CASE STUDIES

Aspose Cells And Slides Case Study

Origo Group

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Using Aspose.Cells and Aspose.Slides to dynamically generate PowerPoint reports

https://www.origogroup.com

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About Origo Group

One of the major Swedish players in research.

Every day, we provide to society and business a basis for wise decisions, so that real change and development can take place. We have a vision of a better future, with a stronger society and business. We aim to become the leading research company in the Nordic region.

Problem

Even though we usually provide our customers with a charting web application to explore and compare data from their surveys, most of them appreciates yearly, or sometimes quarterly, easy to read reports with the most important facts and comparisons, key takeaways and data driven recommendations.

For this specific project we needed to provide many customers with a lot of reports on a set date. Our previous solution was not fully automated, so it has been a very time-consuming task to create, and quality assure all those reports. That is time better spent analysing the data more thoroughly to provide our customers with even better insights.

There have also been a lot of time pressure since most of our customers need the reports as soon as possible after the survey closes se we usually have a yearly peak where we must get a lot of work done in a small window of time.

Until now, we used a lot of different tools and software to generate the reports. Our main solution for this project is mostly in .NET but we used a combination of SPSS-scripts, Excel and PowerPoint templates and a lot of VBA Macros to generate the reports so it has been a lot of things to maintain and not as easy to customize as we would have liked.

For this trial project we wanted to build a better and more customizable report builder and fully integrate it with our main solution.

Solution

For this project we created an Excel template and a PowerPoint template, each containing several general template sheets and slides. Then we used Aspose.Cells to dynamically populate sheets and then used the SheetRender-function to render a range of cells to an image which we added to a new slide in the presentation with Aspose.Slides. With this approach we could create more informative slides with a combination of text, charts, tables, and other objects from Excel instead of just creating charts in Excel or PowerPoint. We found Aspose very easy to work with and it integrated well with the rest of our solution.

It was easy to customize the charts from code, for a programmer perhaps even easier than finding the correct properties in Excel, and we have not had any problems customizing the slides or master slides with Aspose.Slides.

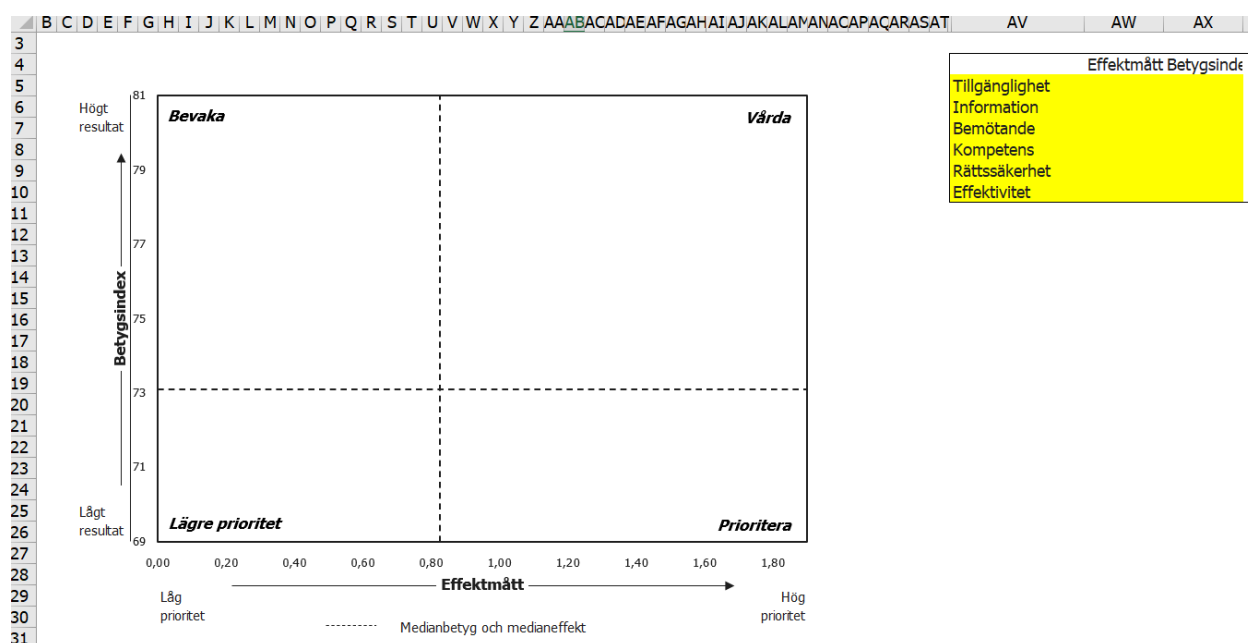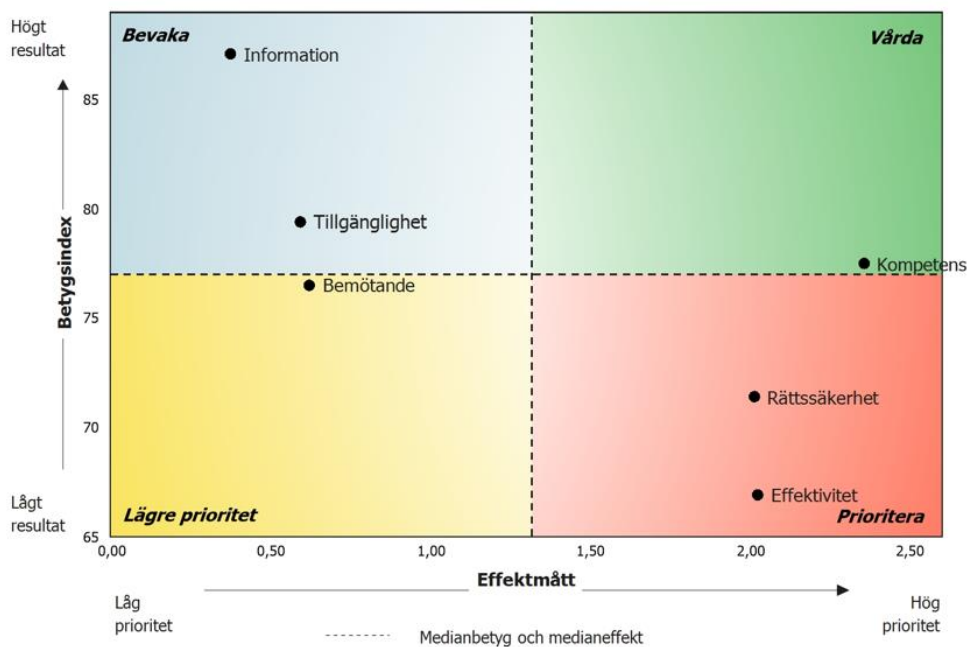Aspose has all the features we needed and a lot more which we are eager to try onwards.

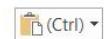Figure 1. One of the Excel template sheets.

Figure 2. Data populated, min, max and cross at for the axis set, formulas calculated, and image rendered by Aspose.Cells. Slide copied from a template, image inserted, texts replaced etc. with Aspose.Slides.

<<Product>> Case Study

Experience

Finding a solution: We have tried a couple solutions over the years, both open source and licenced commercial, but have not had much luck in finding a solution which meet all our requirements. We have had to use one API for some tasks, another one with worse usability but better performance for some other tasks and write our own code against Open XML for some features we could not find in any of the other APIs etc. After some research we found Aspose.Cells and Aspose.Slides for .NET which seemed professional and had all the features we wanted so we asked for a trial licence since we found the products were well-reviewed and the company reputable.

Implementation: We managed to implement a dynamic, customizable, and fully integrated report builder in a couple of weeks.

Outcome: We met our objectives, and our report builder will help us save a lot of time on repetitive tasks and enable us to better use that time to add more value to our customers in the future.

Next Steps

Our new report builder will save us a lot of time and we will probably use some of that time to further develop the report builder onwards and perhaps make it even more customizable and directly accessible to our customers.

We will probably also rewrite some legacy code for Excel documents with Aspose to make it more reliable and easier to maintain in the long run.

Summary

Our experience of working with Aspose.Cells and Aspose.Slides have been excellent. We like the simplicity and maintainability with the well-structured code, the rich feature set, good documentation, and active support forums. We would happily recommend Aspose to anyone working with automation for Microsoft Office.