

# How IGI Gained a Three-Year Head Start on Digital Transformation

Deployment Time

**8 Weeks**

Microsoft, IBM, and Oracle quoted 3 years, 2 FTE, and \$50K/module just to get started

AR Productivity

**23x Faster**

Credit dispute resolution dropped from half a day to seconds

Annual Profit Increase

**\$8-10M**

Manufacturing waste cut from 8% to under 3% using a centralized data foundation

"We've gotten a three-year head start on our digital transformation journey by taking the modern BI approach with QuickLaunch, instead of relying on a more traditional, more time-consuming and expensive approach."

– Bill Sandblom, Chief Information Officer,  
The International Group Inc.

## The Customer

The International Group, Inc. (IGI) is the world's only dedicated paraffin and microcrystalline wax producer utilizing internally sourced materials. The third-generation, privately-owned company has been in the wax business for over 75 years, operating a fully integrated supply chain: waxy crude production through a refinery in Salt Lake City, railed to plants south of Buffalo and other US locations, and onward to customers.

Headquartered in Toronto with eight operations across the United States, IGI produces over one billion pounds of wax annually. Their markets include candles (roughly 25% of volume), food and industrial packaging, and hundreds of specialty applications including tires, cosmetics, and fertilizers. A nine-to-ten-module JD Edwards implementation runs their entire enterprise.

## At a Glance



**THE INTERNATIONAL GROUP, INC.**

**Customer:** The International Group, Inc. (IGI Wax)

**Industry:** Manufacturing | Wax Production

**Size:** 75+ years | Toronto headquarters | 8 US operations | ~1 billion pounds of wax annually

**Challenge:** Traditional vendors quoted 3 years, 2 FTE, and over \$1M. Manual processes across AR, finance, engineering, and production planning cost the business millions in lost time and inventory errors.

**Solution:** QuickLaunch Foundation Pack + JD Edwards Application Pack, deployed in 8 weeks, centralizing JDE and operational data in a unified analytics foundation

**Products:** [Foundation Pack](#)  
[JD Edwards Pack](#)

## The Challenge: When Complexity Meets Opportunity Cost

In late 2018, IGI's leadership recognized that their data environment was costing them money. Processes that should take minutes were consuming hours. Decisions that should be data-driven were being made on gut feel or outdated information.

### The Vendor Roadblock

Bill Sandblom, IGI's MIS Director, brought in Microsoft, IBM, and Oracle to quote a data warehouse connecting their JD Edwards system with other corporate data. The response was unanimous: \$50,000 per module, two full-time analysts, and three years to completion. All in, the project would cost over \$1 million and take years before delivering a single insight.

The greatest concern wasn't the cost. **It was the opportunity cost.** How many millions would IGI leave on the table while waiting three years for data they needed today?

### Painful Manual Processes Across the Business

**Accounts Receivable:** When trucks loaded with wax went on credit hold, the AR manager spent half a day to three-quarters of a day pulling together payment history, days late, and outstanding invoices. By the time the data was assembled, the customer conversation was long over and the wax sat idle.

**Finance:** Month-end close consumed days of manual report-pulling from JDE. Audits were similarly painful, with the accounting team chasing down specific reports for every auditor request.

**Process Engineering:** Engineers needed 3-4 hours to gather data on crude unit operations. By the time they finished, conditions had changed and the analysis was already outdated.

**Production Planning:** Each plant calculated net barrels differently. Without a consistent view of railcar contents, tank levels, and flows across dispersed facilities, IGI couldn't always buy or produce the right wax in the right quantities. Shortfalls meant buying product at a premium; excess meant selling at steep discounts. These mistakes cost millions every year.

## The Solution: Application Intelligence Meets Rapid Deployment



[Watch the Video:  
How the International Group  
Modernized its Enterprise Analytics  
with Power BI and QuickLaunch](#)

Searching for a better path, IGI discovered QuickLaunch Analytics. The approach was fundamentally different from anything the major vendors had proposed. Rather than building from scratch, QuickLaunch delivered pre-built data models with deep JD Edwards expertise baked in: fields renamed for business users, normalized tables, pre-calculated measures, and business logic that would have taken years to develop independently.

The first rollout, covering most of IGI's JD Edwards modules, took eight weeks. Within four to five months of that initial purchase, IGI had not only their JD Edwards data centralized, but their operational systems as well, including process control data from their PI Historian, operational excellence data from OS Suite, CRM, and railcar tracking. What began as a JD Edwards analytics project became a unified data foundation for the entire enterprise.

## Why QuickLaunch Won

- **Deep JD Edwards expertise** embedded in pre-built data models, including nuances like journaling, deleted record handling, and complex table structures that tripped up two Microsoft Platinum partners at The Washington Companies
- **Rapid deployment methodology** delivering results in six weeks instead of three years
- **A fraction of the cost** compared to the \$1M+ and two dedicated FTEs quoted by Microsoft, IBM, and Oracle
- **Flexibility to centralize non-JDE data** including IoT sensor data from plant PLCs, railcar tracking, and operational excellence systems

Even Oracle's own sales representative, after seeing the QuickLaunch approach, told Sandblom: "You're doing the right thing. That's what I would be doing too."

IGI also started small. Rather than attempting a full enterprise rollout, they chose Accounts Receivable as the first module: a small department with a clear pain point and an enthusiastic user ready to champion the project. That decision proved critical to building the organizational momentum that followed.

## The Results

### 23x AR Productivity: From Half a Day to Seconds

With QuickLaunch and Power BI, the AR manager types a company name and the complete customer picture appears instantly: payment history, days late, outstanding invoices. Using Snagit to capture the screen, they send the summary directly to the customer and get the issue resolved in real time. Trucks that previously sat overnight are now released within hours.

### “The AR project has been an over-the-top success.”

This 23x productivity improvement transformed both collection efficiency and customer relationships. The team shifted from spending most of their time preparing data to spending it on resolution and action.

### Finance: Faster Close, Easier Audits

With data available the moment it posts in JDE, the CFO gained instant access to financials, compressing the month-end close from days to near-real-time. Audits became less painful too: instead of chasing down specific reports for every auditor request, the accounting team now gives auditors direct access to drill down on their own.

### 359x Process Engineering Efficiency

For engineers analyzing crude unit operations, the change was stark. Data that took 3-4 hours to gather now takes 30 seconds. In one meeting, an engineer reported that what previously required four hours of data collection now took seven or eight seconds. Engineers can analyze results and advise operators while conditions are still relevant, not hours later when they have changed.

### \$8-10M Annual Profit Increase Through a Centralize Data Foundation

With ERP and operational data centralized through the QuickLaunch data foundation, IGI's team could do something previously impossible: apply machine learning to identify the optimal settings for running their crude unit. Each data source, JD Edwards on one side, process control systems on the other, remained in its own system. QuickLaunch provided the unified foundation that made both sources available to analytics and AI for the first time.

The impact was immediate. In the first year, waste in one production unit fell from 8.5% to around 5%, generating over \$10 million in additional profit from the same inputs. Continued optimization has since pushed waste below 3%, sustaining the multi-million dollar annual gain.

**“We reduced waste from eight percent to four percent, and that's meant eight million dollars in profit without spending any capital. It just keeps getting better and better.”**

With seven or eight towers still to optimize across their plants, IGI's team estimates the potential upside at \$20-50 million in additional profit, without significant capital investment.

#### **Production Planning: Millions Saved Annually**

IGI built a KPI dashboard combining JDE inventory data with railcar tracking from Bourque Logistics and IoT data points from their dispersed refineries. For the first time, planners have a real-time, consistent view of crude flows, tank levels, and railcar contents across all facilities. They can send the right product to the right place at the right time, eliminating the costly inventory errors that previously ran into the millions each year.

## **Cultural Transformation: When Data Becomes the Default**

Perhaps the most telling sign of success: the work changed how IGI operates as a company. Management meetings and sales reviews now feature Power BI screens as a matter of course. The CEO, who would not have described IGI as a data-driven company five years ago, now expects data as the starting point for every business conversation.

**"It's been really interesting watching the company become data driven. That's not the way we were five years ago, not even close to that."**

The team that built it caught the spirit too. Starting with a 20-user license and full confidence they'd need more, IGI expanded to an unlimited license within months of their first rollout. "My team is excited about being part of the analytics project. They rush to finish their regular work so they can get back to the fun project." said Bill.

## **End the Data Disconnect Across Your Enterprise**

IGI Wax transformed their data ecosystem once they connected siloed systems into a unified analytics foundation. Get The Data Disconnect eBook to see the broader framework buyers use to evaluate the path from disconnected data to confident, cross-functional decisions.



[Download the eBook](#)