

RETAIL PRODUCT MANAGEMENT COMPANY SAVES \$100K IN LABOR COSTS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In retail sales, proper product placement and effective displays are crucial to success. Premium Retail Services (PRS) goes to retail locations like Best Buy and WalMart, for clients such as Logitech, Motorola and Google. They ensure the products are well placed, look good, demo modes are working, and compare competitors' placements. When Aaron Hayes, Senior Software Architect, came on board in 2014, he saw the information bottleneck was IT, which had become a reporting shop and provided data that was stale. He convinced management that with Sisense BI, they could empower their users to get the data they wanted, when they wanted. The decision saved them over \$100,000 in labor costs to develop their own data warehouse.



PROVIDING TIMELY AND ACTIONABLE INFORMATION

Clients use PRS because their service results in more retail sales. The PRS representative goes to the stores and collects information about the product displays. The client then evaluates the report from PRS. If there are any problems, they send their own people to fix it. Clients are also kept updated on what competitors are doing in those same stores.

GETTING TO THE ANSWERS

PRS uses a homegrown web-based system developed in 2002 called Q-Trax. It was originally developed as a time reporting tool but has since evolved into a generic data collection tool. Data collection is structured as a survey within the store for the client and tracks the time the tasks take to perform. The survey has questions like: Is the product on the end cap at the store? Are the demos running?

Clients want the answers to those questions. That's a straightforward task for a particular visit, but you could only do it by project, you couldn't select by a date or date range. This meant that anything beyond a simple report of a specific visit became more difficult. If an existing report needed any modifications, it was up to IT to get that data or modify the report logic. Eventually, reports were so complex that by the time the report was produced, the data was stale with nothing actionable because it was already time to visit the store again and get fresh data.

One of PRS' clients came to them with a variety of complex compliance measurements that they needed to adhere to. The logic required was exceptionally difficult to write and Aaron saw the opportunity to get a BI tool into PRS. He knew they would see an immediate benefit, so this was a big driver to make a decision quickly.

THE SEARCH IS ON

Initially, Aaron was trying to stick with a Microsoft centric solution they were already using, but he wasn't getting anywhere. After reading a piece in Forbes about Sisense, he decided to give it a try. The driving factors were:

- ▶ Performance - Needed to crunch millions of rows in seconds
- ▶ Flexibility - Needed to read from a variety of data sources like MSSQL, MS Access, Excel, Google Forms and Sheets, CSV and flat files



- ▶ Scalability - Had to be able to easily grow with time
- ▶ Customization - Wanted to be self-served

The no-cost proof of concept from Sisense allowed him to rapidly set up his first dashboard prototype that integrated data from their custom system to all the other sources.

IMPORTING HALF A BILLION RECORDS IN 2 MINUTES

PRC went live with Sisense in June 2016. Currently their biggest Elasticube is 15gb. Aaron imports over half a billion records with Sisense in about two-minutes, making it simple to regenerate, all on a single server.

The Sisense dashboards report on the survey responses in a quick and actionable fashion. Clients can look at specific dates or ranges, compare what competitors are doing, and get feedback on performance, such as problems with displays or if product placement isn't optimal.

Aaron also integrated POS data and connected it to the survey data. A client can now quickly see the sales difference between stores, and gauge the benefit of using PRC. This shows the immediate ROI of using PRC services.

EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Recently Aaron is working with Sisense Everywhere. He's often heard in his office talking to "Alexa" and having her build his Elasticubes and dashboard widgets with basic dashboard server commands. The ChatBot allows him to interact from a chat console from anywhere and with any device, and be able to drill down on it, while the Echo mostly answers specific questions or performs specific commands. Aaron keeps finding innovative ways to use these tools.

HERO MOMENT

Aaron started Sisense deployment and replaced the ad-hoc reporting. Now Sisense is working its way into training and accounting. Aaron is bringing other departments on board by generating dashboards and giving them to key people in those departments. The reaction is always enthusiastic and positive. They love that they can do the reports on their own and easily manipulate the widgets so it is exactly what they need.

Aaron estimates that they saved \$100,000 in labor costs by using Sisense versus building the data warehouse on their own. The reduced workload has lowered costs and their customers immediately started seeing positive results from the additional and timely insights.

“ SINCE I'VE STARTED TO USE THE SISENSE ECHO, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO HAVE MORE INFORMATION RIGHT AT MY FINGERTIPS. ”

“ RATHER THAN USING A DESKTOP, BROWSER BASED DASHBOARD, I'LL GO INTO THE CHATBOT AND ASK QUESTIONS THROUGH CHAT, AND THAT WORKS REALLY WELL. ”