



CASE STUDY

How Elite OPS Empowered Its Clients With Real-Time Analytics Sharing

When spreadsheets could not keep up with their e-commerce clients' appetite for data, Elite Ops enlisted Numetric to give them the analytics tools to make faster, smarter decisions.

For more than 20 years, third-party logistics company Elite OPS had built a reputation of combining state-of-the-art technology and personal attention to their client base—a client base which had grown to more than 70. In providing both warehousing and distribution services, Elite OPS had always focused on minimizing their clients' logistics and fulfillment costs.

Elite OPS founder and president Wade Melton had seen the company through the ups and downs of this growth. While low points had certainly come and gone for the company, Wade says, the explosion of e-commerce had created a massive opportunity for them. "E-commerce businesses were popping up everywhere, and they wanted to focus on creating and selling widgets," he explains. "They didn't want to buy warehouse space, hire a warehouse crew, install management systems, and all that. That's where we came in."



-  Elite OPS
-  3PL Warehouse, Supply Chain Management Company
-  eliteops.com
-  Spanish Fork, UT

At a Glance

Challenges

- Several hours consumed daily producing static reports for clients.
- Company dependent on a clunky portal, email, and phone calls to field clients' order questions.
- Outdated data inconsistent with needs of a fast-paced fulfillment business.

Benefits

- Time spent on manual reporting has been eliminated.
- Warehouse team can spot and correct inefficiencies in real time.
- Clients trim time previously wasted tracking down shipments, respond faster to their customers' concerns.

Wade was not lost on the fortunate position in which this placed Elite OPS. “E-commerce was the wave of the future,” he says simply. “If e-commerce companies tried to build shipping costs into the price of their product, that could raise the price, which could really make or break their business. What we did, in cutting those logistics and distribution costs way down, made it possible for our clients to be profitable.”

Naturally, Elite OPS’s business model—with thousands of unique orders passing through the system at any given time—was also awash with data.

However, as Elite OPS passed its twentieth year, they were becoming acutely aware that their clients were craving greater visibility into the data surrounding their orders—and that the ability or inability to harness that data would make or break their own business.

The Challenge

Early 2016 found Elite OPS in “an Excel mess,” desperately trying to keep up with their clients’ seemingly insatiable appetite for reports. This meant pulling data out of their warehouse management system (WMS) and building reports for their clients, sometimes on a daily basis.

According to Wade, this created two problems for Elite OPS and their clients alike. “First, creating those reports was time-consuming and expensive—not only for us, but also for our clients. Second, the minute we created a report and printed it out or emailed it, that data had aged and started to be worthless.”

Drowning in this sea of data, they knew that actually analyzing and providing reliable insights to their clients in real time was going to be impossible. Of course, their WMS allowed their clients to log in and see order statuses, how many orders were sitting in the system, and whether

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they had shipped or not. However, problems arose when an order had not shipped as expected and the client would have to call Elite OPS or access the system to find out what was holding it up. The process was frustrating for everyone involved and too slow for the speed at which their clients needed to act.

The situation left Wade scratching his head. “In this day and age, we’ve got incredible technology in this world. I had a WMS system that I had invested a half-million dollars in and that I could do pretty much anything with—except display the data that was sitting in there, in the real-time format I needed.”

If not their WMS or Excel, some other technology must hold the key to getting the real-time data Elite OPS and their clients needed.

The Solution

The Elite OPS team knew they needed a business analytics solution that would be affordable but also allow them to develop dashboards and views without the need to hire a full-time programmer. The first tool they purchased looked simple at first glance. Not long after purchasing, however,

the tool proved to be more complex than advertised—considering how lacking customer support was for the tool, this represented the worst of both worlds.

Moving on, they researched some of the bigger business intelligence tools on the market. “While Tableau and Domo may have had good software, we could never get to the point of evaluating their software, because the price point was way too high,” Wade says. “For our business, it just wasn’t feasible.”

Continuing their search, the Elite OPS team discovered Numetric and was immediately attracted to the solution’s mixture of power and ease of use, as well as their attention to their customers’ needs. Wade recalls, “It took us less than a week to make the decision that Numetric was the right software.”

The Benefits

With the help of the Numetric customer experience team, Elite OPS dove into Numetric, loading their operational data into the solution, setting up real-time integrations with their WMS, and building customized Workbooks for their own team members and their clients. Having instant access to rich, real-time data opened the eyes of the Elite OPS team and their clients to greater possibilities.

Driving the Present and Future With Data

Originally, Elite OPS was looking for the simple ability to make internal dashboards available to their team and executive management. What they found with Numetric, however, was the ability to easily build and modify Workbooks that enable users to dig into the most granular details of their business—without skipping a beat in terms of the tool’s speed and performance. This capability has opened a whole new world for Elite OPS.

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“I’m a kid in a candy store,” Wade grins. “It’s like, ‘What can we measure today? What can we look at in Numetric and see in a different way?’”

The Workbooks that they have developed range from the company’s overall financials—revenue, cost of goods sold, expenses, etc.—to operational metrics—number of orders waiting to be picked, employee pick rate, units per man hour of production, etc. But this, the team says, goes beyond just “data candy”—it holds the potential to provide the deep data insights their team needs to take decisive action.

Whether reviewing sales results with a sales manager or showing his warehouse how the day’s picking is going, Wade says Numetric is at the center of it all. “If something is off in the day’s productivity,” he says, “I can bring a manager over and get them working on the problem.”

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Sharing Analytics With Clients With Ease

Perhaps even more exciting for Elite OPS was the ability to use Numetric's real-time data visualization capabilities with their clients. "Once we found Numetric, we saw the answer not only to giving us real-time data for our business, but also providing the same experience for our clients," Wade says. "We can create Workbooks with real-time data coming out of our WMS system that we can display in a portal where our clients can log in and actually interact with the data."

This portal allows Elite OPS's clients to see, in real time, specific orders, all open orders, current order statuses, or if an order has been released or is on backorder. From there, they can dig in and interact with the data further to see, for example, all of the orders that cannot ship due to a lack of proper inventory.

"I can't stress enough how powerful this interaction is for our clients," Wade says. "We can display all of this information to our clients through dashboards, and they can interact with the data in a million different ways. In five minutes, a client can interact with so much data in Numetric, we would've had to create 100 different reports with our previous system to match it."

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This easy analytics sharing, Wade says, has eliminated the daily emailed reports or concerned phone calls or emails from clients to the Elite OPS customer service team that used to dominate their workdays.

Best of all, it's allowing Elite OPS to provide a superior, truly value-add experience for their clients. "Speed to market is the number one thing that my clients need," Wade explains. "Numetric is allowing them to make intelligent business decisions on the spot without chasing information. That real-time information is very powerful."

Finding a Partner

For Elite OPS, however, the value of their relationship with Numetric goes beyond the solution's capabilities. "You can have the best software package in the world," Wade explains, "but if you don't have a quality support team or the right management, then people won't want to do business with you. Fortunately, Numetric has all three."

The customer support that Elite OPS found lacking with so many other BI tools they have found in abundance with Numetric. "This software is

extremely powerful, but when I interact with them, I feel like I'm the only customer they have," says Wade. "They've figured out how to make it easy to work with them, easy to ask questions, and easy to get information."

"In Numetric, we've found a partner," he says. "It's not a customer/vendor relationship. It's a partnership, and that's very important."

Powerful Simplicity

Elite OPS is ecstatic about the results they have seen so far from partnering with Numetric and the possibilities the future holds. For them, the core strength of the product lies in its ability to make simple once-difficult tasks.

"Numetric has taken something very complicated—data analytics and data mining—and made it very simple and easy," explains Wade. "Their tool allows us to see that data with a depth and speed that we could never see it before. It just simplifies that whole process of accessing, analyzing, and interacting with your data."

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It is this powerful simplicity, Wade says, that will continue to benefit Elite OPS and its clients for years to come.

Turn Analytics Into Action

Numetric empowers teams to visualize data from multiple sources in real time and give anyone inside or outside their organization the ability to dig into the data and get answers they can take action on. If you're ready for faster, fully shareable, and completely explorable analytics, request a custom demo today.

Numetric.com