

Walker Brothers Transport

HOW SMETRIC INSIGHTS HELPED A TARANAKI TRANSPORT OPERATOR MAKE THE MOST OF ITS DATA

Company Background

Walker Brothers Transport (Walkerbros) are a rural transport operator, owned and managed by Nick Walker. Taranaki based, they have a total of 27 staff with two focus areas: stock feed storage and distribution for two national stock feed companies into the lower North Island, and transport. The transport is made up of bulk feed cartage to farms, general freight to farms and waste cartage.



The Challenges

The problems they had were they struggled to predict what was coming. They would get last minute orders, run out of stock and felt that they were always fighting fires and under constant operational stress.

On the storage and distribution side of the business, it was a struggle to get timely, accurate information in front of key stakeholders at all times. Key personnel within the national stock feed businesses as well as Walkerbros operational and sales staff need access to good data to ensure good support, good customer communication and good demand forecasting.

On the transport side of the business, cumbersome customer data made it difficult to acknowledge key customers, spending habits and be able to identify “lost” customers quickly, to ensure they weren’t lost.

Walkerbros use a number of systems to manage their business, Xero, Cin7, MyTrucking, EROAD, Microsoft 365 and Setmore. All of these systems work well, and can generate some reports, but all work in isolation of one another. So, although they had lots of data, they were going into each of these systems and exporting to Excel to try to put it all together into meaningful information. But no one really had the time to do this, so it they were frustrated about being in position where good decisions could be made fast.


“We had loads of data, but it was all in different systems, so we were going into each system to export it to Excel to try to put it all together into meaningful information to drive decisions.”

Smetric Insights Solutions

Smetric Insights set up a business intelligence solution to pull all their data into one portal where it is all in context of each other. The focus became four areas: Financial, CRM, KPI’s, Customer Portal.

Warwick Russell from Smetric sat down with Nick for a morning to get to understand what information they needed for their decision making and what data was needed to answer them. Smetric Insight’s data team then worked out how to get access to the data, store it and clean it. They then built real time dashboards to show what they needed. All the data generated by these systems has been easily integrated to give a wide variety of reports that deliver on the four areas identified by Nick and Warwick.

See below for the range of reports:

 Walker Bros Limited Walker Bros
8/2/2016 - 17/8/2018

Report Selection

Products Sold

Vehicle Report

Delivery On-Time

Products Sold 2wk



Vehicle Efficiency

Delivery Locations

Customer Sales

Stock Levels

Expected Orders

 Powered by  smetric insights

The Results

Now Walkerbros gets tidy, accurate information that is easily shared with the team. They just log on through Smetric Insights website. Instead of each part of the business operating in silos, they are now pipeline based, with everyone seeing progress and performance. It has turned their data into a live view of what is happening. They can understand instantly the patterns of customer purchasing and proactively focus on where they can provide a better service.

"The stress levels have gone down for everyone! I'm not hassling everyone for info all the time"

They can now see each farmers' buying patterns, so they are now in a strong position to predict demand and manage it. That means no more running out of stock, better utilisation of trucks with better planning of deliveries and backloads

The stress levels have now gone down for everyone! Nick knows that if key staff are stressed through having poor access to key information, they can't do a good job and make good decisions. Now they all look at the dashboard often. Nick is not hassling everyone for information all the time like he was before!

Walkerbros are also now able to present information back to their two major customers, national stock feed companies. These stock feed companies have access through individual on line dashboards specifically tailored to them and not accessible by other customers. This takes away the daily reporting Walkerbros were required to do for their them and It has given them better visibility to ensure high satisfaction from their farming clients.

Nick says it has turned Walker Transport into more of a partner with their major customers, not just a manager of their feed stores and distribution.

Time Saved

With the dashboards showing up to date information, the two staff in the stores each save an hour of their time every morning. That's 10 hours a week! No more daily reporting! No more cutting and pasting spreadsheets! No more second guessing!

"I just look at the dashboards first thing every morning, see what's happening and move on."

Nick also saves an hour each day. He just looks at the dashboards first thing every morning, sees what's happening and then can move on. He, like the main customers, is no longer hassling everyone for information all the time.

Summary and the Future

Nick will continue working with Smetric Insights in the future. He says that establishing the dashboards has been great and further developments will include creating more sales and productivity gains through further integration with Xero, Payroll and H&S systems and more customer specific reporting.

He believes over time this information collectively will add genuine insight when establishing the value of the business if an opportunity arises to expand or sell the business.

Want to get all your data into one place and automatically updated and in a format that can easily be reviewed for insights and shared? [Contact us](#) today to learn how we can help you.