



MMA PIPES INSIGHT TO CUSTOMERS WITH SAS®

MMA works with clients to develop fact-driven marketing strategies, brand plans, on-demand marketing effectiveness and comprehensive analysis of brand plan execution for more than two dozen FORTUNE 500® companies. With help from SAS Analytics, the company's customers have consistently improved marketing ROI by 10 to 15 percent.

Business Issue

MMA wanted to provide customers with predictive analytics and market simulations using real-time data.

Solution

SAS® provides MMA with the technology to create a pipeline of data to its clients and a simple means to analyze, forecast and simulate using the data.

Benefits

MMA customers improve marketing ROI by 10 to 15 percent.

Public companies are increasingly demanding that their marketing departments be accountable for the money they spend. Decisions based on gut feelings, expensive ad campaigns that build brand awareness and soft metrics like brand health are under intense scrutiny. MMA dispenses with the feel-good marketing in favor of analysis based on facts driven by SAS. "Our mission is to help companies assess and evaluate the financial impact of their marketing efforts – and then improve those efforts through analytics and optimization," says Ed See, MMA's Co-President and Chief Operating Officer.

"Brand awareness is nice, but if awareness leads somebody to the aisle and they reach for an off-price product rather than yours, you haven't really done your stockholders any good," See says. "Marketing is probably the largest noncapital spend in the US and for many European companies. It's become a focus area for financial and marketing officers to really say, 'What are we getting for these dollars?'"

MMA has used SAS for years but wanted to step up the way it helps clients. "In the past we would deliver reports and outputs on PowerPoint. It was read and used, but it was yesterday's data and it landed on a shelf. What our clients really needed was a look at yesterday's data, today's data and a simulation tool to tell what tomorrow's data would look like. SAS gave us that capability," See says.

SAS was the only company with a product that could be easily customized to provide data to clients' desktops. "SAS was far and away the strongest player in terms of being able to integrate into another application," explains Dave Skinner, Senior Vice President of Product Development and Consulting. The only other option would have been to build a system from scratch, and as See explains, his company is a marketing analytics firm, not a software company. The SAS name also helps MMA market this option to clients. "SAS is seen as the gold standard," See says.

MMA created a decision support service called Avista – a SAS-based software solution – that enables its clients to run what-if scenarios to improve their budgeting and strategic planning processes. Instead of reports, clients log-on to MMA's servers and look at their data online. "We've laid down a technology pipeline that sits on top of core SAS analytics and other applications, and it allows our clients to access their data in darn close to real-time," See explains. About 65 percent of MMA's clients use the tool.

Customers use the data that MMA organizes, funnels and analyzes in different ways. A major brewery uses it to figure out how to best market its most profitable products – and spend the least marketing its less profitable beverages. They do this by running a simulation on their marketing spends. "Many companies have gotten the most they can out of their supply chain; now they are trying to maximize and optimize their demand side," See says.

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MMA

Another company with a stale cosmetics brand reinvigorated the brand by developing a successful marketing approach using MMA’s Avista platform driven by SAS.

Skinner says a key advantage of using SAS is that companies can make corrections to their marketing plans on a monthly basis – something that was impossible in the past because it was too onerous to pull data every month. “So rather than doing complex planning up front and then looking at it quarterly, clients can now build a forecast with our tool in the planning stage then rerun it and course-correct on a monthly basis.”

And when Skinner talks about building a forecast, it doesn’t involve any programming skills. “Our customers aren’t analysts, programmers or statisticians. They’re marketing managers, and with SAS we’ve given them a tool they can use.”



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POWER
TO KNOW.**

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