The IBCS Transformation of Delica with Zebra BI: A Success Story from Migros Industry

Lesen Sie diese Fallstudie auf Deutsch →

Summary

Delica AG, a key player within the Migros Group, has fundamentally transformed its reporting processes through the consistent application of **IBCS principles** and the use of **Zebra BI for Power BI**.

Under the leadership of **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, internal reporting not only became more efficient, but also set a new standard for professional reporting within Migros Industry.

With clearly structured, consistent dashboards and significantly simplified data interpretation, reporting at Delica is now faster, more meaningful, and fully aligned with IBCS best practices.

Oliver Schaerer's team developed scalable, decision-oriented dashboards that turn data complexity into clarity — **saving time, increasing acceptance, and enabling better, faster decisions.**

About the Company

Delica AG is part of **Migros Industry**, one of Switzerland's largest food manufacturers and a central division of the **Migros Group**, the country's largest retail organization.

With a broad portfolio – from chocolate and coffee to ice cream – Delica plays a key role in product innovation and supply chain excellence within the group.

With over **2,000 employees** and an annual net revenue of more than **1 billion CHF**, Delica supplies both Migros-owned retailers and external partners in Switzerland and abroad.

As an innovation leader within Migros Industry, Delica regularly pilots new technologies and processes that are subsequently adopted across the group.

Thanks to the centralized matrix structure of Migros Industry, best practices can be scaled quickly – making Delica's introduction of **Zebra BI a blueprint for broader implementation** across the entire network.

The Challenge – No Immediate Insights

Before using **Zebra BI**, reporting at Delica was **time-consuming, fragmented, and visually inconsistent.**

Although a **Migros Industry template** already existed, it did **not comply with IBCS standards**. The reports used the **company colors red, green, and orange** – which matched the corporate design, but **did not offer a clear, analytical color and meaning system**. As a result, comprehensibility, comparability, and a shared visual standard were lacking.

„ We used reports that didn't follow any color logic. By using consistent color and visualization concepts and an IBCS notation manual, we were able to make significant progress."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

Reports were often created in isolation, using different tools and inconsistent visualization styles. Although **Power BI** was already available, many reports remained **static, overloaded, and difficult to interpret**.

„ In the past, Power BI reports were often just tables – no color markings, no clear variances, no action orientation. People stared at numbers but couldn't see the story behind them."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

As the person responsible for Power BI, **Oliver Schaerer** leads a **Business Intelligence team of two FTEs (including himself)** and **three dashboard creators** within the organization. In addition to developing reports, he is also responsible for **training departments** in finance, maintenance, sales/marketing, and supply chain.

The main problems included::

- Lack of visual consistency across reports and departments
- High manual formatting effort and non-standardized KPIs

- Slow adoption of Power BI due to confusing visualizations and a steep learning curve
- Low trust in data due to inconsistent models and visual logic
- High management expectations for “one-click reporting” without understanding the underlying data processes

„ I was data engineer, Power BI developer, dashboard creator, and trainer in one person. We simply didn’t have the capacity to build everything from scratch or explain every report in detail.“
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

These challenges created the need for:

- A consistent visual reporting standard (IBCS) without manual adjustments
- A standardized reporting framework that unites teams and improves data understanding
- A scalable reporting solution usable across departments – and even across companies within Migros Industry

The Solution – Zebra BI Visuals with Integrated IBCS

To make reporting more efficient, understandable, and standardized, **Delica AG introduced Zebra BI for Power BI** and committed fully to the **IBCS framework (International Business Communication Standards).**

Oliver Schaerer, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, took the lead in driving the reporting transformation internally and became a **certified IBCS consultant**. Together with his team, he established the **methodological and visual foundations** on which other departments can now build.

Several factors played a central role in the decision to use Zebra BI: **integrated IBCS-compliant visuals, out-of-the-box features like chart sliders, dropdowns**, and dynamic comments, as well as the ease of scalability across teams.

„ Zebra BI makes it easier to focus on what really matters. It eliminates formatting effort and standardizes everything automatically.“
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

Key advantages of using Zebra BI for Power BI:

✅ IBCS-compliant visual storytelling

The introduction of IBCS standards was a **strategic company-level decision**. The goal was to ensure that all users could intuitively understand reports and follow a clear visual standard.

With Zebra BI, **IBCS-compliant visuals are available immediately** – without manual creation of variance charts, color rules, or notation elements.

„ Zebra BI allows us to provide IBCS-compliant dashboards by default. It's built-in – we don't waste time on formatting, variance calculations, or defending design choices."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

✅ Faster report creation with semantic clarity

Using **Zebra BI Charts, Tables, and Cards**, the team created interactive, intuitive, and self-explanatory reports – even for non-finance users.

„ The transformation wasn't just technical, it was educational as well. People learned how to read visuals correctly. They now understand what a variance means."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

✅ Visuals that promote understanding and engagement

Again, by using **Zebra BI Charts, Tables, and Cards**, Delica produced interactive, intuitive reports that are self-explanatory – especially for non-financial users.

„ The transformation wasn't just technical, it was educational as well. People learned how to read visuals correctly. They now understand what a variance means."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

✅ Integrated features with real business value

Zebra BI supports advanced data storytelling through integrated features such as:

- **Chart sliders** for switching between chart types (e.g., column and waterfall charts)
- **Dynamic comments** for direct explanations within visuals
- **Drilldowns and hierarchical navigation** for multi-level analysis

Examples of key reports:

- **Maintenance Cockpit –** Used weekly in shopfloor meetings to analyze production issues and maintenance costs using clearly defined KPIs and visual breakdowns
- **Spare Part Report (Ersatzteilbericht)** – Provides transparency on spare parts costs, availability, and trends
- **Sales Flash:** Delivers a compact weekly and monthly overview of key metrics; additional pages allow for deeper analysis

The Golden Semantic Model – Operational Control & Strategic Lifecycle Planning

At the heart of Delica's reporting transformation lies a clean, scalable **Golden Semantic Model (GSM)**. This model was designed once and now serves as the central data foundation for multiple reports – including the **Maintenance Cockpit** and the **Spare Parts Report**.
Both dashboards are connected to the GSM via **DirectQuery**, accessing centrally maintained and validated data.

Advantages:

- ✅ **One model, multiple reports:** The GSM supplies various dashboards (e.g., Maintenance & Spare Parts) from a single source.
- ✅ **Consistent KPIs, logic, and dimensions:** Uniform definitions ensure comparability and trust in the numbers.
- ✅ **Simplified data governance:** Less redundancy, more control.
- ✅ **Real-time data via live updates:** No need for full refresh cycles.
- ✅ **Scalability:** Shorter development time when rolling out to other companies within Migros Industry

„ The Golden Semantic Model is the foundation for everything. We develop centrally, and the reports just connect to it. That saves time, reduces errors, and ensures a unified logic across all dashboards."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

Multilingual Reporting – Powered by USERCULTURE() & Tabular Editor

To support company-wide usage – especially at the Italian-speaking sites in Ticino – Delica developed a fully **multilingual semantic model**. It supports **German, English, and Italian**, ensuring that all users see the same content in their preferred language.

⚙️ Technical implementation:

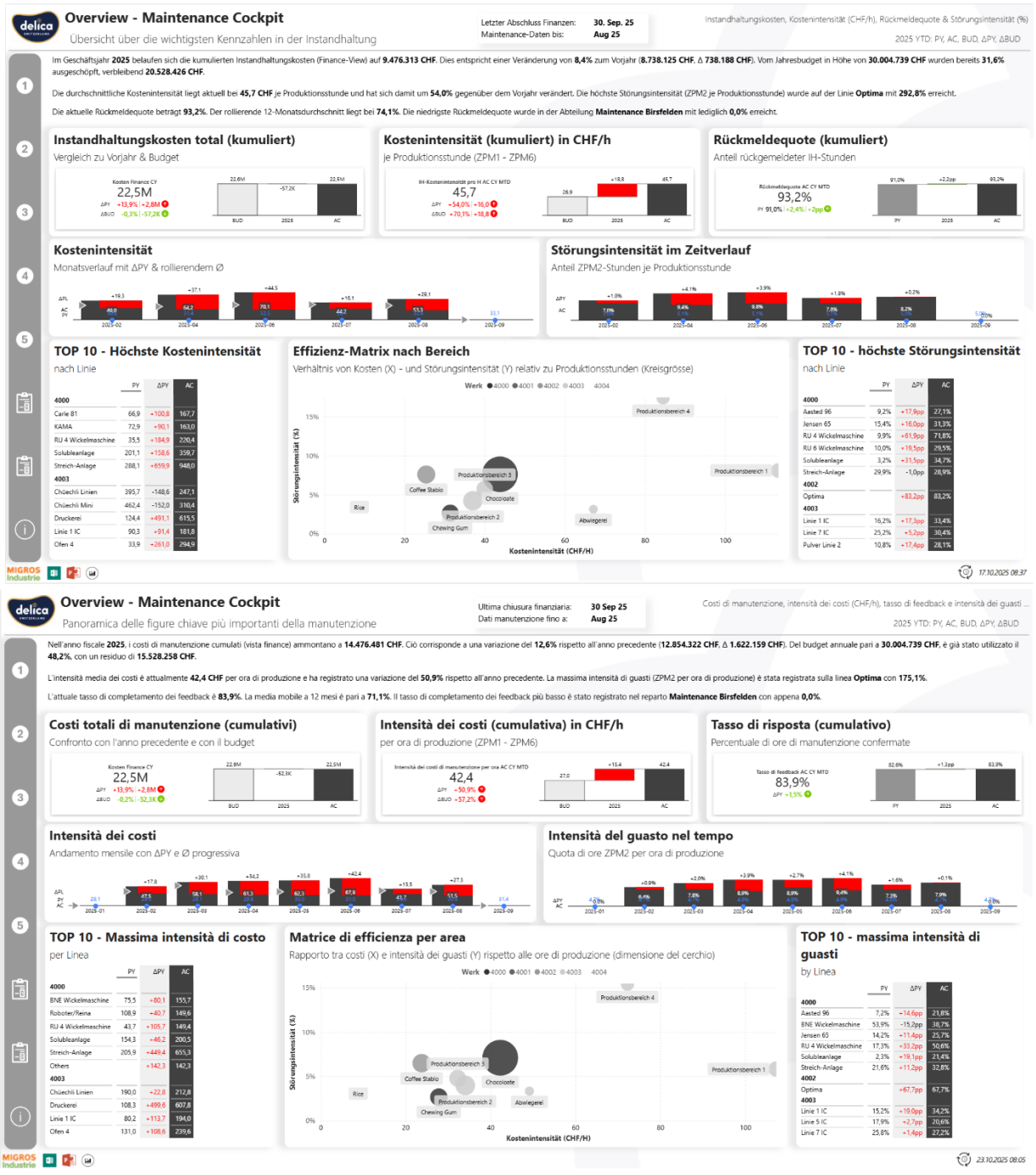
- All field names, metrics, formats, and dynamic texts were maintained using **multilingual functionalities in Tabular Editor**.
- Reports use the **USERCULTURE()** function in Power BI to automatically adjust the language based on the user's profile in the Power BI service.
- No separate translation tables or duplicated reports – just **one model**, dynamically localized.

„ We manage just one version – the GSM. The language is controlled by the Power BI user's profile setting – no toggles, no manual effort."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

✅ Business & Operational Benefits:

- 🧩 **One central report**, language-adaptive by design
- ⏱️ **No manual translation effort** – everything is built into the model
- 🚀 Improved **user experience** across all locations and roles
- 🔁 Easy scalability for additional languages in the future
- 📘 **No extra training required**, as the language adjusts automatically

This approach highlights Delica's commitment to **IBCS-standardized, user-centered reporting** and creates a harmonized data foundation for unified decision-making across the Migros Industry network.
At the same time, the GSM provides the basis for future expansions – a **foundation other teams can build on**.



Screenshot: Use of the function UserCulture in the Maintenance Cockpit in DE & IT

Maintenance Cockpit – Weekly Operational Impact

The maintenance reporting developed with Zebra BI is now used in **weekly shopfloor meetings** at Delica. It provides **precise insights into equipment issues, downtimes, and maintenance costs** – with clearly defined KPIs, standardized visualizations, and

high comprehensibility.

In contrast to previous static reports, the current setup enables **in-depth operational analysis** down to the asset level and supports **data-driven decision-making** across the entire production environment.

Core functions and benefits:

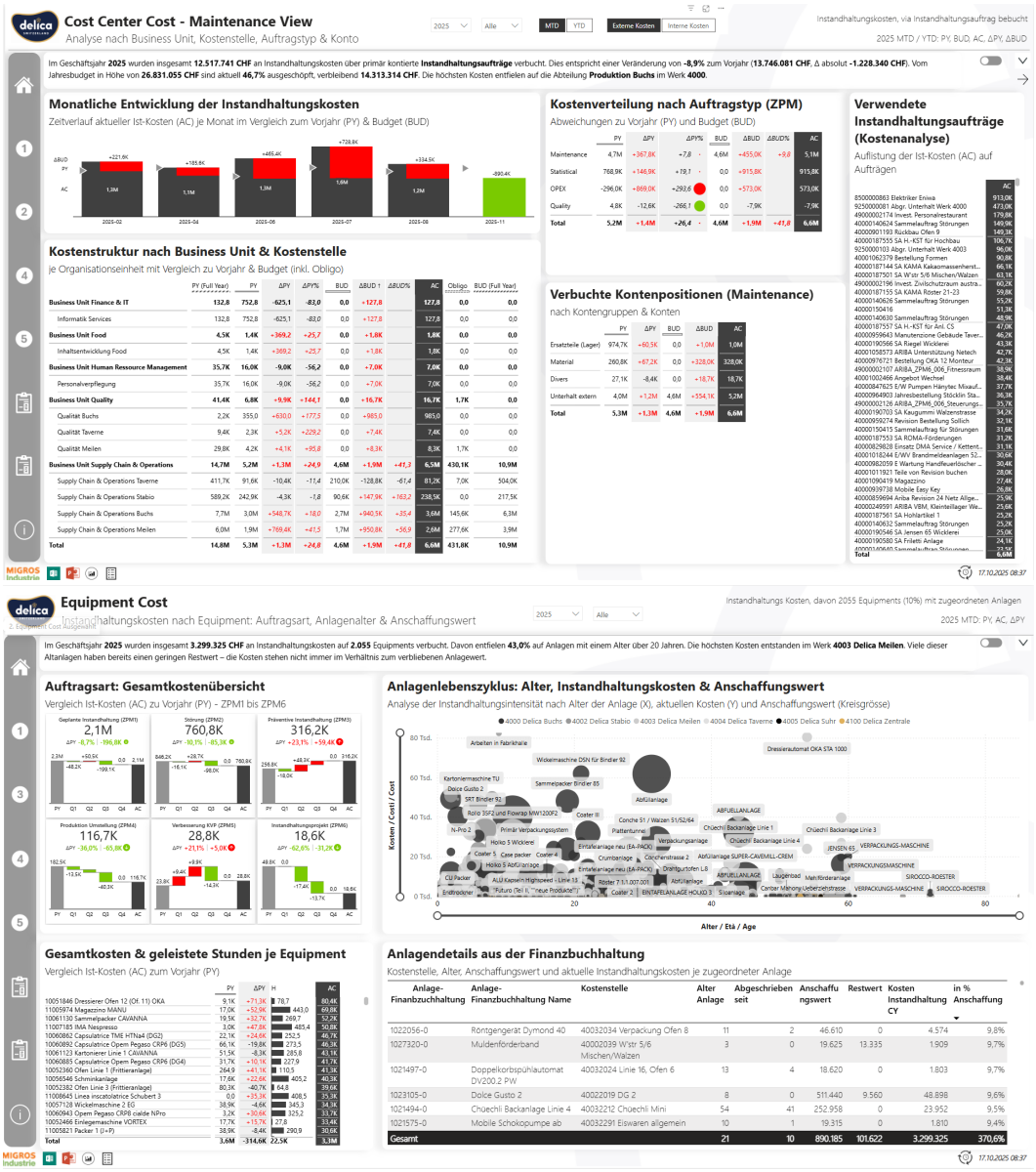
- ✅ **Lifecycle management of individual assets** – transparent insights into usage, failures, and maintenance history
- ✅ **Identification of cost- or failure-intensive machines** – data-based prioritization of measures
- ✅ **Root cause analysis of recurring issues** – faster problem detection and sustainable solutions
- ✅ **Well-informed investment planning** – fact-based decisions between repair and replacement
- ✅ **Identification of cost-intensive machines**
- ✅ **Root cause analysis of recurring issues**
- ✅ **Data-driven investment planning (repair vs. replacement)**

„We track every asset – how often it fails, what it costs, and which spare parts it consumes. This isn't just reporting – it's operational lifecycle management."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

„By replacing our manual, error-prone data preparation with an automated and standardized workflow, we now detect variances earlier and gain new insights into misuse and master data issues – ultimately improving both data quality and understanding of maintenance reporting."
— **Joël Chiapparelli**, Head of Maintenance, Delica AG

📉 **Business Value:**

- 📉 **Strategic asset management** based on actual usage and cost
- 💡 **Investment optimization** through fact-based decisions on maintenance and replacement
- 🏭 **Cross-plant transparency** and **benchmarking** of equipment performance



Screenshot: Equipment analysis & Cost analysis Maintenance Cockpit

Spare Parts Report – Unified Lifecycle View of Spare Parts

While the **Maintenance Cockpit** focuses on equipment efficiency and failure patterns, the **Spare Parts Report** offers a **comprehensive view of spare parts consumption, inventory development, and warehouse structure** across all production sites.

The report was developed using the same **Golden Semantic Model (GSM)** as the Maintenance Cockpit. As a result, purchasing, maintenance, and supply chain teams

access a **shared data foundation** and can **seamlessly navigate between different levels of analysis**.

Key Areas of Analysis:

- 📦 **Inventory levels** (in CHF and quantities)
- 🔁 **Stock turnover & coverage** (in days and percentages)
- 📊 **Consumption trends** by plant and usage type (actuals, scrap, stock differences)
- ⚙️ **Usage analysis** along the equipment structure (equipment / bill of materials)
- 💰 **Top spare parts** by capital tie-up or consumption

A central design principle was the shift from **static tables to dynamic, IBCS-compliant dashboards**, which clearly and interactively visualize **monthly consumption, dead stock indicators**, and **component relevance** (e.g., within bills of materials).

„Thanks to the semantic model, users can view the same spare part from different perspectives – consumption, inventory, and BOM relevance – in one place. You can easily navigate from the company level down to individual equipment.“
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

Functional Highlights

The **“Stock & Structure”** page allows planners to instantly identify:

- 🧩 High-value slow movers
- ⚠️ Spare parts with **critical availability risks**
- 🏷️ Parts with **no consumption but high inventory value**

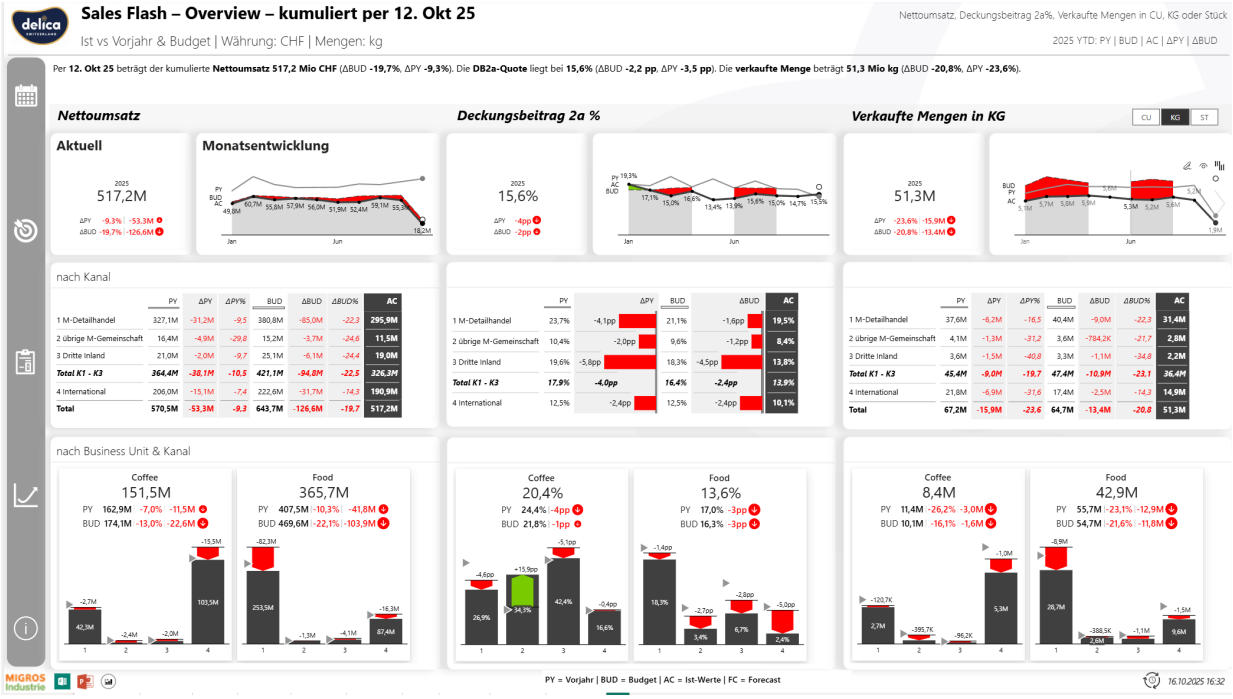
The **“Usage”** page additionally supports:

- 🔤 **ABC analyses** to prioritize spare parts
- ✅ **Validation of equipment assignments** to improve master data quality
- 🧭 **Structural inventory optimization** for more targeted investment decisions

By combining **IBCS-compliant visualization**, a **semantically consistent data foundation**, and **interactive analysis capabilities**, the Spare Parts Report delivers a **unified, data-driven view of the spare parts lifecycle** – a crucial step toward more **efficient maintenance** and **sustainable inventory management**.

The Sales Flash – Weekly Performance Dashboard for Management and Sales

The **Sales Flash** is an **IBCS-compliant**, **weekly and cumulative performance dashboard**, developed with Zebra BI and based on Delica's **Golden Semantic Model (GSM)**.
It is **automatically updated every Monday** (business week = Monday to Sunday) and standardizes key metrics such as **net revenue**, **CM2a (contribution margin)**, and **volume** (ST / KG / CU) in millions of CHF.



Who uses it

Das Dashboard wird von **Management, Vertriebsleitung, Key Account Management, Produkt- und Portfoliomanagement** sowie dem **Controlling** aktiv genutzt – sowohl für wöchentliche Stand-ups als auch für monatliche Performance-Reviews.

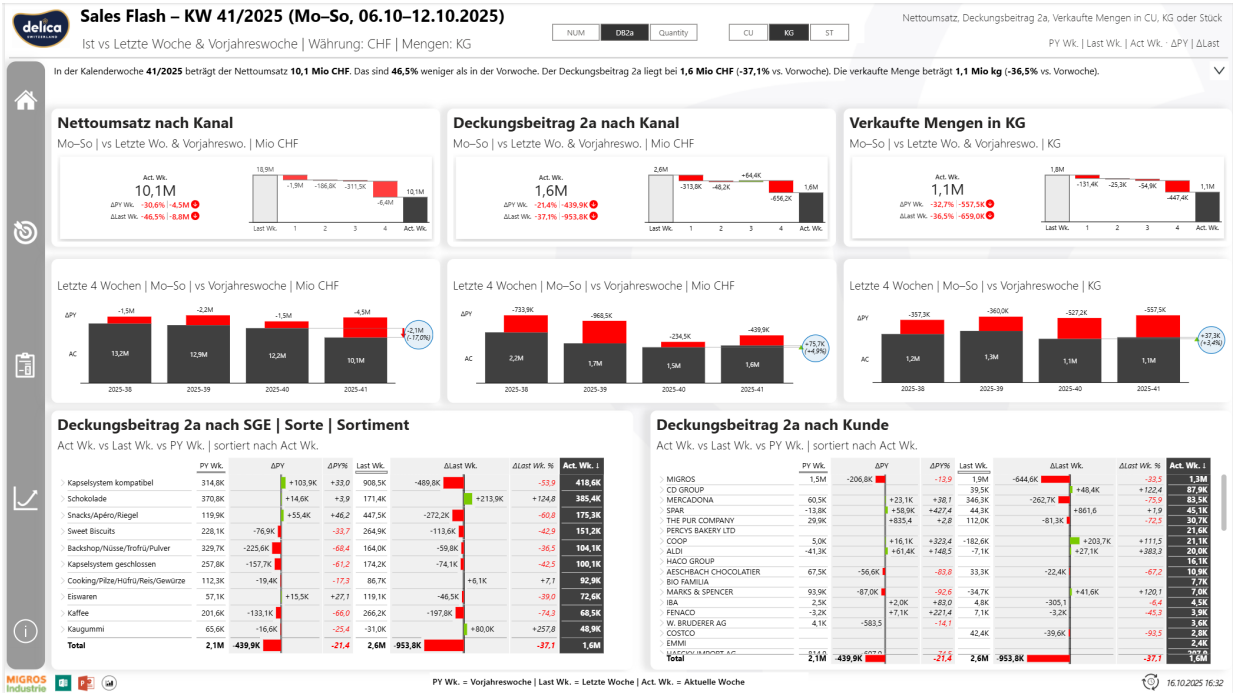
How it's read

- **Neutral base colors**; red and green are used **only** for variances, according to IBCS notation
- 💹 **CM2a** (contribution margin 2a) is shown as **absolute value** and, where relevant, also as a **margin in % (Δ pp)**

- 🌐 **Dynamic headline messages** in DE / EN / IT, controlled by the **USERCULTURE()** function in Power BI

What it shows

- **Weekly Flash:**
  Comparison of the current week with the previous week and the same week of the previous year
- **Financials (cumulative):**
  MTD/YTD comparison to budget and previous year, with variance bars and waterfall charts
- **Trends & Drivers:**
  Detailed analyses by assortment and brand, with filters for product and portfolio managers

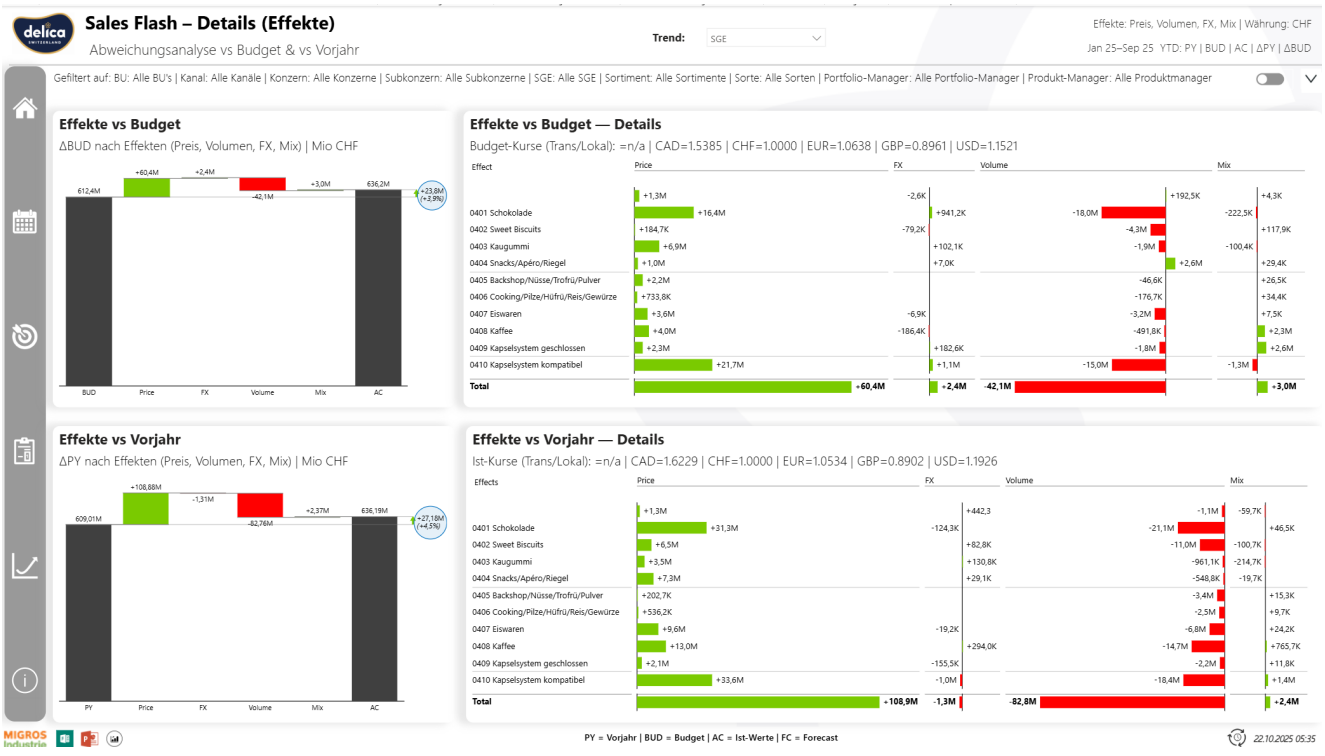


Impact

- ⚡ **Faster decisions** thanks to a **one-page, clearly structured overview**
- 🧩 **Higher acceptance** due to a shared visual language and consistent KPIs
- 🔁 **Easy scalability** to other teams via reusable templates and the shared semantic model

„As a business unit manager with a broad and heterogeneous product portfolio in various markets, the cockpit provides me with an efficient and targeted tool to focus on relevant action areas and make well-founded decisions.“
— **Oliver Hausmann**, Head BU Food, Delica AG

The **Sales Flash** has become a **central management tool** – connecting operational and strategic perspectives, enabling **transparent performance tracking**, and strengthening **data-driven control** across the entire sales organization.



Faster Insights, Better Decisions

The work of Oliver Schaerer and his team did not go unnoticed.
The benefits of the reports created with Zebra BI quickly became apparent in multiple departments – and even in **other companies within Migros Industry**.

From **machine operators to executive management**, everyone now benefits from **easier interpretation of KPIs and variances**.
The spread of standardized dashboards across several departments led to **time savings**, **simplified onboarding**, and **greater acceptance** – even outside of Oliver’s direct area of responsibility.

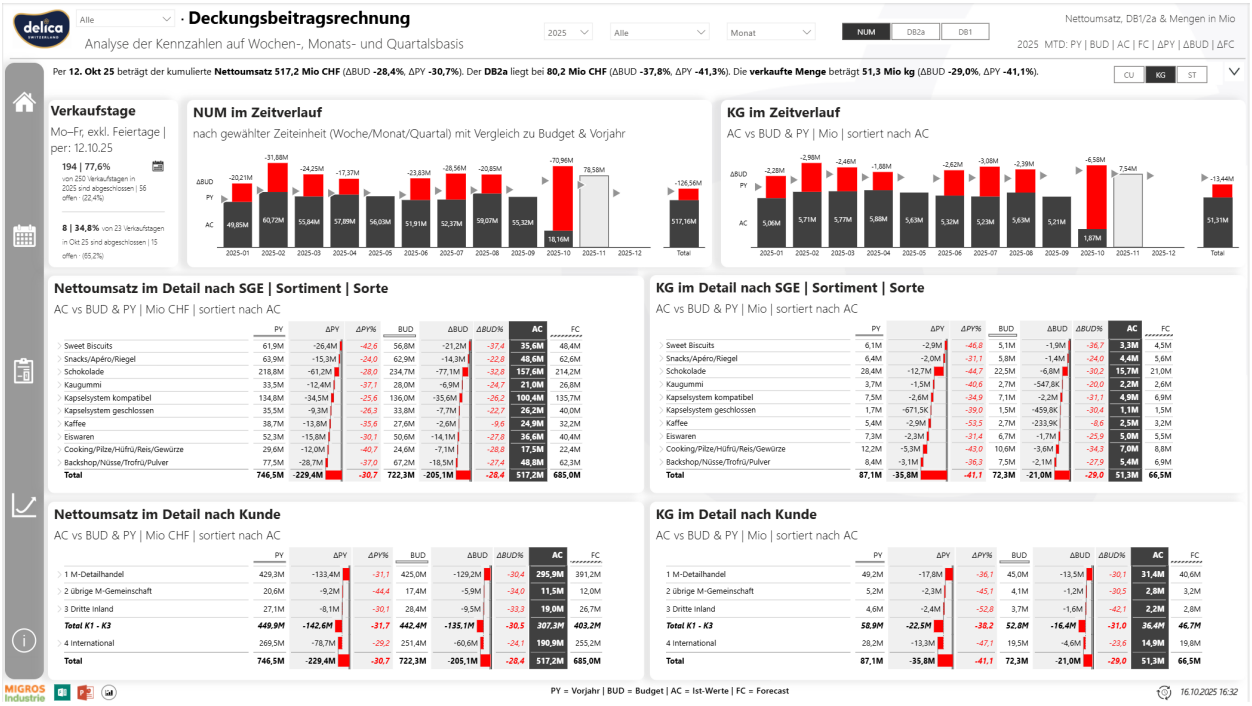
A clear testament to the **cross-functional value** of this approach.

„We've set the standard. Now everyone can quickly understand the context behind the numbers, see what's happening, and act accordingly."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

The Results: Better Report Quality & Scaled Adoption

Since introducing **Zebra BI** and **IBCS**, Delica has seen measurable improvements in **report quality**, **user engagement**, and **cross-team collaboration**.

„When we build something from scratch using Zebra BI, the feedback is overwhelmingly positive. I was one of the first to work with it – now other departments and companies within Migros Industry are adopting what we created."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG



More Than Visuals – A Cultural Shift

With Zebra BI, reporting at Delica evolved from **static outputs to dynamic insights** – driven by **clean data models**, **standardized visuals**, and a **scalable framework**. But Oliver Schaerer and his team didn't just build dashboards – they established a

process and a **culture of data-driven working**.

To drive true change within a large organization, the team placed special emphasis on **internal training and user acceptance**.
After a new report was created, it was first **tested**, then **reviewed with stakeholders**, and only then **introduced in training sessions**.
Employees learned how to correctly **read reports**, **use filters**, and **interpret visual variances**.
Only after this onboarding did the official rollout take place.

„Zebra BI isn't just a time-saver – it's a mindset shift. We now speak a shared visual language, and that changes everything."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG

This new approach led to:

- 🔁 **Democratized reporting** – everyone can understand and use it
- 🧩 **IBCS established** as a common language across the company
- 🧠 **Increased data transparency and literacy**
- 💬 **Deeper, fact-based collaboration** between departments
- 🚀 **Faster scalability** of innovations thanks to reusable frameworks

A Role Model for Other Companies in Migros Industry

By introducing **IBCS standards** and **Zebra BI**, Delica created a **reporting framework** that can easily be applied across other Migros companies.

The combination of a **Golden Semantic Model**, **standardized KPIs**, **reusable layouts**, and a **clear training concept** makes Delica's approach a **best-practice blueprint for data-driven decision-making**.

„We see how our work inspires others. When another team uses the same structures and is instantly productive, that's when you know you've built something sustainable."
— **Oliver Schaerer**, Manager Business Intelligence & Analytics, Delica AG