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PRODUCT REVIEW

Robinsons Boosts Growth with Better, Faster and Smarter Decision- Making



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ARC Retail Performance Management

Robinsons Boosts Growth with Better, Faster and Smarter Decision-Making

REVIEWER: Thelma G. Roxas, VP and CIO, and Ms. Jenifer A. Encomienda, BI Project Manager, Robinsons.

BACKGROUND: The Robinsons Retail Group is one of the largest retailers in the Philippines, operating more than 300 stores nationwide across eight retail formats, including department stores, supermarkets, hardware and home solutions, appliances, fashion specialty, toys, convenience stores and single price stores.

PLATFORMS: Windows 2003 Server, Sybase IQ Data Warehouse.

PROBLEM SOLVED: As a leader in innovative merchandising and marketing, Robinsons was poised to grow its business to the next level. Our ability to make better, faster decisions was a key enabler to our growth strategy. We had best-of-breed operational systems, but lacked a superior decision-making platform. Due to our disintegrated and ad hoc reporting processes, reports never came on time; were inflexible for advanced analysis, limited in presentation and visualization capabilities, and worst of all, the numbers were often inaccurate. We spent a huge amount of time preparing, correcting and analyzing data, and less time in its application. Therefore, we were unable to capitalize on short- and medium-term market opportunities. We wanted to move our decision making practices from gut instinct to a more scientific, scalable and sustainable one.

PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY: With the implementation of ARC from Manthan Systems, our merchandising, operations and marketing staff get daily reports and analyze their categories more effectively with intuitive reports and dashboards. They can perform a wide variety of analysis like drilling, slicing and dicing, score-carding, comparative analysis, identifying trends and patterns in key areas like sales growth, days supply and gross margin. Users can easily customize and create new reports. With ARC, we have realized benefits in many areas. For example, sales have increased because promotion-eligible merchandise is easy identified, resulting in increased off-take. We can now easily analyze the margins of SKUs

and come up with the competitive pricing strategies. We've improved days of supply and inventory performance with quicker response time for implementing programs and move-out plans focused on categories and SKUs with the highest days of supply. These are only a few examples of the benefits we've realized.

STRENGTHS: Being a product designed for retail, I think ARCs inherent ability to take away the pain of building parts of the decision-making technology stack and reach our goals in a few weeks has added tremendous value. It has helped us jumpstart and accelerate our endeavors. While ARC is a comprehensive solution for all aspects of decision-making, like operational BI and performance management, its ARCs usability and role-based guided analytics that has made it a favorite among our decision-makers. In all respects, ARC behaves like it's built for our organization, and its thoughtful design and application are its biggest strengths.

WEAKNESSES: Predictive modeling is an area for improvement.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Many benefits were derived by ARCs retail-centric design. It could deploy quickly; it was easy to learn, use and grow with; best practices were built-in; it is highly manageable with its self-service capabilities; and it needs low maintenance and technical manpower. In our evaluation, no other product matched up to ARC in this area. Much of the prebuilt capabilities also translated to cost advantages in deployment and post-deployment maintenance. Apart from these benefits, ARC has prebuilt integration and deployment accelerators for our JDA merchandising system. Its data integration tool has built-in retail capabilities like handling data errors, late polls, adjustments and source system changes. ARCs data warehouse model maintains data quality while delivering excellent performance. ARCs usage-friendly pricing, which is not based on user, server, processor or data growth enables us to save incremental costs.



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DELIVERABLES: ARC delivers analytics through various forms of dashboards, reports and ad hoc queries. There are hundreds of analytics and thousands of prebuilt metrics available in ARC. Prebuilt analytics are available in many applications like category performance analysis, promotion analysis, stock and sell-through analysis, assortment optimization, customer loyalty analysis, market basket analysis, SKU rationalization, finance analytics and many more. ARC uses many analytic methods like OLAP slicing and dicing, scorecarding, benchmarking, statistical algorithms and several advanced mathematical techniques. ARC has the ability to deliver outputs via the popular Web-based portal interface, mobile interface, email and even through Microsoft Office applications.

VENDOR SUPPORT: There was excellent support from the ARC team in all phases of our engagement, with knowledgeable subject matter experts, technical experts and project managers. The 24x7 global support model is timely, result-oriented and cost effective. Being a retail specialist, the ARC team is easy to work with. Our interactions are highly productive and best of all, the team believes not just in delivering a solution, but working with us as a partner in driving business results from it.

DOCUMENTATION: The documentation is complete and easy to understand.