

CASE STUDY

## Britz-Simplot Uses Pitney Bowes Business Insight's Technology to Boost Business

"WE WOULDN'T BE WHERE WE ARE TODAY WITHOUT THEIR POWERFUL LOCATION INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGY."

Tim Stone, Precision Agriculture Coordinator, Britz-Simplot

BUDGET, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND INDUSTRY REGULATIONS NO LONGER A PROBLEM FOR CALIFORNIA GROWERS



### Challenge

Faced with budget, environmental and compliance challenges from its customers, Britz-Simplot needed a technology partner to improve its precision agriculture business and meet the industry's changing demands.

### Solution

Britz-Simplot implemented Pitney Bowes Business Insight's MapInfo Professional® and ProViewer™ for high-quality mapping technology that reduces customer expense and increases ROI.

### SUMMARY

Britz-Simplot LLC is one of the largest, full-service California agricultural retailer and wholesaler of fertilizers, seed and other applications. Britz-Simplot also provides precision agriculture and crop mapping services for its customers – a farming management concept based on observing and responding to soil variations to make growth predictions and determine appropriate applications for each specific field. The number of Britz-Simplot customers varies year to year depending on the type of crops being treated; however, the company consistently services almost 10,000 farmers in California, including permanent crop growers for citrus, cotton, almonds/pistachios, grapes (wine, raisin, fresh), tomatoes and corn.

Today, modern precision agriculture uses satellite imagery, mapping and location intelligence technology to improve everything from crop strategy to the equipment, including tractors. With the help of Britz-Simplot, growers can better understand their growing potential and leverage "smart" tractors that are pre-programmed to distribute correct application amounts to each specific field based on the soil samples.

With its innovative nature, precision agriculture has its challenges as well.

In today's world, businesses need to spend less money and use fewer resources, but still turn a higher profit. The precision agriculture market is no different as growers want to purchase and use less product (fertilizer, etc.) and still yield higher results (more healthy crops). Therefore, they require answers to very specific questions on how

to best farm their land – what can my fields grow? What type of soil do I have? How can I create a better product?

Outside of the business challenges, there are also environmental concerns with agriculture. Consumers want to purchase foods that have been grown in less fertilizer and pesticides, and, therefore, growers have been forced to take these demands into consideration.

The agriculture industry also faces countless compliance challenges – both current and future. Only a few years ago, the dairy industry was forced to make changes to its feeding and growing process as a result of new monitoring regulations. Now, there is also a USDA regulation expected for 2012 that will affect the entire agriculture industry and regulate how much product is allowed to be applied to fields. With this challenge in mind, farmers are already preparing.

"While our industry faces extreme challenges in budget, compliance and environmental concerns, there are cost-effective, successful solutions for all of these issues," said Tim Stone, Precision Agriculture Coordinator, Britz-Simplot. "For Britz-Simplot, the goal has always been to service our customers with experience and technological foresight that provides high-quality agricultural inputs and recommendations. The capabilities of today's technology is above and beyond what we could have imagined even just a few years ago, and our team has been tirelessly working to leverage those innovations for the betterment of growers across the state of California."

“PARTNERING WITH PITNEY BOWES WAS AN OBVIOUS CHOICE. AS THE EXPERTS IN LOCATION INTELLIGENCE AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS, THE TECHNOLOGY THAT THEY PROVIDE US IS INCOMPARABLE TO OTHERS, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, THEY ARE A TRUE PARTNER THAT SUPPORTS US IN EVERYTHING WE DO.”

Tim Stone, Precision Agriculture Coordinator, Bank of Britz-Simplot

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#### SOLUTION

Precision agriculture isn't a short and easy process. When a customer calls, Britz-Simplot experts pull field data and create a map, which is then used to identify appropriate soil sampling zones. Britz-Simplot then analyzes the soil samples, makes an application recommendation, and pre-programs the equipment for automatic distribution into specific fields.

However, to continue growing its own business and meet customer demands for less application and better results, Britz-Simplot needed a strong technology partner that could provide advanced location intelligence solutions to improve mapping accuracy and enable Britz-Simplot to offer better recommendations to its customers. “Growers want to be able to use imagery and maps to make intelligent business decisions, but if they can't understand the data or technology we're using, no one is going to be satisfied,” stated Stone. “At the same time, we wanted a partner that would work with us and be available at all times. Not all of the companies we assessed could provide this.”

Britz-Simplot turned to Pitney Bowes Business Insight as a company that met its specific partner criteria – strong tech support and an easy-to-learn, user friendly solution. The company began integrating Pitney Bowes Business Insight's MapInfo Professional® as a powerful Web-based mapping and geographic analysis application designed to easily visualize the relationships between data and geography. This product quickly helped Britz-Simplot to gain new insights into the fields with information-rich maps and graphs that improved strategic decision-making, enabling the company to make strong recommendations about crops and applications to its customers. In

addition, Stone used MapInfo ProViewer™ to share the location intelligence with his clients and co-workers, allowing them to more easily open, view and manipulate the maps, tables and analyses created with MapInfo Professional.

#### RESULT

Britz-Simplot's precision agriculture business has always seen consistent growth, but with the support and renowned technology of Pitney Bowes Business Insight, Britz-Simplot has been able to offer even stronger capabilities, which has significantly impacted its customers' ability to produce more crops.

For example, one Britz-Simplot customer, a cotton grower, is now using one third less application with higher results. The savings of the precision agriculture process and the equipment completely paid for itself in just one year; therefore, the grower experienced stronger ROI overall.

Based in California, Britz-Simplot serves numerous wine grape growers, who face unique challenges including temperamental crops. For one wine grape customer, Britz-Simplot's use of Pitney Bowes Business Insight has helped produce 20 percent more yield across 80 acres of land, using the same fertilizer as the competitors. The process has been so successful, that the grower is now using Britz-Simplot for more than 4500 acres of land.

In addition to impacting their customers' bottom line, Britz-Simplot is also helping to solve challenges in managing budget, regulations and environmental concerns. The company helps its customers meet and prepare for legal regulations faster, cleaner and easier, offering answers to compliance questions and providing data on hand to growers so they can report quickly and easily.

#### THE PITNEY BOWES BUSINESS INSIGHT ADVANTAGE

“This type of data and intelligence is crucial for optimizing grower business, maintaining compliance and increasing ROI, and the results of our precision agriculture process truly speak for themselves,” said Stone. “However, we wouldn't be close to where we are today without the help of Pitney Bowes Business Insight and their powerful location intelligence technology.”

Every connection is a new opportunity™

