



## GfK Retail and Technology France Captures More Market Research Market Share with Informatica

“By automating the twin processes of data integration and data quality, we can launch new services more quickly, which helps GfK Retail and Technology France increase revenues and capture market share.”

– Fabrice Benaut,  
director of information systems and development, GfK Retail and Technology France

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### FAST FACTS

#### BUSINESS INITIATIVES

- Collect data from thousands of sources and provide market reports to customers in support of their strategic decision making
- Ensure that the market research data is accurate, reliable, and trustworthy
- Exploit new data sources in support of new product development

#### TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

Data Aggregation solution deploying Informatica PowerCenter®, Informatica Data Quality™, and Informatica B2B Data Transformation™ to access, cleanse, integrate, and deliver timely, trusted data both within the organization’s databases, enterprise applications, and 3,000 staff and for the extended network of market research customers.

### Consider the GfK Retail and Technology France Dilemma

GfK Retail and Technology France turns information into knowledge. The company uses point-of-sale information from thousands of retailers, resellers, and distributors to provide intelligent market research sales information on technology consumer goods and entertainment media. Given that GfK Retail and Technology France’s customers use the information for strategic marketing planning and product development, it needs to be timely, accurate, and high quality. Almost a decade ago, GfK Retail and Technology France was integrating just 50 data files every month. Today the figure is 1,700 per month and that demands a scalable, high-performance platform for data aggregation and data quality.

The Informatica® Platform is used to deliver timely, trusted data both within the organization’s databases, enterprise applications, and desktops, and beyond to the extended network of customers eager to learn more about their market situation—and act upon what they find. Following the introduction of Informatica technology, GfK Retail and Technology France has been able to launch compelling new market research services significantly more quickly, accelerate integration time by 400 percent, reduce development resources by 75 percent, and cut the volume of data errors by 80 percent. According to senior GfK Retail and Technology France executive Fabrice Benaut, “Informatica gives GfK Retail and Technology France an undeniable competitive edge in the market research market.”

There are no prizes for guessing what's at the heart of GfK Retail and Technology France's success. As the world's leading market research company for tracking point-of-sale (POS) data in technical consumer goods and the entertainment media markets, it's no surprise to find that data drives the company. POS data from retailers, resellers, and distributors in more than 80 countries forms the basis of the research, which is used to provide high-quality sales information on consumer durables, such as car navigation systems, and entertainment media, such as gaming software and mobile content.

GfK Retail and Technology France's StarTrack reporting platform is the heartbeat of the company's market research services. StarTrack (System To Analyze and Report on TRACKing data) has been developed with one goal in mind: to provide GfK Retail and Technology France clients with a system for analyzing market data in-depth. The easy-to-use, Web-based system provides access to key global market information, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Decision makers in all sectors of trade and industry use the information from retailers, resellers, and distributors for everything from product development, channel strategy management, and pricing strategy to optimizing marketing investment and maximizing stock efficiency.

Although StarTrack is successfully providing retailers, manufacturers, and other interested parties with detailed, high-quality, right-time market research information, the journey to this integrated data environment has not been free of challenges. Fabrice Benaut, director of information systems and development for GfK Retail and Technology in France, takes up the story. "In the embryonic stages of the business, we were integrating just 50 files from different retail sources every month," he says. "However, it was apparent that the volumes of data would explode as GfK Retail and Technology France launched more categories of research and targeted more consumer goods and entertainment media customers. Clearly, our competitiveness would depend on our capacity to industrialize the integration of the data. It was at that point that we began talking to Informatica."

## **Delivering Trusted Data Within GfK Retail and Technology France and Beyond to Customers**

Having evaluated various alternative solutions, GfK Retail and Technology France standardized on the Informatica Platform, based on the rich, proven functionality of the solution—and its ability to scale seamlessly to cope with the forecast growth in demand for the market research services. Today, GfK Retail and Technology France is using the Informatica Platform to access, cleanse, integrate, and aggregate timely, trusted data both within the organization's databases, enterprise applications, and 3,000 staff and for the extended network of customers.

The Informatica Platform introduces a single, unified data aggregation platform that allows Fabrice Benaut and his team to access and integrate data despite increasing data complexity and a multiplication in the number of different file formats and sources received from retailers, resellers, and distributors. Reflecting the scalable nature of the solution, the Platform has transformed the scope of GfK Retail and Technology France integration capabilities. Whereas almost a decade ago only 50 files per month were being processed, the Platform is now being used to integrate up to 1,700 files per month.

"Owing to the codeless environment provided by Informatica and the ability for us to profile the data, the speed of integration has, on average, halved every year. This means that integration that used to take us 8 hours to complete now only takes 20 minutes," says Fabrice Benaut. "That accelerated integration means we can launch new market research services more quickly, increase our competitiveness, and grow our revenues."

## Dramatically Shrinking Data Collection Time — Regardless of Source Complexity or Format

Alongside the growth in the number of files and formats received from the source network, the data has also grown in complexity. For example, it now includes more than 400 variations of Excel files, PDF files, Word documents, emails, and imagery. In light of this, GfK Retail and Technology France decided two years ago to introduce an Informatica data aggregation solution. The solution enables GfK Retail and Technology France to extract data from any file, document, or message—regardless of format, complexity, or size—and transform it into a usable form. This productive, codeless, visual design environment is dramatically shrinking the time to aggregate all of the company's file, document, and message-based data.

The Informatica Platform is also optimizing the quality of the data received by the trade and industry customers. The solution defines GfK Retail and Technology France data quality dimensions, builds data quality scorecards, and reviews data quality results. "Data quality is vital for GfK Retail and Technology France because it determines the quality of our customers' decision making. The information is used by managing directors, marketing directors, commercial directors, and other senior executives for strategic decisions which determine the direction of their organizations. At every level of the value chain, from the reference data through the data our customers use in StarTrack, Informatica helps us control, correct, and improve data quality," says Fabrice Benaut.

The implementation of these two solutions has enabled GfK Retail and Technology France to track data that is particularly difficult to categorize and compare. In the company's fledgling tourism line of business, for example, GfK Retail and Technology France can find data relating to individual travel bookings, such as the number of people booked, the number of nights selected, whether they took out the optional insurance policy, and other data. By effectively managing this complex data scenario, Informatica has played a vital role in the expansion of the tourism business.

"The Informatica Platform enables GfK Retail and Technology France to structure and accurately interpret the data—and then subsequently transforms it into solutions which our customers want to purchase," says Fabrice Benaut.

To extend the success of the implementation, GfK Retail and Technology France has also been able to integrate the 12,000 inbound emails and associated Excel attachments received each month from GfK Retail and Technology France partners—equivalent to 1.5 gigabytes of data. As a result, the GfK Retail and Technology France teams now only need to manage the exceptions (currently 10 percent of emails) and validate them prior to integration and aggregation. "The errors are very few and the productivity gain is tremendous," Fabrice Benaut adds.

"Informatica is instrumental in ensuring our customers can trust the market research analysis we provide them with—and that results in a more satisfied and loyal customer base."

— Fabrice Benaut,  
director of information systems  
and development,  
GfK Retail and Technology France

## Launch New Services More Quickly — and Increase Revenues

However, rapid integration, seamless scalability, and increased productivity are by-products of the real value of the Informatica Platform at GfK Retail and Technology France. By connecting an increasing volume of more complex data sources, more quickly, GfK Retail and Technology France has been able to launch new market research services more quickly, thereby broadening the scope for increased revenues. For example, Total Store Report (TSR) is a unique new tool from GfK Retail and Technology France that provides retailers and manufacturers with a comprehensive sales monitor covering their total portfolio of products and services, benchmarked against the retail market as a whole. TSR aggregates sales of every product, into a standardized global reporting structure, enabling customers to measure their performance against the market across all areas of the business.

Another service made possible by the rapid collection of high volumes of trusted data is the GfK Retail and Technology France Weekly Monitor. In an industry where a week can potentially comprise an entire retail store cycle, this consumer demand report based on POS data enables customers to track the effectiveness of promotions and advertising, identify trends behind seasonal shifts, launch strategies for new products, and maximize supply chain management by optimizing stock availability.

“Informatica gives GfK Retail and Technology France an undeniable competitive edge in the market research market,” Benaut concludes. “By automating the twin processes of data integration and data quality, we can launch new services more quickly, which helps GfK Retail and Technology France increase revenues and capture market share. Improved development productivity increases efficiency and allows us to redeploy staff to other key areas of the business. And Informatica is instrumental in ensuring our customers can trust the market research analysis we provide them with—and that results in a more satisfied and loyal customer base.”

### LEARN MORE

Learn more about PowerCenter, Data Quality, B2B Data Transformation and the entire Informatica Platform. Visit us at [www.informatica.com](http://www.informatica.com) or call 800.653.3871.

### ABOUT INFORMATICA

Informatica enables organizations to operate more efficiently in today's global information economy by empowering them to access, integrate, and trust all their information assets. As the independent data integration leader, Informatica has a proven track record of success helping the world's leading companies leverage all their information assets to grow revenues, improve profitability, and increase customer loyalty.

### BENEFITS

- Enabled the company to launch compelling new market research services significantly more quickly
- Helped increase market research revenues
- Accelerated data aggregation time by 400 percent
- Reduced required development resources by 75 percent
- Cut volume of data errors by 80 percent
- Led to a continuous improvement in data quality

### NUTS AND BOLTS

- Products: Informatica PowerCenter, Informatica Data Quality, and Informatica B2B Data Transformation
- Sources: Mainly Excel files (more than 400 formats)
- Targets: Oracle-based StarTrack reporting data warehouse



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