

Informing the informers

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The challenge

CRU Group specialises in Commodities. Its mission is to support its global clients with market analysis, price assessment, consulting services and events for the mining, metals and fertilizers industries.

The solution

An FT Group Subscription enables CRU Group to better engage with and advise its customers across the globe. With the FT's global coverage of political, regulatory and market developments, this helps CRU enhance their knowledge of its commodity market specialists.

The benefits

CRU Group is able to retain its position as experts in its field delivering relevant and timely advice and information to clients and further increasing its reputation for delivering the highest quality business intelligence in the commodity sector.



FT is a very useful source for CRU, through their columnists our customer facing staff are able to put their commodities analysis into the context of global, economic, political and social trends.



Paul Robinson
Director, CRU Group

Background

CRU Group's analysts and consultants deliver high-quality business intelligence and advice to organisations in the global metals, mining and fertilizer industries.

Analysts and consultants value access to the latest Financial Times news and intelligence because they require a wider understanding of the political and economic landscape in commodity countries around the world and need supporting information they can trust around individual commodities.

Commodity experts

The FT plays a vital role in helping CRU Group get the reliable information on which both it and its clients depend, helping to fill any knowledge gaps and provide a broader context around events. "The FT does two things for us," says Robinson. "Firstly it provides a wider context for us to put our commodity analysis into. So, for example, we can look at the wider social issues, political and economic situation within Chile and feed that intelligence into our Chilean copper market analysis, allowing CRU Group to combined specific market expertise with wider national or international issues."

"Secondly we use the FT and other sources to help us recognise when industry specific events are changing into issues of political, national or even global importance," he adds.

"There are many events happening in the metals, mining and fertilizers sectors, every day. It is always important to know which are starting to be reported in the FT."

The knowledge-sharing between CRU Group and the FT goes both ways, with the FT regularly calling on experts from CRU Group to provide valuable insight for its commodity-related analysis. "CRU Group is one of the main commodity experts that we speak to when we require in-depth insight into bulk and metals markets," says Neil Hume, from the Financial Times Commodities Editorial Team.

Country focus

With a global client base to serve, information on developments in specific countries is particularly useful background intelligence for CRU Group. The Indonesian export ban, which has had a significant impact on commodity market sentiment and availability, is a case in point, says Robinson. "Through our Beijing office and our commodity experts we gather intelligence on what



We need to provide high-quality data and intelligence for our analysts to maintain their strong reputations. Their work is used around the world to aid our customers with opportunities in the commodities sector. It is vital we get the source data right.



Sara Culpin

Head of Information and Knowledge



we believe the impact of the Indonesian export ban is for specific commodities,” he explains. “Where the FT provides assistance is in filling our knowledge gaps, providing us with updates on the political situation in Indonesia, and providing context on the importance of commodity challenges to the new government.”

The FT’s coverage also serves as a useful indicator of just when particular issues become wider problems. “When the FT started reporting pollution concerns in the Chinese lead industry, we knew this issue had become a wider political problem in China,” says Robinson. “Similarly, when the FT reported links to the steel or aluminium industry, it gave us an indicator that these issues, which we’ve been discussing within the industry, are becoming issues of national and international importance.”

“We aim to have the highest levels of interaction with our customers in our sector,” says Robinson. “Ensuring our analysts and consultants are well informed, beyond their commodity specialism, provides a firm foundation for wide-ranging discussion with clients,” he continues. “The FT is one of our essential sources that allow us to deliver this service”. He points to a recent FT analysis piece on the five biggest challenges facing the new Indonesian President as an example. “Those challenges may then be discussed with our clients in the context of copper, nickel, coal or other commodities,” he concludes.

New channels

CRU Group is also making use of new channels to ensure its analysts can stay informed on the latest news wherever they are. Many access the FT through smart phones or tablets on their way into work, and can even set email alerts for specific countries, sectors or commodities to ensure they never miss a story which could impact on the information they provide to clients.

Social media is also helping CRU Group stay informed, as analysts follow the FT and individual FT commodities editors on Twitter. This provides them with instant access to the latest news and opinions, as well as providing a means to communicate directly with editors and journalists. “Neil Hume, Jack Farchy and I

interact on Twitter” says Robinson. “I like the instant access and direct communication”, he adds “and I find Twitter reveals a little bit more about Neil and Jack’s wider interests in the commodity sector”

The value the FT brings to CRU Group is clear. “The FT is the only source this year where we have expanded our number of users,” says Culpin. “It is a source that saves people time, is reliable, good quality, has broad coverage, is well written and respected at CRU Group and in the business world.”

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