

DMA Provides Customers, Distributors, and Employees with Insight into the Supply Chain with PivotLink On-Demand BA

“PivotLink gives us a sense of how to remove non-value added costs by helping us gain visibility into our transactional data. Now we can investigate price exceptions before they become impactful errors, pinpoint food cost issues, and track operational performance in order to continually maintain costs and improve customer satisfaction across the supply chain.”

— Jim Szatkowski, VP Technical and Data Services, DMA



INDUSTRY

- Consumer Products

GEOGRAPHY

- North America

CHALLENGES

- Huge amount of transactional data generated daily
- Insufficient IT resources to build or maintain an in-house solution
- Provide 50 plus organizations with secure access to supply chain data
- Empower users to access and understand their data

RESULTS

- Rapid implementation with minimal IT involvement
- Near real-time visibility into the supply chain
- Better understanding of how to optimize points in the supply chain
- Differentiated service and higher levels of customer satisfaction

CHALLENGE

Headquartered in Schaumburg, IL, Distribution Market Advantage (DMA) is a national foodservice distribution system whose shareholders are prominent regional foodservice distributors. They joined forces to provide foodservice operators with the pricing, distribution and technological advantages of a national organization, and the service priority of a local business. DMA customers include Chili's, Macaroni Grill, Potbelly Sandwich Works, and PF Chang's China Bistro. DMA's distributors include Ben E. Keith Foods, Conco Food Service, Food Services of America, Gordon Food Service, HPC Foodservice, Hawkeye Foodservice Distribution, IFH, Jacmar, Maines Paper & Foodservice, Nicholas & Company, Inc., Reinhart FoodService, Shamrock Foods Company, and Systems Services of America.

A lot of transactional data gets generated throughout DMA's supply chain each day. DMA's 50 plus customers and distributors needed visibility into the supply chain, but the company's existing data warehouse fell short of an end user's need to access relevant data for daily decision-making. The company did not have the resources to develop or maintain an in-house BI solution. “We were essentially using Microsoft Access to create reports by combining intricate product cross reference files with a fast moving river of invoice transactions. It was tedious, time consuming, error prone and non-scalable,” said Jim Szatkowski, VP Technical and Data Services for DMA.

What DMA needed was an on-demand BA solution that could:

- Handle massive amounts of transactional data in near real-time
- Enable customers to take “analytics into their own hands”
- Be fast and easy to deploy while lowering operating costs
- Scale as the business grows

"PivotLink allows us to take a performance driven approach to our business. Having crystal-clear visibility into the supply chain to identify problems early and make real-time adjustments to supply chain processes is driving new strategies into the DMA business, higher levels of collaboration and efficiency among our customer base and an exceptional service experience across the board."

— Jim Szatkowski,
VP Technical and Data Services, DMA

PivotLink is a leading provider of on-demand business analytics.

For more information:
(866) 625-9884
pivotlink.com



SOLUTION

DMA uses PivotLink to take large volumes of transactional data from its data warehouse and enables its 50 plus customers and distributors to securely access the data required to run their business. "We are a cooperative of 12 companies competing with national broadline distribution companies. We give customers a competitive advantage by providing deep visibility into their data, advanced analytic capabilities that are easy-to-use and cool tools like the Google gadget. "Once they see our data presented in the PivotLink application, they quickly realize that DMA has industry leading tools. PivotLink is very intuitive to use which quickly won over our users, so adoption wasn't an issue. Easy access to data is critical in building a data-driven enterprise" said Szatkowski.

The company also leverages PivotLink internally. DMA's sales budgets are combined with daily transaction data to provide a near real time understanding of performance against budget and forecast from the highest summary to the most granular detail. "Combining data from our price verification tool to quickly identify exceptions between our customer's negotiated manufacturer agreements and the prices held in our systems, helps to ensure we are invoicing our customer correctly and are eliminating potential errors before they cause chaos."

RESULTS

With near real-time visibility, DMA can make more informed decisions on how to optimize each point in the supply chain, such as identifying ways to take non-value added costs out of the process. "Unplanned deliveries are costly, so a group comprised of a customer, DMA staff and distributor personnel wanted to develop a report to identify where this activity was occurring," Szatkowski begins. "With PivotLink's help, we integrated a delivery schedule with our transactional data and set-up specific drill paths to allow us to see the low hanging fruit at a high level and quickly level down to the specific deliveries and product combinations. Patterns emerged that pointed to the root causes: inefficient entry of orders into the system, running inventories too low prior to period end and a lack of understanding to the costs of unplanned deliveries. Together the group worked to turn insight into action. The number of deliveries are running very close to their weekly schedule and approximately \$13,000 in expense was eliminated over the past year" Szatkowski concludes.

With that kind of success story, users quickly understood the potential of analytics to drive performance enhancing initiatives. In turn, they asked DMA to provide additional content within PivotLink, further enabling DMA to build a culture of information accessibility, collaboration and crystal-clear visibility.

Benefits:

- Self-service, Web-based analytic and reporting tools
- Secure access from any Web browser, anytime
- Ad hoc reports generated in minutes rather than hours
- Improved productivity for business end-users
- Free-up IT resources for more strategic tasks