

Sparex

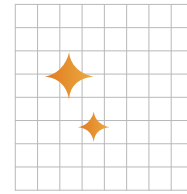
Sowing the seeds of success with dependable data





The Company

**1st choice for tractor parts
and agricultural equipment**



Founded in 1965, Sparex is the UK's leading distributor of more than 50,000 agricultural spare parts; from tractor engines to power tools, beacons and nuts and bolts. Although its headquarters is in the rural county of Devon, where more than 72% of land belongs to commercial farm holdings, the business owns 18 international subsidiary companies. From the USA to Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, France, Poland and more, Sparex is meeting the global parts demands of the fast-paced, labour-intensive agricultural industry.

We caught up with Kristian James, Sparex's Business Intelligence & Analytics Manager, to discover how the company's adoption of Zoho Analytics in 2016 restored confidence in its data, empowered its team, enabled actionable decision-making and accelerated its sales.

The Challenge

Create one clean source of truth



There was a lot of **mistrust in the data**

Kristian James

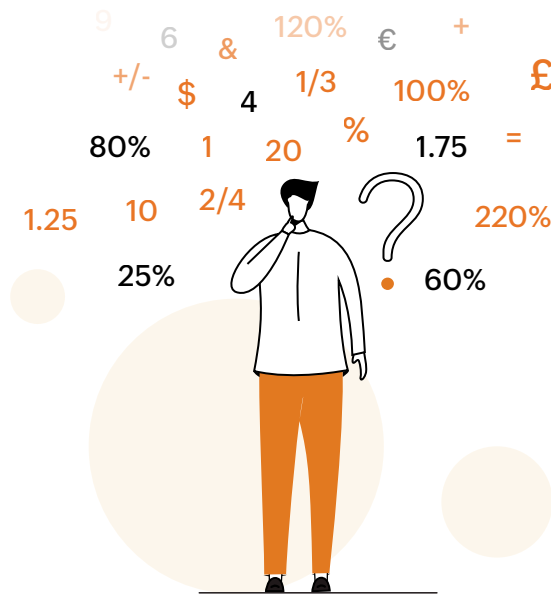
Business Intelligence & Analytics Manager



Across Sparex, around 190 users in 18 different markets require access to up-to-date, accurate business data to successfully carry out their job functions. The Sales, Purchasing and Management teams rely heavily on data to drive decisions about stock levels, promotions and resource planning, as well as to dictate strategies.

Prior to implementing Zoho Analytics, Kristian explains that "there wasn't a great level of data accuracy". A lot of valuable meeting time was wasted trying to unpick conflicting data from various departments, sources and systems. This prevented the business from making actionable decisions, paralysed by the concern that its numbers were unreliable.

This consistently inconsistent data was so troubling that Kristian's first position at Sparex was as a full-time Data Quality Analyst, a role that required him to verify the numbers in each and every report. Much of his day-to-day activity was spent manually cross-referencing data sets to try and ensure accuracy.



This was a laborious task, considering that Sparex's 18 different markets collected different data using different software packages. It was clear that there was a pressing need for a solution that would collate and validate Sparex's data in one user-friendly, accessible platform.

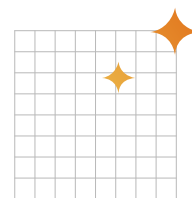
To deliver this much-needed "single source of truth", Sparex turned to Zoho Analytics.

The Solution

Simplify, streamline and standardise!



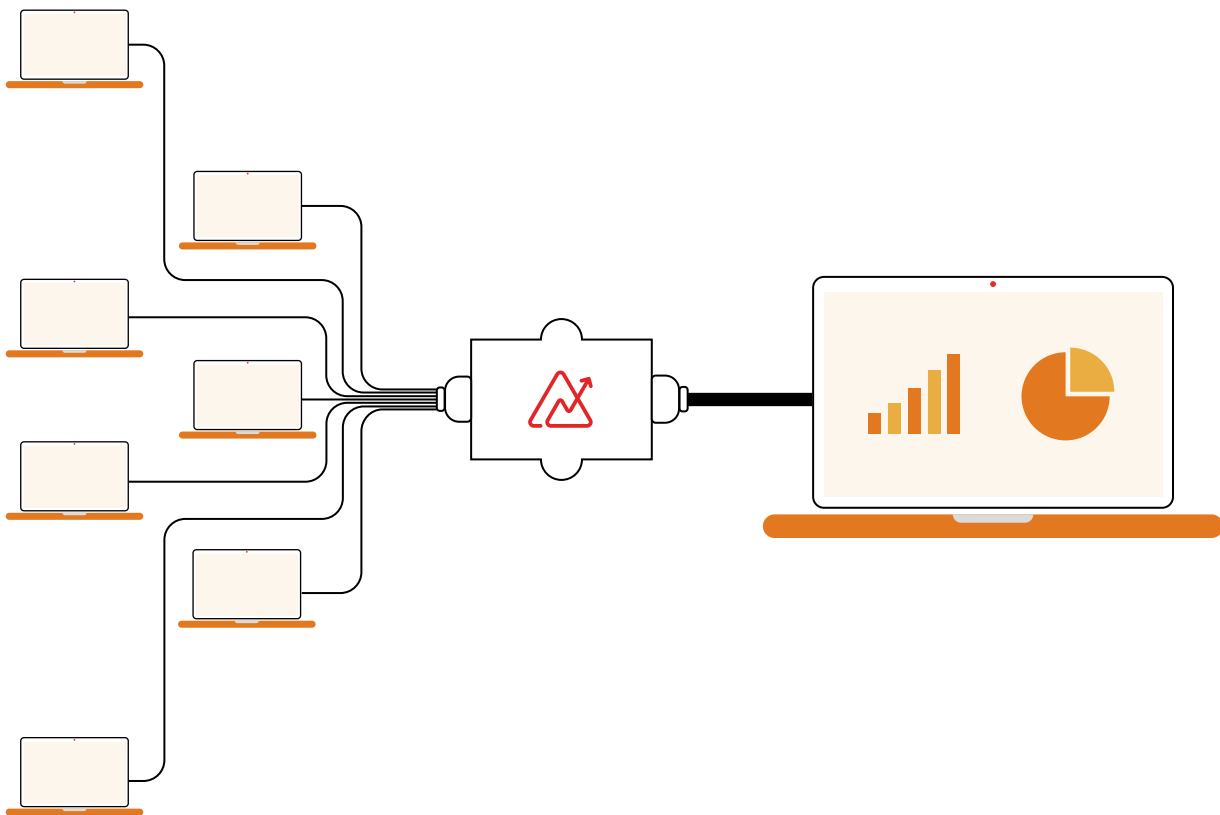
The data is
**trustworthy, honest
and accurate**



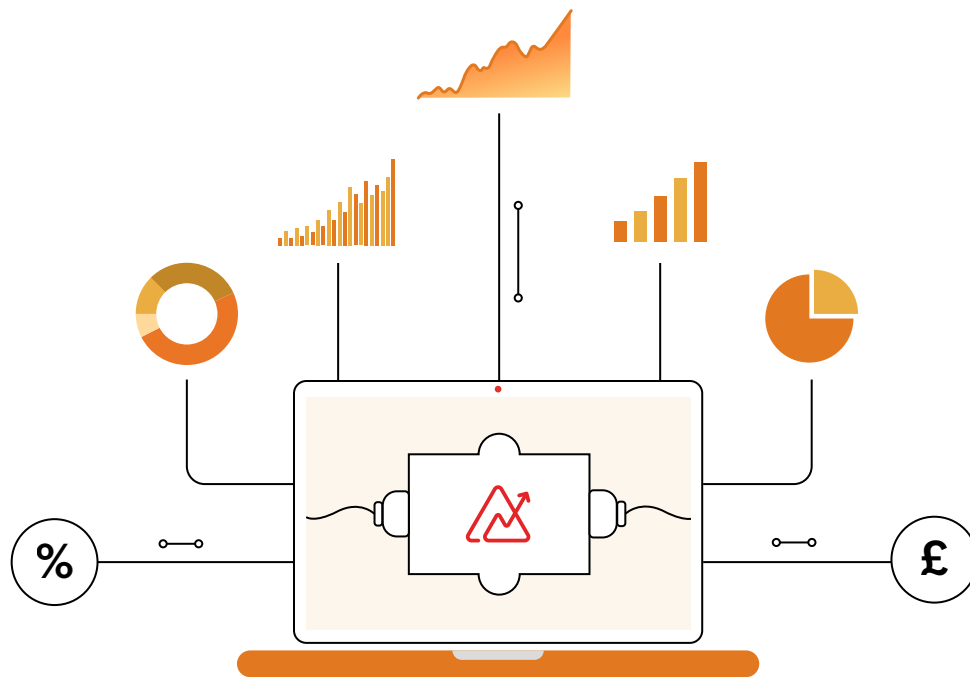
Kristian James

Business Intelligence & Analytics Manager

Although Zoho Analytics was introduced at Sparex in 2016, it wasn't until Kristian took the reigns of the BI department in 2017 that its full potential was unlocked. Using a Databridge connection, Kristian configured a daily sync from all of Sparex's disparate data sources into Zoho Analytics, which became the font of all its business knowledge. To deliver near real-time insights, this data upload completes before 8.30 am each day. The system's data is fresh and ready to be interpreted from the moment his colleagues begin work.



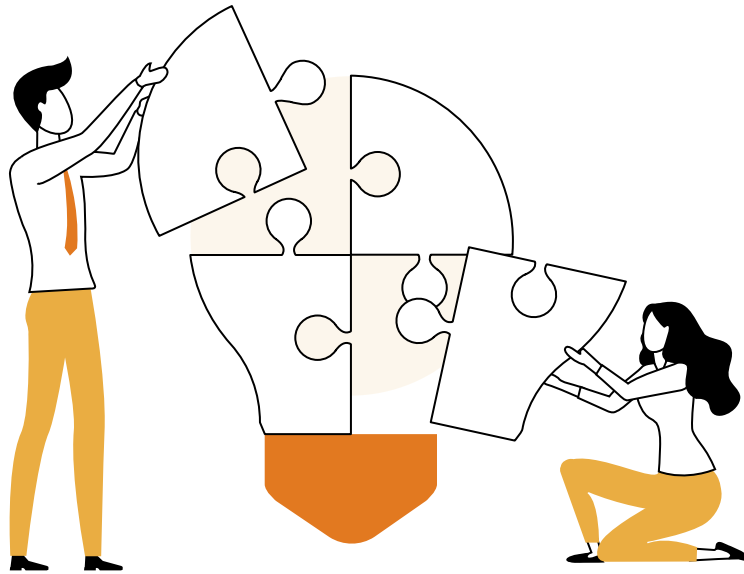
After channelling the data flow into Analytics, Kristian set about building reports, dashboards, at-a-glance KPIs and data visualisation charts to document important statistics for his 190 users. To easily share these insights, he created a schedule of automatically emailed reports for key departments and stakeholders. "We can set up automated schedules with a few clicks of a button and then we never have to worry about it again", reveals Kristian. Some users preferred to have automated report alerts inside Microsoft Teams, which Kristian could do using Analytics' out-of-the-box integration with the messaging app.



Gradually rolling out the Analytics implementation across Sparex, Kristian was able to tailor the reports and personalise the dashboards to the needs of each team. He recalls a meeting when one department, without Analytics at that time, first saw the software. The team leader - who had tried repeatedly to replicate Zoho's accuracy and aesthetics inside Microsoft Excel - delightedly exclaimed, "This is the tool we need!".

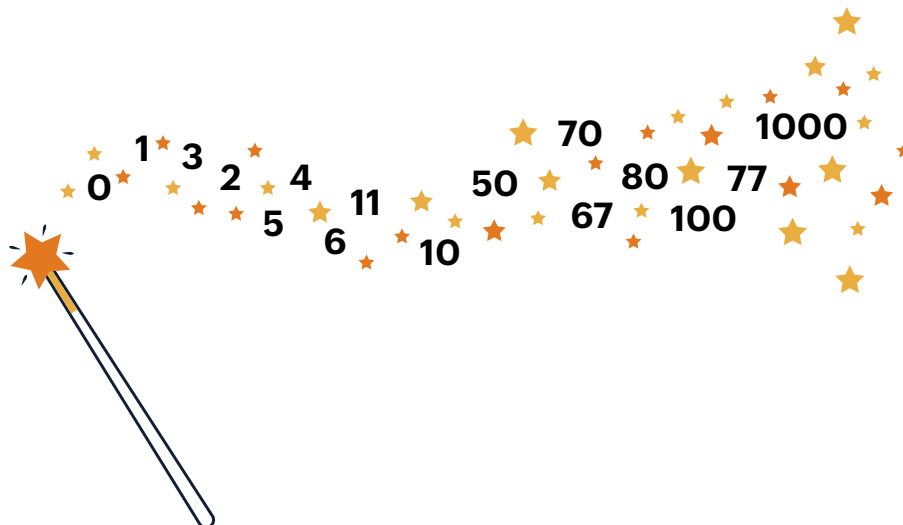
Kristian's favourite features:

- The ability to white label the platform so that screenshots of charts or graphs in presentations include Sparex's branding.
- The simple drag-and-drop dashboard builder with the "copy dimensions" tool to create uniform components.
- The permission variables controls, which mean that after logging in, each user only sees the specific data that they need.



With Analytics in tow, Sparex has achieved complete stability of data transfer and total data cleanliness, as well as gaining a flexible, user-friendly interface. It has fully restored its confidence in its data and as such, has allowed for progress through informed decision-making in every department. Throw into the equation Kristian's assertion that "Zoho's just really easy to use", and it's clear that Analytics is the powerful, well-rounded tool that was needed to support the growth of this world-leading agricultural parts supplier.

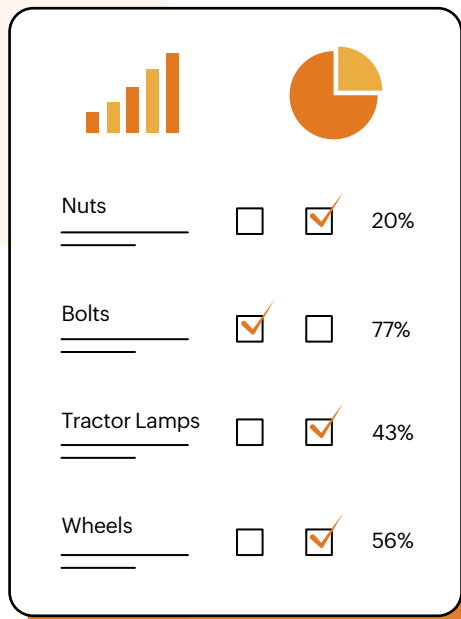
Indeed, if further proof were needed of Analytics's impact, Kristian recounts how a new colleague was introduced to the BI department as "Where the magic software exists that makes the numbers happen!".



Analytics in action

Not just a daily dose of sums and stats, Zoho Analytics has impressed Sparex with its sales-boosting potential. On one occasion, Kristian was asked by the Sales team to identify slow-moving and non-moving stock by creating a simple report in Analytics. Analytics was able to recommend a new selling price for these products that then triggered a huge uplift in sales. "We've now sold about 1.4 million dollars worth of parts that we never sold before", Kristian explains. Now that's what you call a return on investment!

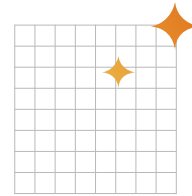
In another major boon for the business, Zoho Analytics has made the Data Quality Analyst role redundant, allowing Kristian to focus on more important projects. "Thanks to Zoho, we've been able to lose the previous role... it used to be 40 hours a week checking system after system after system...we have automated processes for that now and I just spend a few minutes of my week looking at it".



Self-Service: Championing DIY Analytics!



There's no
**bottleneck through
BI anymore**



Kristian James

Business Intelligence & Analytics Manager

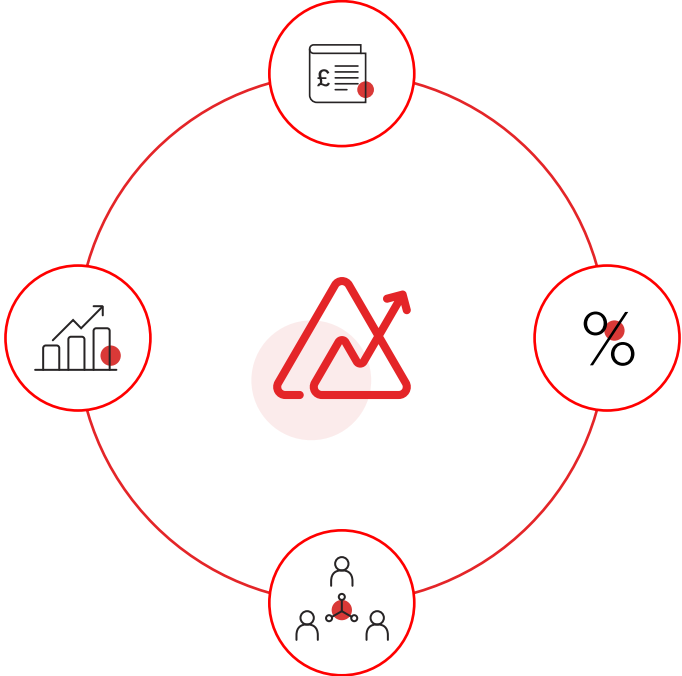
Alongside a raft of number-crunching capabilities, Zoho Analytics also boasts an intuitive Self-Service function. Self-Service allows users to create their own data visualisations without the need for assistance from a BI professional.

Since enabling the Self-Service functionality, Kristian has noted a considerable reduction in the amount of report requests he receives from his colleagues, down to 1-2 a week instead of 1-2 per hour. "With the Self-Service tool, we're able to empower our users to gather data themselves....they can get it whenever they want, wherever they are... All of our users can now build pivots, charts and dashboards themselves". Kristian encourages all staff to take advantage of the Self-Service capabilities, reassuring them that "you cannot break this tool or mess up the data. The data is there, it's true, good to go, safe to use". In this way, Self-Service has further reduced the demand on Kristian's time and resources without compromising the company's data precision or security.

Sparex's Zoho Analytics journey by numbers:

- Sparex manages 18 subsidiary companies around the globe with 190 users.
- 30,000,000 rows of data are uploaded to Analytics daily.
- 5 scheduled imports are processed before 8.30 am every day.
- 2,000 pivot tables and 4,000 query tables are maintained inside Analytics.
- 30 scheduled reports are emailed to key stakeholders each day.
- Sparex has created hundreds of interactive, informative Analytics dashboards.
- \$1.4 million of non-moving stock was sold after being identified in a report.
- Kristian's report requests were slashed from 1-2 every hour to 1-2 every week after employing Self-Service.
- **One** central source of reliable data, thanks to Zoho Analytics.

About Zoho Analytics



Zoho Analytics helps business users connect, prepare and analyse their data, create stunning data visualisations and discover hidden insights - all within minutes. A trusted BI platform with over three million users around the world, Zoho Analytics serves up actionable business data that can deliver a competitive edge, highlight opportunities or streamline processes. To see what Analytics can unlock for your business, arrange a free trial today.

Please find out more via our website: www.zoho.com/analytics



[zoho.com](https://www.zoho.com)



Zoho Analytics

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