

Pandora Australia

Pandora's path to the truth

A need to harmonise data from multiple point of sale and wholesale systems and to centralise data in a warehouse to provide data to Denmark and satisfy reporting needs in Australia saw Pandora Australia engage with Analytics8 to steer a fast-evolving and technically demanding business intelligence project.

Exhilarating growth

Even in a well run business, rapid growth can be disruptive, but Pandora Australia vice-president Brian Winther describes that which the jewellery company experienced from 2007 to 2010 as "incredible", and says, "having infrastructure and systems to keep up with this growth was challenging in the extreme."

That growth, IT manager – operations Eitan Schleissner says, meant Pandora constantly, "struggled with inconsistent reporting, and questions around the processes required to get reports, as well as of getting data together.

"It was causing angst that we didn't have a consistent way of reporting – just a lot of big spreadsheets.

"The business was asking, how do we analyse the data, and that also led to many, many more spreadsheets."

Winther says, "People had tried to create solutions on the run, for all the right reasons, but no one was sitting back, asking, where is all this data coming from, where's it all going to?

"It was chaotic, but nothing to do with poor management, simply because of the growth in retail sales, and then franchising started, as well, in 2010."

Conflicting sources

With many source systems, Pandora's

"In the BI maturity scale, did we want to be industry standard, or better?"

challenges began with how it got data in place to report on.

Schleissner says, "You'd get instances where someone forgot to load something, would quickly reload it but not tell anyone. It created issues when someone spent a whole morning working on something, and it's wrong.

"Reporting development was also tracked very poorly.

"There was no audit trail, and no one to answer to about data, and when you started questioning how good is the data behind it, there wasn't much of a story behind that, either."

Winther says of the company's reporting at the time, "We were more dependent on people than on process and we wanted to reverse that situation. We also wanted our people working smarter not simply moving data around to different tables, spreadsheets or cubes."

Finding guidance

The change came, Winther says, when, "we hired our merchandising and sales VPs, who both had extensive retail backgrounds and an expectation for information with much tighter data governance and retail-driven metrics."

The search for help with its former reporting solution led Pandora to Analytics8, with whom it quickly entered into a review of its business intelligence (BI) maturity.

Schleissner says, "We needed the right governance in place, and to think where are we now, where are we going tomorrow, and where do we want to be?"

"In the BI maturity scale, did we want to be industry standard, or better?"

Client profile

Originally founded in Australia, Pandora is a mid-range jewellery wholesaler-retailer headquartered in Denmark. Its products are sold in more than 65 countries on six continents through over 10,000 points of sale, including more than 800 concept stores.

The challenge

Pandora Australia had a need to standardise many different data sources, and the introduction of new reporting technologies created a project of considerable challenge. But the company also had to rebuild its data warehouse twice, with the second occasion brought about by a mid-project switch of the organisation's international ERP system.

Benefits


Pandora Australia now has:

- Internationally recognised group-leading BI practices
- A highly functioning data warehouse
- A single view of the truth

Technologies

- MicroStrategy
- Microsoft AX
- Microsoft SSIS





“There is documentation, and there is the skill and knowledge we didn’t have previously that comes with Analytics8.”

“For the VP of merchandising to be able to deliver her goals, it became imperative that we had the right systems in place to allow it to happen.”

A change of course

Analytics8 helped Pandora select a better reporting tool in MicroStrategy, and got to work on data warehouse design using the Analytics8 ETL [extract, transform and load] framework.

The mid-project switch of ERP systems precipitated by its Danish head office’s decision to implement Microsoft’s AX threw up new challenges.

Although the change had been known of for some time, Winther says, “What we didn’t anticipate very well was the impact on the DW build – this was much more our planning problem than a result of AX being introduced.

“Unfortunately, even though Analytics8’s work was proving itself, and we had runs on the board, a lot of those runs got wiped out.”

Schleissner says, “The impact was vast ... then we started again.”

Back on track

Pandora’s work with Analytics8 is now once more paying dividends.

Schleissner says, “We’re putting runs back on. We know the warehouse is building. Every morning we get emails and alerts, there is automation, access to reports every day, it’s structured and we can control the data.

“We no longer have someone waking up at 4am to distribute reports.

“There is documentation, and there is the skill and knowledge we didn’t have previously that comes with Analytics8. This is a true BI service company.

“There is a pool of people in Analytics8 to call on. [Partner] Alex Brown can really give us the retail view of things.

“It’s a big change, where we’ve said, let’s invest in partners that will grow us as a business, and I believe we’ve moved far more quickly than anyone could have imagined in BI maturity.”

Now, Winther says, “One of the really big achievements this year, is that we can say we are not [single] people-dependent in running our reporting.”

Control is certainty

The change is profound, Schleissner says. “Anywhere you want to pull data from, or connect your system to, it has to be through the data warehouse.

“With the new merchandising system coming online, you have to go through the warehouse to get the data.

“The other side is control. You start finding opportunities. You get to say, hey, that way we do campaigns or do discounts doesn’t really work because you can’t really report on it, so we’re going to do this to change it.

“Little things like that come out of this work that you wouldn’t have expected.

“We’ve now supplied a conduit to provide Denmark with access to the same data, and it’s in line with what they want for the business.”

Importance of advice

Schleissner says, “Analytics8 has been an extremely important part of this, and in getting us to the stage of being really focused on BI.

“They’ve helped us see the bigger picture, as well as having the resources to point us in the right direction.

“They have a great team on board, and they’ve been really committed to the project, and if we hit an issue we know they will fix it, and fix it really quickly.

“There have been plenty of moments when we thought, yes, we have the right supplier. We definitely think that.”

About Analytics8

Analytics8 is a Business Intelligence (BI) and Data Warehouse (DW) enablement and optimisation consulting firm with over 85 consultants in Australia and the United States. Analytics8 provides consulting services covering the end-to-end BI life cycle, from strategy to design, development, implementation, support, and training.

Though we are experts with many tools and technologies, we never lose sight of the business reasons for implementing technology.

Let us show you how to make the most of your data.

Contact us

SYDNEY
Level 2, Suite 4
65 York Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel + 61 2 9299 4430

MELBOURNE
Level 8
350 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel +61 3 8605 4880

CHICAGO
500 N Michigan Avenue
Suite 810
Chicago IL 60611
Tel: +1 312 878 6602

www.analytics8.com