IT budgets that's scalable, secure and easy-to-use
- With the necessary technical capabilities to set-up a multi-tenant cloud-based BI environment
- With a flexible subscription-based licensing model necessary for cloud deployment and usage
- To offer a world-class hosted BI solution at a financially accessible price-point for the SME market
- To offer a financially viable hosted BI solution due to Yellowfin's flexible revenue share model, which integrates seamlessly into mac2 Data's existing business model

### Company

mac2 Data is an Australian Business Intelligence (BI) consultancy and software provider, delivering bespoke cloud-based reporting and analytics solutions to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). mac2 Data built its hosting environment on Amazon Web Services (AWS), using Yellowfin as the front-end BI platform.

mac2 Data's mission is to use its hosted business analytics solution to remove the barriers that have traditionally prevented SMEs from harnessing the decision-making capabilities of BI, including prohibitive costs, complexity and a dearth of in-house expertise.

“mac2 Data's vision is to provide our customers with a world-class cloud-based reporting environment that is scalable, secure and easy to use,” said mac2 Data Director, Adam Sharp.

mac2 Data's go-to-market strategy is focused on creating partnerships with its clients to develop and host customized BI solutions.

“mac2 Data isn't just about selling tools,” said Sharp. “We are about sharing our extensive experience in BI and data management to ensure our customers get the best insights possible from their data in order to improve their business.”

### Challenge

mac2 Data came to fruition when its founders discovered a gap in the BI marketplace, identifying that the needs of SMEs were not being satisfactorily met by existing BI offerings.

“We noticed many SMEs were reluctant to embrace BI – particularly because of perceived cost and skill demands,” said Sharp.

Sharp explained that, as a result of this lockout, many SME organizations were predictably developing Excel-based reports in an attempt to explore their data.

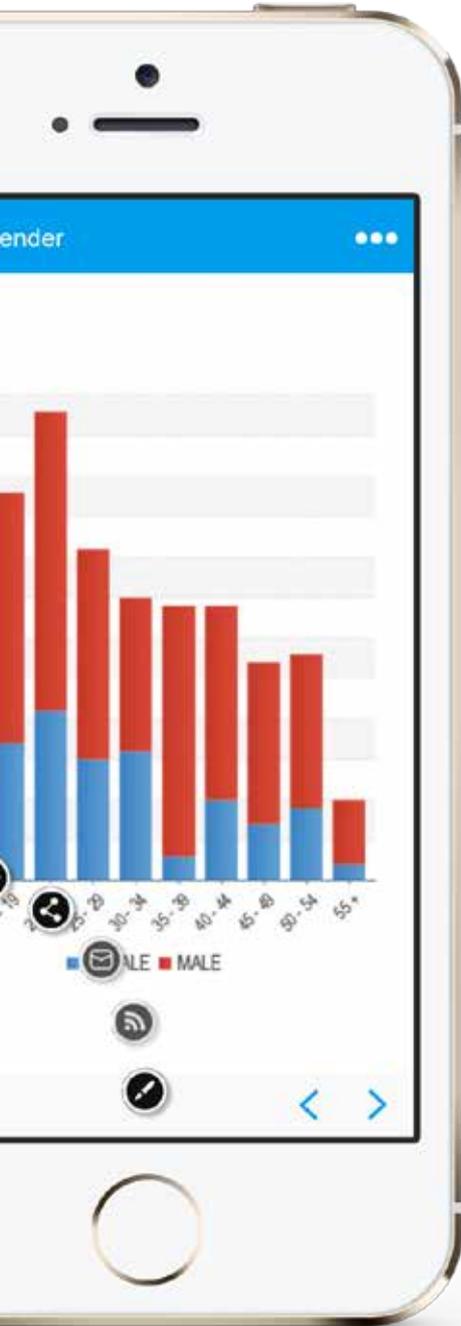
“The problem with creating individual reports based in Excel, let alone an entire reporting environment, is that it's a very manual, repetitive and resource intensive process,” said Sharp. “It is also very difficult to maintain one version of the truth. SMEs very quickly find themselves spending too much time creating unreliable, unappealing and stagnant reports instead of analyzing their data for competitive gain. Additionally, they're not actually using the data available to them effectively – delivering that information in a cohesive format to the right people at the right time – to drive business improvement.”

mac2 Data saw the opportunity to provide SMEs with the same enterprise grade BI features and functionality available to large corporates with big IT budgets.

“To fill this gap, our challenge was to offer a BI solution that could deliver lower total cost of ownership, enhanced flexibility, seamless scalability, faster deployment and easier self-service access – all while reducing delays and optimizing our clients' IT resources,” said Sharp.

**“Together, mac2 Data and Yellowfin are providing SMEs with a low risk way to quickly and easily get started with enterprise-grade BI today”**

- Adam Sharp, Director of mac2 Data



**“With Yellowfin, we’re able to deliver a secure multi-tenant BI environment for our clients”**

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## Solution

To make this vision a reality, mac2 Data needed to partner with a BI solution that was able to suit:

- The technical requirements of a multi-tenant cloud environment
- The financial flexibility demanded by cloud deployment and usage
- mac2 Data’s business model – so that they could provide a hosted BI environment to its target market (SMEs) at an accessible price point

Sharp said that Yellowfin’s ability to easily meet these requirements – from a financial and a technical perspective – made mac2 Data’s BI partnership decision simple.

“As a 100 percent browser-based solution, with no thick client, it’s clear that Yellowfin was built for easy cloud-based deployment,” said Sharp. “Able to be clustered on multiple servers to cater for thousands of concurrent users to enable high availability and load balancing, Yellowfin provides the scalability and flexibility expected of cloud-based BI deployments. And, with Yellowfin’s multi-tenant capabilities and security features – including role, group and data level security options – we’re able to deliver a secure multi-tenant BI environment for our clients.”

Sharp also cited Yellowfin’s flexible financial approach to ISV partnerships – in conjunction with its single all-inclusive subscription-based licensing model – as crucial.

“Importantly, Yellowfin’s flexible subscription licensing, and personalized approach to ISV partnerships, meant that it could also integrate seamlessly into mac2 Data’s existing business model,” said Sharp. “With Yellowfin, we’re able to make genuinely world-class BI accessible to the SME market in a hosted environment – both architecturally and commercially.”

Thirdly, Yellowfin’s functional richness played a key role. Sharp highlighted Yellowfin’s range of visualizations, highly navigable User Interface, device independent approach to Mobile BI and Collaborative BI capabilities as providing critical “wow factors” capable of selling mac2 Data’s overall cloud BI package.

“The front-end reporting layer of a business analytics environment needs to be aesthetically appealing because that’s what sells the solution – customers expect the back-end components to ‘just work,’” said Sharp. “Yellowfin’s rich visualizations, intuitive User Interface, Storyboard – its PowerPoint-like presentation module for BI content, functionally rich and collaborative dashboards, as well as the ability to create BI content once and consume via any platform or mobile device, delivers a stunning user experience.”

mac2 Data have deployed Yellowfin on a cluster of servers utilizing AWS’ EC2 compute platform. The environment is load balanced across the cluster and automatically scales to cater for demand, whilst maintaining extremely high levels of availability. This continuously ensures efficient resource usage without compromising performance.

AWS’ petabyte-scale data warehouse service, Redshift, is used as the data sources, which in turn provides fast report generation and ad-hoc analysis refresh times.

“mac2 Data’s usage of these AWS technologies, together with its implementation of Yellowfin, has ensured an exceptional overall end-user experience,” said Sharp.

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## Results

As a Yellowfin ISV partner, mac2 Data has been able to deploy Yellowfin within a hosted AWS environment to deliver SMEs a technologically and financially accessible cloud BI solution. With mac2 Data's customized partner-oriented approach and expert guidance, customers are able to start small – both from a functional and pricing perspective – and grow their reporting environment over time to suit their data and business needs.

“Together, mac2 Data and Yellowfin are providing SMEs with a low risk way to quickly and easily get started with enterprise-grade BI today,” said Sharp.

Because there's no onsite hardware or software to deploy and manage, and customers only pay for what they use at all times, the financial risk is almost non-existent. Clients simply scale up and down as workload fluctuates, leading to very low total cost of ownership, whilst freeing-up internal IT resources to work on value-add projects.

“BI is a journey,” said Sharp. “With mac2 Data, any SME can start with reporting on a single functional area, such as sales. As the business and its BI needs mature, the client can add reporting capabilities to other areas of the organization, like finance or inventory. Over time, clients can combine functional silos to provide end-to-end business reporting, delivering company-wide

insights to improve total business performance. mac2 Data partners with clients to help guide their business along this BI journey.”

In terms of specific metrics, mac2 Data delivers integrated analysis on key metrics, at the request of its clients, on a case-by-case basis.

“The key is that you can start with operational reporting and move towards more advanced analysis of your data – all in the one environment,” said Sharp.

mac2 Data selected Yellowfin as its embedded BI partner because of its ability to seamlessly integrate into mac2 Data's business model, while also meeting the financial and technical requirements of cloud-based BI deployment best practice.

However, Sharp emphasized the fact that it was these qualities, in addition to Yellowfin's culture and transparent approach to ISV partnerships, which would underpin their joint future success.

“Yellowfin is an easy and accommodating organization with which to partner,” said Sharp. “They are always open to new ways of working together. We know that we can always sit down and have great conversations, that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for us and our clients, at any time.”

## Summary

Integrating Yellowfin as the front-end BI platform for mac2 Data's cloud-based business analytics solution has enabled mac2 Data's SME clients to:

- Move away from the manual, repetitive and resource intensive processes of Excel-based reporting
- Experience world-class reporting and analytics that's both technologically and financially accessible
- Quickly and easily develop a single source of truth and deliver that accurate insight to the right people at the right time
- Start small – both from a functional and pricing perspective – and grow their reporting environment over time to suit their data and business needs

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