



1-800-FLOWERS.COM GATHERS A BOUQUET OF CRM CAPABILITIES

SAS® flourishes within retailer's information delivery framework

Industry

Retail

Business Issue

Develop an information delivery framework that supports advanced CRM and aligns IT strategy with long-term corporate goals.

Solution

SAS® helps provide a CRM strategy that can be leveraged across e-mail, catalog and telephone channels and used across multiple brands.

Benefits

SAS® generates multiple views of customer data in a fraction of the time.

From its innovative use of telecommunications technologies in the 1980s to its pioneering Internet programs in the '90s, 1-800-FLOWERS.COM has always been a company that embraces technology. Today, the retailer's IT department, headed by CTO Enzo Micali, views information technology as an invaluable element of corporate success and SAS as a leading component of its IT architecture.

"1-800-FLOWERS.COM would not be growing at its current pace without ongoing and significant contributions from the IT side of the business," says Micali, "and SAS plays a huge role in our information delivery framework." That framework, according to Micali, is a multitiered architecture that puts strategic information directly into the hands of business users. "SAS is a major piece of that framework. It's a standard around here," he says.

As part of the retailer's information delivery framework, SAS helps 1-800-FLOWERS.COM focus on customer relationships. "Our company is founded on the ability to help people connect," says Micali. "SAS makes it possible for us to know our customers and to understand how they connect with each other."

A multibrand CRM strategy

With SAS, the retailer has developed a CRM strategy that can be leveraged across e-mail, catalog and telephone channels; the strategy is also used across multiple brands, including The Popcorn Factory, Magic Cabin Dolls, GreatFood.com, Plow & Hearth and HearthSong.

"IT is one of the core capabilities that we look to leverage across all of our brands," explains Micali. "When it comes to CRM, SAS plays a role in the operational piece, the strategy piece and the development piece." In fact, he says SAS spans the entire decision-support process for CRM and permeates the entire organization.

"On the back end, SAS supports all data formats, and on the front end, everyone in the company, at one point or another, uses data that is either directly or indirectly touched by SAS." Available through the company intranet, customer data can be viewed at many different levels, including departmental views, which present data for unique divisional needs and common views. These show a general snapshot of customers, including order history and household data across the whole family of brands.

In other words, marketing executives and customer service representatives alike can use SAS to determine if a first-time customer at Magic Cabin might be interested in a catalog for The Popcorn Factory, or if a recurring telephone client for 1-800-FLOWERS.COM would like to be notified about a Mother's Day promotion at the Plow & Hearth Web site.

Aligning corporate and IT goals

In addition to supporting the company's immediate CRM endeavors, SAS also helps Micali align IT goals with long-term corporate goals. Not only is he better able to maintain a low capital deployment profile and a low expense ratio, but he can also support programs



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Enzo Micali
Chief Technology Officer
1-800-FLOWERS.COM

to broaden and maximize product offerings, refine the multiple-brand strategy and optimize inventory management.

Bill Carson, Vice President of Application Solutions, is especially confident about the future with SAS. “The overall architecture allows flexibility and scalability. We’ve already scaled SAS from a single-user, NT-based environment to a multiuser, UNIX-based platform, and it was a very smooth transition. That’s very powerful from a flexibility and scalability perspective. So in the future, we know it will be easy to grow these programs even further, and that works perfectly into our strategy.”

Currently, Micali’s team is working on a number of application development and consolidation efforts to standardize

common platforms and reduce server usage throughout the corporation. And like most companies with multiple transaction systems and millions of customers, data integration is an important issue at 1-800-FLOWERS.COM.

“Data consolidation is a big push for the future,” explains Carson. “We have a lot of different brands with multiple transaction systems, multiple warehouses and a very complex data environment, but SAS does an excellent job of bringing all that data together for one consolidated view so key marketing strategies can be developed.”

Whether accessing data from Oracle databases, NT-based SQL servers and Microsoft Access databases, or delivering information to company executives, SAS saves time for

the company’s IT development and integration teams. “Partnering with SAS has been great from an IT perspective, because the software is very self-explanatory and the end users are able to work easily with the data,” says Carson. “It used to take longer to generate the multiple data views that the various departments needed, but SAS automatically provides data for different areas of the company and frees up a lot of our time.”

Most importantly, Micali says SAS helps the company derive competitive advantage. “The upside to a custom-built SAS application is that you can develop something that’s specific to your needs. With a custom-built SAS solution, I’m able to model exactly what the business needs much easier than I could with an off-the-shelf package.”



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