

Modell's Ups its Game with Self-service Data Prep



Background

Headquartered in New York City, Modell's Sporting Goods is America's oldest, family-owned and operated retailer of sporting goods, athletic footwear, active apparel and fan gear today. Founded in 1889 by Morris A. Modell, four generations of Modells have developed the family business into a chain of over 150 stores throughout the Northeast including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, with a focus on customer service and quality products.

Challenge

Retail is a fast-paced business. To stay competitive, organizations like Modell's must react quickly to market place conditions, industry trends, and economic upticks and downturns, sometimes overnight. 20 years ago, critical sales, inventory and transactional data lived in a mainframe system that was only accessible through Lotus 1-2-3. Joe Paltenstein, now AVP, Assistant Controller at Modell's Sporting Goods said, "It was challenging to get the data we needed out of the mainframe system and into a workable format that we could use. And with so many different types of data it was hard to extract any useful insights without a painfully slow reformatting process. We had to print out reports on green bar paper and then entered the data into spreadsheets."

Solution

At the time, Altair had just come out with its product for data preparation, so Modell's decided to give it a try. Now, two decades later Modell's is still using Monarch and depends on its efficient and effective data preparation capabilities for its day-to-day business needs. "The product is so intuitive," said Paltenstein, "I learned how to use Monarch my first day on the job, and Altair continues to enhance it." Today, Modell's has a new ERP system and users in finance, accounts payable, inventory control, credit card reconciliation, sales auditing, and real estate all rely on the Monarch system to pull financial reports, accounts payable check registers, and various merchandise inventory reports.

MODELL'S SPORTING GOODS®

Industry

Retail

Challenge

Modell's had no efficient way to extract and combine different data sources to provide important retail business insights in a timely manner.

Altair Solution

Altair® Monarch® eliminates rekeying of data and streamlines data sources to provide timely information for improved business operations across 150 stores.

Benefits

With Monarch, no programming is required, it's easy to use and allows for fast and efficient data retrieval and reporting.

On average, Paltenstein produces 200+ reports a month. "We use Monarch to extract different types of data and summarize it into reports, which can be thousands of pages long. The system also helps us quickly spot anomalies that can provide important insights into our business," he added. "It's so easy. I just create a batch file, extract the data, and run the report. I use Monarch to find problems. If the data doesn't make sense, it helps you find that needle in the haystack." Today, more than 20 Modell's employees are dependent upon the data models that Paltenstein has built using Monarch for their day-to-day jobs. The finance department even uses it to bridge the gap to other departments that don't use Monarch. In addition, individual store profit and loss reports (P&Ls) are created monthly using Monarch to retrieve and format the data so upper management and operations can analyze it. Monarch gives Modell executives a big picture view of all their stores - letting them see which are performing better than others and what inventory is moving or isn't. They can also drill down and see how much they're spending on utilities, supplies, credit card costs, etc. - to help them make smart decisions about their business.

"If I didn't have Monarch, I wouldn't be able to get to the data or meld all my data sources together to help us improve operations. It's a great tool and invaluable for getting my job done every day."

Joe Paltenstein, AVP, assistant controller, Modell's Sporting Goods

Results

Monarch has become a part of Paltenstein's daily work life, and he continues to recognize the value it provides in terms of time savings and efficiency. "I'd never be able to hand-key thousands of numbers or extract the data we need in a timely fashion without Monarch," he said. The Altair tool enables them to generate multiple reports from Modell's ERP system and merge them into useful reports they can actually use, allowing them to make smarter, faster decisions.

About Modell's

Modell's is the oldest sporting goods retailer in the U.S. with more than 150 stores in the Northeast - from New Hampshire to Virginia.

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