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McLeod IQ Business Intelligence Helps
Barnhart Transportation Track Financial Performance,
Increase Cash Flow, and Improve O/R

Business intelligence empowers people within an organization to take actions that move the company forward. The right information at the right time gives people a focal point for their efforts. Do you want to improve cash flow by billing faster? Then show your billing team metrics about days-to-bill. Do you want to boost margin by increasing your proportion of loads directly from shippers instead of loads from brokers? Then give your sales team live numbers that indicate how loads are trending. There are opportunities for improvement across the enterprise, but the challenge is getting good analysis into the right hands. That's where McLeod IQ Business Intelligence comes in. With this powerful tool, you can take data from LoadMaster and PowerBroker, combine it with data from other sources, and present analysis in context that provides unprecedented visibility into financial and operational activity. Barnhart Transportation's use of McLeod IQ provides excellent examples of the many ways good analytics can drive a better operating ratio.

CASE STUDY: BARNHART TRANSPORTATION

Barnhart Transportation, based in Erie, Pennsylvania, offers a variety of logistic services, including flatbed, step deck and RGN, full van truckload, dry bulk, liquid, intermodal, oversize and heavy haul, and expedited shipments. Their trucks service all 50 states as well as both Canada and Mexico. "The flexibility of McLeod IQ is exceptional," says Brandon Exley, Director of Business Development for Barnhart. "McLeod provides the tool, and then it's up to you to make use of it, and the things you can do with it are powerful. IQ has affected almost every facet of the business."



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— Brandon Exley, Director of Business Development for Barnhart Transportation

Our finance team can view performance quickly.

"We've created an overview dashboard for our finance team that contains a broad range of information. The data is arranged so that they can run through it in a few minutes and get a general understanding of business performance."

Having a closer view of financial data helps us find exceptions.

"McLeod IQ gives us a way to track financial data in near real-time, which allows us to catch anomalies. For example, if we're looking at expenses and see a spike that doesn't make sense, we mark it and then take a deeper dive to find out what caused that spike. Maybe an expense was reclassified or something slipped through the cracks. In one way or another, it exposes something that we need to address. In this way, McLeod IQ helps us with continuous improvement."

IQ-driven insight helped the billing team cut our days-to-bill in half.

"We built dashboards for our billing team that showed them how long it was taking an order to be billed. We set goals and used conditional formatting in the display to indicate progress towards those goals. Visuals present in green if they're meeting their goal and red if they're not. Through their hard work, we've cut our average days-to-bill from 9 days to 4.5 through the first half of 2020. This improvement in our cash flow was crucial in helping stabilize the company in the unprecedented second quarter of 2020 as we weathered the onset of the pandemic."

Our CFO can keep his finger on the pulse of the company.

"When our financial statements are closed for the month, our CFO has immediate access to all that information. He can analyze it from a trend perspective and from a macro level down to a granular level. This provides an effective way to keep a close watch on the overall health of the business."

People across the enterprise use the IQ data.

"We push dashboards to the management team and to individuals to monitor KPIs. We installed dashboards

around the office to display near real-time KPIs. We also use the Power BI mobile app so information is accessible when we are away from the office."

Intelligent dashboard design delivers a user-friendly experience.

"We tailor the design of the Power BI dashboards to be easily consumed by the end user. You do not want to overwhelm anyone with information who is not a power user. Sometimes boring is better. In the Marine Corps I learned the value of KISS—Keep it simple, stupid. You can put a ton of bells and whistles on these dashboards, but what I try to keep in mind is the message that the data should be revealing. I don't want that message to get lost behind an overcrowded display of graphics. We repeat design elements so that users don't have to relearn each dashboard they encounter. For example, the current year is always in light green and last year is always in dark gray. Many of our dashboards also have a section at the top that gives a snapshot or brief understanding of the focal point, and then the rest of the dashboard tells the story behind the snapshot information."

Interactive dashboards make deeper insight possible.

"The interactive reports make it easy for users to drill down into the data in ways that are not as easily accomplished in traditional flat spreadsheet methods. For example, users can move between date ranges, going from a monthly view down to weekly or daily, and slice between GL accounts or between different TMS databases."

Dashboards provide views that help us spot cyclical trends.

"We use historical data to detect trends by creating charts and graphs that track revenue across all twelve months from multiple years. This allows us to look for cyclical trends or seasonality changes that repeat each year. We then use these insights to plan ahead and ensure we're not caught off guard by a sudden increase or decrease in demand and shifting rates."

We can build analytics that are versatile and can be easily modified to fit the specific needs of end users.

"After a dashboard is created, we frequently hear people say, 'That's great, but we would like to see it presented this way,' or 'Can you add this data into it?' Maybe someone wants to see a metric broken down by revenue

code or trailer type or something else. Our response is, 'Absolutely. It's not a problem.' Many of our dashboards have been redesigned multiple times after gathering feedback from the end users."

Our incentive program relies on IQ analysis.

"A portion of our incentive program at Barnhart is based on KPIs generated through IQ and Power BI. The goal of the incentive program is to create a system where we can reward employees not for just doing what they are asked to do, but also for going above and beyond to help grow the organization. Managers in these departments can monitor these KPIs and give their people feedback on performance towards their goals."

We provide the brokerage team with live performance insights.

"We have a dashboard that appears on a TV above the brokerage desk. It cycles through their weekly, monthly, and quarterly performance. They can see real time performance in relation to the goal. Access to this information is very important to them, and it drives the competition. It pushes them to make that extra phone call that they might not have made, if they didn't have a live view of their numbers."

Data visibility helps us find more direct and contract customers, which boosts our operating ratio.

"One of our business goals is to increase the proportion of loads we get directly from shippers as opposed to the loads we get from brokers. We get better margins when we work directly with shippers. Having IQ data about this issue on constant display has really helped the team see where our revenue is derived. This allows our team to be more strategic in their planning. The result is that we're making progress at getting more profitable loads by directly soliciting freight from the right shippers."

IQ and Power BI boost efficiency for delivering information.

"Once a dashboard is created, if nothing changes in the information that you want to portray, it's done. It updates on its own. McLeod IQ and Power BI allow you to automate the work, which is so much more efficient than working with spreadsheets. The efficiency gain of delivering this volume of information to people who need it is dramatic. Without McLeod IQ, there wouldn't be enough hours in the day to get all of this valuable information out to everyone."

Actionable information affects the bottom line.

"Some of the dashboards contain operational data, such as linehaul rates and rate per mile, and by creating visibility and getting the informatin into the right hands, we can have an impact on the actions people take. When people have that understanding in a timely fashion, they make adjustments to the way that they conduct business, which leads to improvement in revenue performance, greater margin, and increased productivity. It all ties together to improve the bottom line."

Business meetings are more productive.

"When questions come up in business meetings, we can look at current data. This makes our meetings more productive, because we can explore right then and there. We don't have to postpone the discussion while someone gathers the relevant data, conducts the required analysis, and prepares the information for viewing in a format that everyone can understand."

We use IQ data and data from other sources to track cost-per-mile.

"What does it take for us to run a company truck? We want to see this at a minute detail. This involves cost segregation and cost allocation. We pull in location data from our trucks and compare this with mileage data in McLeod. Overall, this has allowed us to get cost-per-mile figures on our company trucks that are accurate. This helps us appropriately allocate costs and find out what we are spending to run each truck. We are using this in multiple ways. For example, we can know our break-even cost for running a lane. When we're negotiating rates with a customer, we now know what we need to get. That's empowering information for a salesperson."

IQ data sheds light on driver turnover.

"We can calculate turnover for company drivers and owner-operators, and run metrics off of that utilizing McLeod IQ. Driver retention is critical and this helps us evaluate our performance on reducing turnover, recruiting new drivers, and retaining existing drivers."

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McLeod IQ Business Intelligence Can Bring You Vital Insight That You May Be Struggling to Obtain Right Now

What do you need to know? Financial performance, margin, driver turnover? Rate per mile, days-to-bill, revenue per month year over year? The list is endless. The simple fact is that when you have this sort of insight into your financial and operational performance, you are empowered to make dramatic improvements. You don't have to guess when making decisions, because you can see the impact of your actions through sophisticated analytics delivered now, not next week or next month. In the end, you don't need to ask if you need more visibility into your company. Instead, you need to ask how you expect to compete without it.



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