



Based in Sandpoint, Idaho, Coldwater Creek is a national retailer of women's casual apparel, jewelry, accessories, and gifts. They sell through more than 100 retail stores nationwide, their direct-mail catalog, and via the Web.

Hitachi Consulting helped them restructure their business analyst and data warehouse technical staff into one Business Intelligence group and to implement Microsoft Reporting Services.



C Case Study: Coldwater Creek

Business Challenge

Coldwater Creek's Business Intelligence group, comprised of business analysts and data warehouse technical staff, is responsible for fulfilling reporting and analytical needs of the corporate offices, two call centers, a distribution center and more than 100 full-line and outlet stores. They needed a unified reporting solution that supported interactive reports and allowed users the flexibility to drill down for information and easily change search parameters. Their existing reporting platforms didn't scale well for such wide-ranging reporting requirements. Interactivity was difficult without individual reports, Web reports had limited layout capabilities and few had the ability to print full format.

To improve the costly, time-consuming and inflexible process, they evaluated reporting platforms by focusing on:

- Flexible report authoring
- Secure access to report information
- Multiple delivery formats
- Formatted printing for customized reports
- Integration with Microsoft® SQL Server™ 2000, Microsoft Analysis Services, and Microsoft Sharepoint Portal Server

The Solution

Coldwater Creek selected Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Reporting Services and enlisted the help of Hitachi Consulting, a Microsoft Gold Certified Business Intelligence Partner, to replace its collection of in-house and third-party reporting applications and deploy the Microsoft Reporting Services solution.

Hitachi Consulting recommended its Fast Track to Reporting Services, a five-day combination of Reporting Services training and consulting (two days of intense hands on training along with three customizable days of onsite consulting).

Before Reporting Services was officially released, Hitachi Consulting had a complete training program available. The Fast Track program allowed Coldwater Creek to focus not only on Reporting Services, but the entire reporting environment.

Hitachi Consulting worked with Coldwater Creek to set up and configure its reporting server and review specific reporting needs. The Business Intelligence group then quickly began developing the first production report.

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Within three hours of training, that team was able to successfully create its first production report. Hitachi Consulting also helped write additional reports, mentor the report developers and address any implementation issues.

Business Benefits

As a result of the implementation, Coldwater Creek has seen benefits in:

- Consistent information
- Improved customer experience
- Reduced total cost of ownership

By combining Coldwater Creek's business analysts and data warehouse technical staff into one Business Intelligence group, they eliminated conflicting reports from various groups. Deploying Reporting Services in the BI group brought data consistency by providing a unified structure for accessing and exploring information.

Reporting Services' rich feature set enabled users to export reports into desired formats and improved printing capabilities, allowing for easy dissemination of information and reduced report development time.

Coldwater Creek reports a lower total cost of ownership as a result of the implementation for the following reasons:

- Analysts require less time to create new reports and fewer reports need to be created because of interactivity and flexibility
- Reporting Services can cache reports, so end users not only have faster reporting, but process fewer queries
- Single reports now meet multiple report requirements, allowing analysts to spend more time analyzing data and less time generating reports
- They leveraged existing software investments in SQL Server 2000, Analysis Services and Sharepoint Portal Server to gain licensing savings

Overall, the solution is helping Coldwater Creek to make better business decisions faster. Managers can explore sales data, staffing, and customer traffic on national, regional, district, or store basis. Store managers can determine trends, identify cross-and up-sell opportunities, and staff stores to optimize the conversion rate of store visitors to purchasers.



About Hitachi Consulting

As Hitachi, Ltd.'s (NYSE: HIT) global consulting company, Hitachi Consulting is a recognized leader in delivering proven business and IT solutions to Global 2000 companies across many industries. We leverage decades of business process, vertical industry, and leading-edge technology experience to understand each company's unique business needs. From business strategy development through application deployment, our consultants are committed to helping clients quickly realize measurable business value and achieve sustainable ROI.

Hitachi Consulting's client base includes nearly 30 percent of the Fortune 100 as well as many leading mid-market companies. We offer a client-focused, collaborative approach and transfer knowledge to our clients throughout each engagement. For more information, call 877-664-0010 or visit www.hitachiconsulting.com

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Hitachi Consulting
2001 Bryan Street
Suite 3600
Dallas, TX 75201
info@hitachiconsulting.com
Toll Free Phone: 877.664.0010

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