



Retail Account Performance Management for Gallaher

The solution uses Microsoft SQL Server, Analysis Services and ProClarity Analytics Server.

Background

Gallaher is one of the premier tobacco companies in the UK. The market share of its brands depends to a large extent on the success of its distribution through retail accounts and its understanding of market dynamics. Field based account managers manage relationships with retailers and monitor the effectiveness of product distribution and presentation supported by a head office team who develop more advanced market insight.

Objectives

Gallaher wanted to be able to maximise the performance of its brands. Its objective was to get timely information on performance in each retail outlet, and, by identifying any underperformance, to alert field based account managers so that they could identify and resolve issues within the outlet. This would enable the field force to target their efforts where most required, maximise their effectiveness and maximise brand revenue and market share. The insight team required a system that was fast enough and flexible enough to analyse and interrogate this wealth of data.

Requirements

The solution had to provide accurate retail outlet level data, and to provide it promptly so that the analysis was always up to date, and so that timely alerts could be generated. The data structures had to support a wide range of analyses and aggregations and to be capable of adaptation to new requirements such as changes to retail and market structures. Both office and field based analysts required the same powerful and intuitive analytical capabilities with good performance.

As the solution was also a means of enhancing understanding of business intelligence potential within Gallaher, it was to use the most up-to-date multi-dimensional technologies, solution architecture and data visualisation techniques. The solution was to be introduced as a completely hosted solution, provided as a managed service.

Solution

Thorogood created a data warehouse which brought together selected EPOS data from the retail outlets, so that it could be cleansed and re-structured. The database used the latest analytical and reporting engines. Users based both in the field and at head office used a modern analytical and visualisation tool to access and analyse the data over the web.

Thorogood provides the system as a complete managed service, and manages the data, the software, the application, the server hardware and the web-based delivery of information, using its BI specialists based in Bangalore, India. There is a single point of responsibility for the performance of the system and any changes that are required due to changes in the business environment or business processes.

Technology

Thorogood built the solution using Microsoft SQL Server, Analysis Services and ProClarity Analytics Server. This gave scalability, analytical power and web-based access.

Outcome

The positive reaction of users to the solution exceeded the expectations of the project manager, Andy McDonnell. He commented: "In the past, our data was used primarily to look over our shoulder and see how we had performed historically – shaping our data took so much time that little was left for making sense of it all. The system has allowed us to finally start harnessing the power of this information and use it to drive our activity."

Thorogood are specialists in the application of multidimensional, relational, analytical, web-based, desktop and ETL (data extract, transformation and load) technologies to business intelligence requirements.

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