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New Belgium Brewing Raises a Glass to Pilot Software

by Product Reviewer

REVIEWERS: Jay Richardson, director of IT, and Jennifer Orgolini, COO, for New Belgium Brewing.

BACKGROUND: Best known for our Fat Tire Amber Ale, New Belgium Brewery is the third-largest craft brewer in the United States. With an established history of employing cutting-edge technology and emphasizing environmental sustainability, New Belgium Brewery is committed to employee empowerment through vested ownership and a practice of open-book management.

PLATFORM: We run PilotWorks software on Windows.

PROBLEM SOLVED: Our continued success has led to an increase in employees and an expansion of operations outside the company's headquarters. As we grow, we have become increasingly concerned with continuing operational alignment and maintaining strategic objectives. In an employee-owned business, it is important that there is a distribution of ownership across multiple people. Central to our workmanship at New Belgium is the idea that including different owners for the overall initiative helps promote effective collaboration and accountability. PilotWorks was deployed to add structure and transparency to our business processes while also preserving New Belgium's unique company culture and encouraging healthy growth.

PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY: New Belgium has completed phase one of a multiphase deployment of PilotWorks and is using the solution to increase alignment and internal transparency throughout the organization. It is important to us that PilotWorks goes beyond just tracking metrics; the software has helped us to further company-wide collaboration that aggregates upward, ensuring uniform strategic objectives. PilotWorks enables us to focus on transparency of operations in order to ensure that every employee is equipped with the knowledge and information to help us achieve company-wide goals. With PilotWorks, employees throughout the organization can see what needs to be done to realize our strategic objectives.

STRENGTHS: High-involvement cultures are high-performance cultures. The increased transparency that Pilot helped us to achieve enabled us to extend the kind of two-way communication, collaboration and information sharing that we've embraced well beyond our Fort Collins, Colorado headquarters. By using PilotWorks, we've become a more effective company, and we have clear visibility into all day-to-day activities.

WEAKNESSES: Many companies in the business intelligence category are specifically focused on delivering financial dashboards, which isn't what Pilot is all about. Some might characterize this as a weakness, but for us it's a core strength and a big part of why we went with Pilot. Dashboards that measure financial performance are valuable, but for us it was (and is) critical that we have the ability to focus on operational alignment and internal transparency.

SELECTION CRITERIA: We appreciate that by choosing to work with Pilot, we are partnering with an adviser, not merely purchasing software from a vendor. Pilot trains organizations to get started with a solution that has the ability to grow to fit the organization's needs. Pilot uses an incremental approach in which the organization can provide any group that begins a deployment with complete autonomy, confident that it can later leverage it as a foundation for an enterprise rollout. In consonance with New Belgium's mission, these practices encourage a culture of trust and shared responsibility as well as employee ownership.

DELIVERABLES: Pilot has allowed us to track, align and communicate strategic, operational and personal activities with corporate and departmental strategies to further empower our employees to do the right work.

VENDOR SUPPORT: Pilot gave us the initial training that got us started quickly and provides ongoing support with a solution that has the built-in ability for us to modify and adjust our deployment as our organizational needs evolve. Because we're a growing company, it's important that our performance management software isn't static. It needs to change and be flexible to accommodate our growth. In addition to the support we get from Pilot, they've given us the tools we need to support ourselves.

DOCUMENTATION: Documentation was not an issue during implementation.

PilotWorks

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