Madras Cements enhances business intelligence with data visualisation enabled by Google Maps

At a Glance

What they wanted to do
- Monitor & analyse data with visualisation capabilities
- Drive positive change & growth with their industry partners

What they did
- Chose Google Maps for its fast and easy user-interface, strong graphics performance in a web browser & detailed maps that integrated with their Ramco ERP system

What they accomplished
- Improved consignment clearance time by up to 40%
- Reduced wagon clearance penalties by up to 70%
- Provided Madras Cements better visibility of business landscape, resulting in overall cost savings, increased efficiency, productivity, profitability & growth.

Company
Madras Cements Limited (MCL) is the flagship company of the Ramco Group in India. The company is one of the six largest cement operators in India, manufacturing ordinary portland cement and portland pozzolana cement.

Challenge
Madras Cements felt that their potential for growth was hampered by their inability to visualise and leverage the rich data generated from Ramco Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

Information such as distributor performance comparison and location mapping of their wagon movements were difficult to visualise.

Madras Cements also found it difficult to understand the real issues affecting operations and performances across the region.

Mr A. V. Dharmakrishnan, Chief Executive Officer of Madras Cements, commented that traditional means of reporting using Microsoft Excel sheets were complex and time-consuming, hindering further business decision-making. They needed a data visualisation solution, one that offered richer, dynamic, interactive graphics that integrated with the Ramco ERP system.

Solution
Madras Cements chose Google Maps to integrate with its Ramco ERP system. By superimposing its data onto Google Maps, the result was a rich data visualisation tool that facilitated idea generation and improved productivity.

All across India, over 1,000 employees access reports and transactions on a daily basis from the Ramco ERP system and integrated Google maps. Management at Madras Cements uses Google Maps for visual analysis – for monitoring benchmarks, identifying discrepancies and deviation. Google Maps serves as a tool to help them develop appropriate strategies for business growth.

> *"Business decisions leaders were unable to identify patterns in data without clean data visualisation. Many of our employees handling data analytics did not have the necessary technical know-how to make accurate analysis."*
> —*A.V. Dharmakrishnan, Chief Executive Officer, Madras Cements*

Madras Cements' sales and marketing divisions also benefitted from Google Maps. The field sales team now has the capability to easily view information on their mobile devices – information ranging from competitor distribution networks in their area, to the best and worst performing dealers. This not only enabled them to make faster sales strategies on-the-go, it also helped

About Google Maps API

Google Maps API provides a range of "application programming interfaces", which allow developers to build with relative ease:

- location-based applications
- mobile apps that work on multiple mobile devices
- applications that enable users to bring data to life by visualising and interacting with geospatial data
- customised maps, incorporating and highlighting data and imagery specific to their organisations' needs

Google Maps API provides developers with a platform that has the flexibility and power to leverage maps and geospatial data in new and truly innovative ways.

For more information, visit
www.google.com/enterprise/earthmaps/maps-apis.html

"Google Maps is a strong visualisation tool, offering both form and function. It is easy to discover and present data that would help drive the important business conversations needed to persuade different audiences."
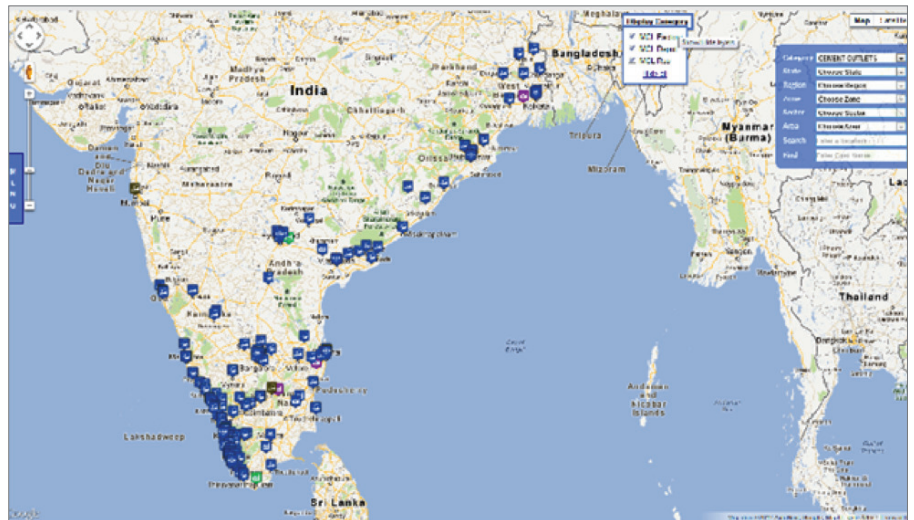*—A.V. Dharmakrishnan, Chief Executive Officer, Madras Cements*

Figure 1. On overview of Madras Cements' business environment, with multi-location, multi-plant operation spread throughout India.

management improve their market penetration strategy and competitiveness as they could locate their cement warehouses and key customers on Google Maps vis-à-vis critical operation information, empowering them to devise effective supply chain strategies and enhance customer service. Google Maps helped illustrate data at various levels of detail, for example, which regions were experiencing strong growth, which dealers were performing best, or had the most potential for growth.

Results

Keeping logistics costs low is a critical success factor in the cement manufacturing industry. Google Maps, together with their in-house SMS notification system and Ramco ERP solution, formed a solid communication infrastructure. This has helped the Madras Cements reduce penalties, losses and damages arising during the wagon clearance process by up to 70%, and improved consignment clearance time by up to 40%.

Google Maps also made it easier to identify and analyse performing markets with the potential for growth. Since implementing Google Maps, the company has successfully captured 20-30% market share of these markets.

"Google Maps has brought tremendous impact to Madras Cements – with better visibility of our business landscape, we have managed to increase our company's overall competitiveness," says Dharmakrishnan. He adds that, "Google definitely played a pivotal role in helping Madras Cements gain a 6-7% market share in the Indian cement business – a significant growth in our industry."

While the same information can be put in an Excel sheet or Word, Dharmakrishnan shared that he can better appreciate the data when it is visually presented on Google Maps.

"Google Maps is the differentiating factor in our business intelligence strategy. With its data visualisation, we have been able to better harness the power of our Ramco ERP data," says Dharmakrishnan.

Google