Sky IT Group uses a powerful technology platform to give retail suppliers rapid, actionable insights into product performance and consumer sales trends.
Leverage analytics for detailed visibility into sell-through performance for retail

How can brands collect critical data, run high-performance analytics, and visualize results to understand buyers’ behavior?

CHALLENGE

Retail analytics are the domain of New York-based Sky IT Group, a leader in global sell-through data collection, validation, and analytics. Its SKYPAD web-based reporting suite integrates advanced data collection and integration methodologies with an intuitive user-focused interface, giving merchandising, planning, and sales teams access to a powerful self-serve reporting platform.

SKYPAD eliminates the manual, labor-intensive, and burdensome process of compiling and validating inconsistent sell-through data across multiple retailers, channels, and disparate data sources such as vendor portals, merchant spreadsheets, and a host of other sources.

As the company’s client roster grew to over 50 global brands—including Theory, Alice & Olivia, Lacoste, Fendi, and Marc Jacobs—several challenges emerged around data variety, velocity, and volume. Sky IT Group needed to upgrade SKYPAD’s technology capabilities to enable its retail clients to gain better insights and make better-informed decisions.

“Leveraging accurate, store-level data and more timely self-serve reporting enables users to better anticipate product needs, discover emerging sales opportunities, and react to inventory imbalances with a higher degree of confidence.”

Gil Hakami, Business Development Manager, Sky IT Group
Better analytics + actionable intelligence = faster results

Sky IT Group upgraded its SKYPAD platform infrastructure to accelerate and refine data analysis.

SOLUTION

Installing the HPE Vertica Advanced Analytics solution, Sky IT Group now treats data in a truly vertical way. In the past, the company had to deal with each client separately; now, it can collect separate, individualized data for each. This has dramatically accelerated Sky IT Group’s processes.

Sky IT has the ability to sort massive volumes of data, calculate it correctly, and put it into appropriate database tables. This data is highly granular and can be used to correlate sales to factors such as product attributes (e.g. style, color, size), store location, even local weather.

The solution gives SKYPAD’s clients immediate, accurate, secure visibility into their products’ sales performance across all channels. That, in turn, helps them improve decision-making, improve collaboration between buyer and seller, accelerate supply chain processes, optimize inventory, and boost sales.

In shifting from a traditional database to the HPE Vertica model, the data UI stays the same. Behind the scenes, Sky IT gains tremendous performance, cost savings, and timely results, enabling the SKYPAD platform to scale with demand from Sky IT’s customers.

“We are now able to collect data into a coherent structure in a very rapid time as opposed to our legacy systems.”

Stephen Czetty, Vice-President and Chief Technology Officer, Sky IT Group
Better retail decisions, higher profitability

Fashion brands use Sky IT Group’s big data solution to view and analyze data collected and aggregated from multiple retail channels and disparate data sources.

RESULTS

Leveraging HPE Vertica Advanced Analytics software, Sky IT Group’s costs are down because the company needs less infrastructure.

Sky IT Group’s retail clients have accelerated their ability to understand customer trends and behaviors. This allows them to:

• Fine-tune inventory placement, driving increases in sales and margins and decreases in product markdowns.
• Improve supplier collaboration and communication.
• Ensure their products meet customer needs.
• Pinpoint resources to ensure they maximize return and minimize overhead and unnecessary inventory.
• Quickly shift inventory based on where specific items are selling, placing products in locations where demand is highest.

Clients gain visibility into weekly sales data with minimal lag between actual sales and data availability. They can easily track what’s selling, in which sizes and colors, at which stores, and at what quantities and price points, among other metrics.

Retail customers benefit from improved access to the products they want. Stores are less likely to be overstocked on unpopular items and out-of-stock on popular items, sizes, or colors. This not only maximizes sales, but enhances brand loyalty and reduces risk that products will need to be marked down to move inventory, which improves profitability.

USEFUL TIP

“Ten years ago in fashion, it was about optimizing return and focusing on winners. Today, you must manage and optimize margins on your losers as well. It’s a total package.”

Dane Adcock, VP Business Development, Sky IT Group
Here are the technologies that Sky IT Group used to soup up its SKYPAD solution.

To deliver faster insights into consumer sales trends, Sky IT powered its SKYPAD solution with the **HPE Vertica Analytics Platform**, as well as QlikView data visualization. The **HPE Vertica** platform runs on three 600 GB drives, with the ability to add more if and when capacity demands.

The solution runs in a cloud-based environment hosted by Rackspace.