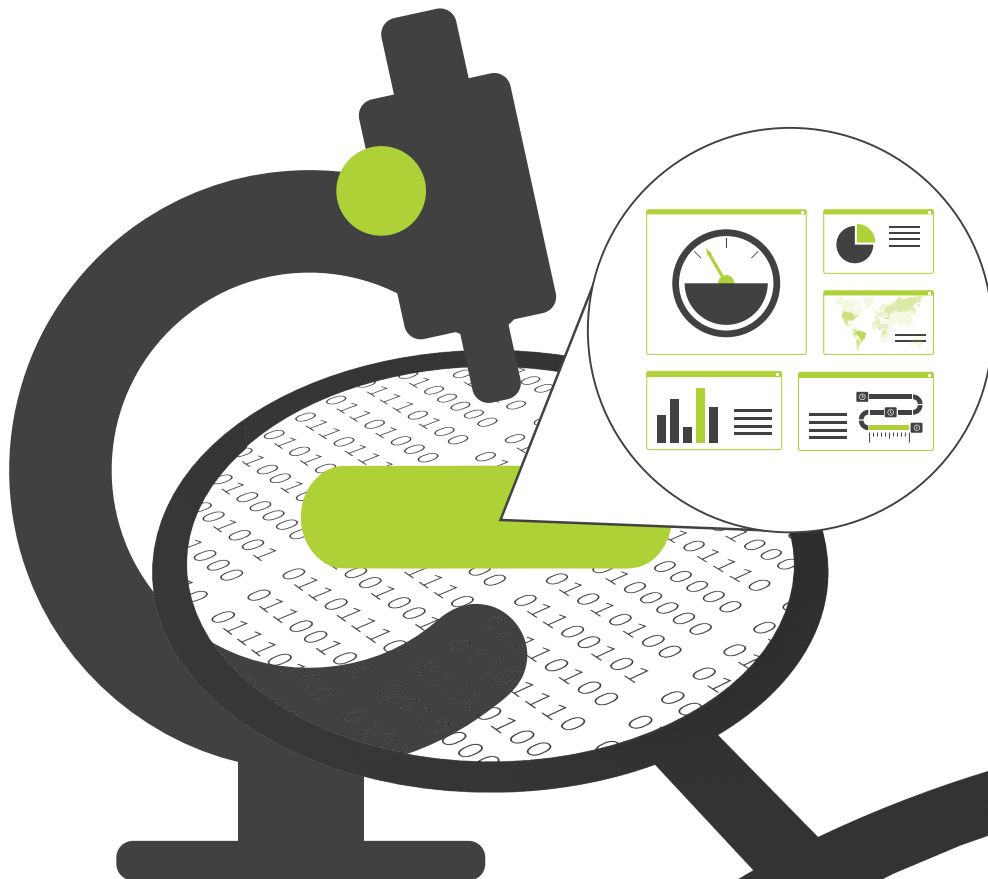# International Cotton Advisory Committee

Generation 10 gives ICAC 'An Entirely New Way to Analyse Data'

Find out how ICAC:

- Increases its productivity without adding staff
- Collects, compiles and normalises supply and demand data from 130 countries
- Converts granular data into strategic insights

Generation 10

G10 Solution Offers
'Entirely New Way to Analyse Data'

The **International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)** keeps global production, supply and consumption statistics for 130 countries, dating back to 1921. After keeping statistics in notebooks for 60 years, ICAC tried various programs in the 1980s to help them manage this vast amount of data: Supercalc, Lotus, and eventually Excel.

ICAC needed to manage hundreds of thousands of cells — each of which contained multiple strings of code because the new system didn't overwrite data from the prior ones — and eventually, Excel simply began to break down. Formulas wouldn't calculate and system crashes were growing more frequent. Meanwhile, statisticians were working on multiple worksheets, each of which needed to be updated frequently and manually, increasing the likelihood of input errors.
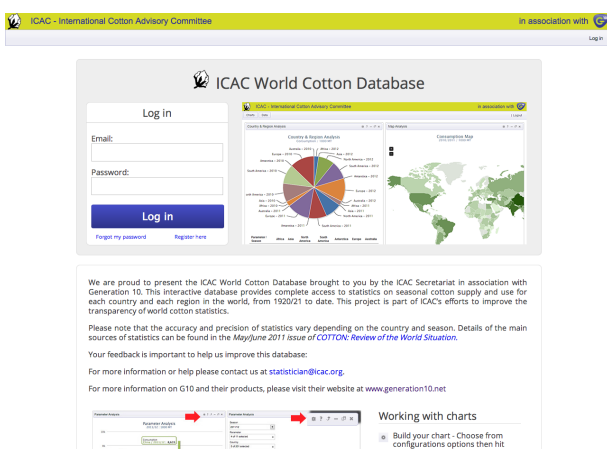
ICAC began to lose relevance with the public because cotton industry professionals couldn't interact with the massive amount of data online. When users wanted specific information, they had to email the Secretariat, which hindered ICAC's daily productivity and forced users to wait a day or longer to get the data they needed.

"Further complicating the issue was the fact that the information we collect isn't static — it is constantly being revised and updated," says Terry Townsend, ICAC executive director from 1999-2013. "We began to explore possible solutions and realized that a relational database was our best option. We looked at other organizations, but no one had to keep a database as large and complex as the one we needed."
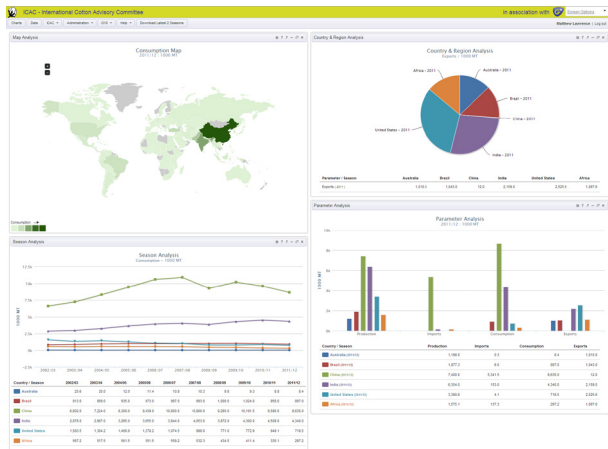

That's when ICAC engaged Generation 10 to create the World Cotton Database. The G10 Framework was able to gather those massive amounts of macroeconomic data from around the world and compile them into a central database, then implement a workflow to ensure the data was clean and accurate. The normalised data is now displayed online using d3 Analytics, which allows people to see the big picture but also drill down to granular details, identifying trends and understanding the information in a way they never could before.

"All of the comments we've gotten from users have been overwhelmingly positive, and sometimes the best feedback you get is what you don't hear," Townsend says. "The number of phone calls and emails that we receive has been going down, and the number of people using the World Cotton Database is going up."

The availability of this vast amount of data and the entirely new ways people can analyse it have already begun to seep into the industry's consciousness. That momentum will only increase as more and more people become aware of what a valuable tool the World Cotton Database is."

possible for any cotton professional to search a vast amount of information and find exactly what they're looking for — and ICAC did it without adding any staff.

"If anything, we've reduced the workload on the Secretariat because they don't have to respond to emailed requests every day. Those people who used to send emails are now able to get the information they need on their own, without delay," Townsend says.

The combination of the G10 Framework and d3 Analytics allowed ICAC to add new functionality, greatly enhance user accessibility, and make it

"I've been working with cotton statistics for more than 27 years, and as a user of the World Cotton Database myself, I can testify to the effectiveness of Generation 10's solution. The newfound ability to visualise our data has completely changed my perspective, and now I am constantly learning something that I never realized before."

Terry Townsend
ICAC Executive Director,
1999-2013

About Generation 10

Established in 2000, Generation 10 has a proven track record of delivering innovative, high-value, flexible commodity management software designed to help clients manage their operational and financial risks, optimise supply chains, and improve business transparency. For more information, please visit our website, or call us for a demonstration of all that Generation 10 can do for you.

What is the G10 Framework?

- The G10 Framework is a highly flexible technology platform that all Generation 10 products and solutions are built upon.

- When combined with a library of Web-enabled components and bespoke applications, it allows us to quickly provide the exact capabilities our customers need, on a platform built for change, at the lowest total cost of ownership.

What are d3 Analytics?

- d3 Analytics are interactive, visual tools that help you identify trends, increase operational transparency, set benchmarks and achieve goals.

- d3's intuitive, visual user interface allows you to locate, understand and act on information much more efficiently, making your company more agile and able to capitalise on opportunities whenever they arise.