



# DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT

Solver Data Warehouse streamlines reporting and budgeting for distribution management company.



[www.distributionmgmt.com](http://www.distributionmgmt.com)

### Company Profile

Established in 1991, Distribution Management provides the operational infrastructure for its subsidiary companies, specializing in automated order handling, fulfillment and shipping of small packaged goods.

### Industry

Distribution

### Country

United States

### ERP System

Microsoft Dynamics SL



## Solver Data Warehouse Streamlines Reporting and Budgeting for Distribution Management Company

Looking for a more sophisticated, consolidated approach to financial reporting and budgeting across their subsidiaries, Distribution Management opted for a business user-friendly, powerful solution to produce financial statements and eliminate offline, manual processes. The Solver Data Warehouse empowered the Distribution

Management team to make their analytics more efficient across the organization.

Distribution Management provides the operational and financial infrastructure for their growing list of subsidiary companies, which primarily specialize in automated order handling, fulfillment and shipping of small packaged goods. The company is headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri and is able to reach 99% of the U.S. within two days from its four strategically located distribution centers. An order accuracy rate of 99.9% is reflective of the operational excellence and efficiencies that have resulted from significant investment in technology and a dedicated IT development staff specializing in integration, automation and real-time reporting.

Distribution Management was established to support the growth and acquisitions of its subsidiary companies. Over the years, more and more

processes developed into one-off, pieced together tasks that simply were not efficient or dynamic. They wanted to support decision-makers with accessible reports, budgets, and forecasts. "Like many growing companies, the increasing scale and complexity of our business presented significant challenges for our finance and accounting teams. We were managing more and more offline, custom Excel planning & reporting spreadsheets," Distribution Management's Director of Financial Planning and Analysis Eric Sliger says. "We faced significant challenges with version control and lacked the ability to quickly assess changes in planning & forecasting drivers. We recognized that in order to support the growing demands of our business leaders we had to become more sophisticated and efficient in our planning and reporting processes."

When Distribution Management implemented

Solver as a solution to better manage their growing amounts of data across the company, the team noticed the effects on multiple levels.

“Implementing Solver has made a big impact. Some in the obvious ways, like introducing collaborative planning tools, real time budgeting and forecasting reports, and our graduation from numerous offline Excel files to a centralized and consistent repository of results and reports,” Sliger says. “But also some in less obvious ways, like improved business processes and more meaningful interaction with our business leaders as a whole.”

Some of these effects can be easily attributed to the power of the complete Solver suite. “We are excited to leverage the full suite of Solver features to support both our financial and operational performance reviews,” Sliger says. “We have successfully integrated our financials into Solver and have leveraged the inclusion of statistical measures within this data structure to incorporate high level operating metrics. We are currently scoping how to integrate our existing data warehouse into Solver so that we can leverage the platform holistically across our business, to include products, pricing and operational aspects.”

The Solver solution, called Solver, is based on Microsoft

SQL Server, Microsoft Excel and a Web Portal. Solver is headquartered in Los Angeles, CA and operates internationally, with a total of 115 employees.

The implementation of Solver was smooth because of strategic partnerships, both with Solver and the reseller partner. “Most of our interactions have been with our implementation partner, Tribridge, but it is apparent that Solver has cultivated strong relationships with its technology partners,” Sliger says. “I have some experience with other software platforms, having implemented solutions like SAP’s BPC and Longview’s Khalix. Without question, this has been the easiest and most gratifying experience of all.”

Distribution Management is seeing great results for their reporting and budgeting output because of Solver. “We use Solver exclusively for reporting our financial statements, as in Income Statements, Balance Sheet, etc.,” Sliger says.

“We also use Solver to prepare segment reports for our subsidiary companies. Additionally, we are continuing to expand our use of Solver through the inclusion of statistical measures to allow for more operational performance reviews.”

Solver has been a truly dynamic solution for Distribution Management, from feature

and functionality offerings to improvements in budgeting processes. In terms of a favorite functionality, Sliger points to “the ability to create and add dimensional attributes to our chart of accounts and cost center structures. Leveraging this feature, we are able to consistently analyze the financial and operational results of the business in many different ways that before required managing several different relational tables across several different Excel files throughout the company. Needless to say, we spent a lot of time reconciling variances across reports.” And these kinds of consumer-driven, intuitive features produce better processes and results for analytics.

“The quality of our budget has increased significantly,” Sliger says. “Collaborative use of budgeting templates has resulted in consistency across departments with regard to supporting entries, notes and numbers. We are able to consolidate, review and revise departmental budgets in a way previously not possible. This has resulted in a higher degree of accountability to the budgets. We seldom hear ‘That’s your number, not ours’ anymore.”

Distribution Management has seen Solver shift the way they conduct their business. “Solver has had impacts on

our business in less obvious ways than just the traditional technological benefits,” Sliger says. “By challenging ourselves to explore new ways to leverage the features and functionality of Solver, we have introduced new ways to examine our business performance. By utilizing the Scenario dimension in Solver we have been able to create alternate views of business performance with allocations that we just couldn’t do previously.”

**Challenges**

Wanting to streamline and upgrade their financial reporting and budgeting processes across their subsidiaries, Distribution Management was seeking a software solution that included a data warehouse for smarter information management. More specifically, this distribution leader wanted to move their processes into one program for a singular approach to producing robust, compartmentalized and wide-reaching reports, budgets, and forecasts across the company.

**Result**

Solver has not only provided a unified space for the variety of data that Distribution Management harnesses and leverages regularly to support their business leaders and decision-makers, but the



Business Intelligence suite has also helped to upgrade reporting and budgeting processes for their business end users, as well as challenge the company to evaluate different business performance outcomes. Distribution Management plans to continue

adding more diversified data to the Solver Data Warehouse in order to accomplish their robust analytical objectives to continue to lead in their industry. ▲

**Resources**

- [Solver Data Warehouse Product Page](#)
- [Solver Data Warehouse Informational](#)