



Dial Improves Sales Performance with the Informatica® Data Integration Platform™

“As a direct result of the rollout of Dial’s Informatica powered data warehouse, we now have a more detailed focus on core products in terms of sales and service performance. Data warehousing has also completely changed the way Dial manages data as a company, and has indirectly affected the entire organization’s performance and growth.”

—Paul Cunningham, Vice President of Data Warehousing, Dial Corporation

CHALLENGE

Creating a more sophisticated, robust method for conducting enterprise business analysis

INFORMATICA SOLUTION

- Informatica PowerCenter®

BENEFITS

- Improved sales performance
- More effective product distribution and sales promotions
- Reduced IT support costs

ARCHITECTURE

- Data Integration: Informatica
- Sources: Legacy mainframe, GEAC, Oracle
- Target: Oracle
- Platform: HP

The Dial Corporation, headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a \$1.7 billion company and is one of America’s leading manufacturers of consumer products, including Dial soaps, Purex laundry detergent, Renuzit air fresheners and Armour Star canned meats.

The Challenge

In May of 1996, Dial spun off from its parent company, VIAD. As with its parent company, Dial’s computing environment was wholly mainframe based and supported by an outsourced IT group. The company’s first attempts at conducting business analysis relied heavily on third-generation reporting tools that existed within its mainframe system. As a result, any new requirements for information were typically expensive and slow to turn around. With an ever-expanding need for strategic business analysis, Dial soon realized that it needed a more flexible and scalable solution.

In order to create a powerful and flexible computing environment after becoming its own entity, Dial began rolling out a client/server architecture and formed its own IT department. Its new architecture set the stage for Dial to introduce a more sophisticated, robust method for conducting enterprise business analysis through the implementation of a data warehouse.

The Solution

In 1997 Dial selected the Informatica data integration platform to develop a centralized data warehouse and several supporting data marts. This has enabled Dial to improve sales performance, establish more effective sales promotions and product distribution strategies, and reduce IT support—ultimately improving the company’s overall performance.

The company's Sales Analyzer data mart is used to integrate data from daily shipments and open orders, giving Dial the capability to track and analyze daily sales performance from an actual and budgeted perspective. This data mart also provides Dial's field sales team with daily reports on different sales-related metrics so they can continually refine their sales efforts.

The company's Promotions and Pricing data mart is used to determine where and how to allocate product resources. Dial monitors retail sales across the country to determine how sales are affected by different promotional campaigns and sales displays. These results tell Dial which campaigns were most effective in what regions, enabling the company to conduct more targeted, effective promotional campaigns in the future.

Dial's Customer Service Measurement data mart pulls together several years of product distribution data, such as carrier-delivery performance, inventory returns, percent case sales, and order fill rates. Dial uses this information to provide its customer service organization with reports to help determine the most effective distribution methods and conduct more targeted, effective promotional campaigns.

The most significant report generated from the company's Customer Service Measurement data mart is the Executive Scorecard, which contains several key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs measure case fill and lead-time averages, and are represented as macro performance summaries for Dial's CEO. The Executive Scorecard also provides reports on key customers.

The Results

Improved Sales Performance

Setting up a customer file used to require manual compilation of data from all of the company's different management systems. This cumbersome process took anywhere from 45 minutes to two days, depending upon the size of the customer account. With PowerCenter, the complete up-to-date file is available in just a few seconds.

More Effective Product Distribution

The Customer Service Measurement data mart has enabled Dial to determine which distribution methods are most and least effective, and adjust distribution methods accordingly. This information helps Dial improve its supply chain management processes and improve inventory control.

Elimination of Custom Code to Reduce IT Support

Because the Informatica data integration technology is non-code generating, Dial's IT staff is no longer strained to manage and document large sets of code. Furthermore, the company's infrastructure pieces are less complicated and more straightforward, resulting in reduced development time.



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