



Application Data Hub Improves Operational Efficiency

ABOUT COMAG MARKETING GROUP

Comag Marketing Group LLC (CMG), a jointly owned company of Condé Nast Publications, Inc. and The Hearst Corporation, provide many of the world's leading magazine publishers with comprehensive sales, marketing and promotional services through a network of domestic and overseas sales venues, including mass market, direct-to-retail and specialty market channels. CMG's owners are joined by dozens of other influential, full-line publishers, enabling a sales team to market a core group of more than 250 quality magazines.

CASE STUDY BACKGROUND

CMG collects in-store magazine data for over 200 leading magazine titles in 47 airports and 140,000 retail locations within the U.S. With centralized efforts on receiving, cleansing and processing data for publisher clients, CMG's success depends on accuracy and timeliness to market.

As advertising revenues and newsstand sales have been challenged due to economic conditions, retailers and publishers cannot afford to miss potential sales. The Application Data Hub was conceived to provide a platform to organize, manage, deliver and integrate high-quality enterprise reference data to achieve greater business value and sustainability. Using this application, CMG has a greater ability to react to market conditions and to provide greater value to publishers.

THE PROBLEM

Previously, a legacy application aggregated and reported on data collected from CMG's field staff. However, the final product lagged behind the collection process by as much as six weeks. To be at the top of the market, CMG needed a way to provide more timely information to clients. Allowing publishing clientele to miss out on potential sales due to consumer demands was not acceptable.

CMG needed an integration solution to bridge the gap between legacy data and new enterprise business applications. This would allow for more accurate information to be delivered faster to clients.

"Thanks to Composite, CMG can offer greater visibility to relevant enterprise data in near real time to both CMG and our customers, resulting in significant value."

Sean Poccia,
Senior Director, Information Services,
Comag Marketing Group

AT-A-GLANCE

Industry

Media Distributor - Magazine Marketing

Business Problem Solved

More timely and accurate information is needed to support Comag Marketing Group's (CMG) field, merchandising and back office operations. In addition, delivering both timely and actionable data to CMG's publishing clientele is critical to maintain a competitive advantage. With the many challenges facing magazine newsstand sales, the ability to provide both timely and accurate data can play a critical role to drive future newsstand sales.

Data Integration Strategy

Create an Application Data Hub to simply provide clients with standardized information on a timely basis.

Composite Software Products

Composite Information Server 5.1

Data Sources

Oracle Applications (OE, AR, Publisher Payables); Lotus Notes (Field Force Application); Microsoft CRM (RDC/RDMP); Data Warehouse; Miscellaneous Internal Systems; Third Party Systems (IPDA, Trade Dimensions)

Data Consumers

Internal CMG departments and publishing clientele

Platform

The Composite Information Server™ runs on SunOS

OTHER ALTERNATIVES

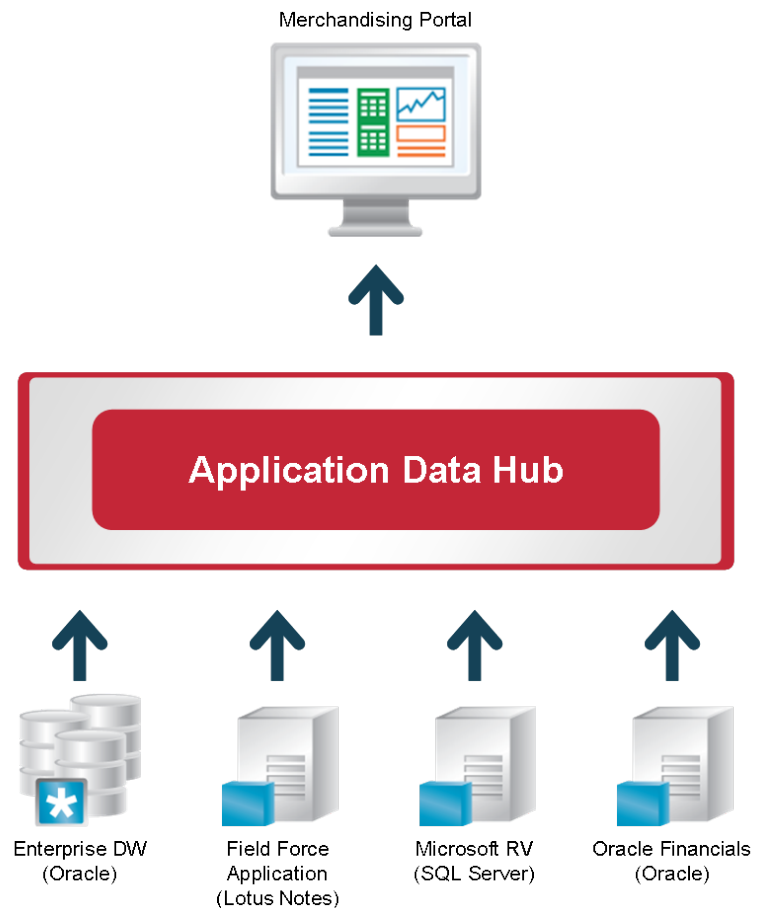
Historically, CMG IT staff would take the time to develop an in-house solution in house. However, developing a system to meet all the required specifications was both time and cost prohibitive. The CMG IT mission statement was clear, they needed to spend less time developing software code and more time working directly with the business to drive results.

THE SOLUTION

Comag Marketing Group selected the Composite Information Server (CIS) for its data virtualization and query optimization capabilities. CIS was deployed between the data sources and clientele applications, creating a virtual Application Data Hub, allowing quicker delivery of data within a single platform.

With this solution, new capabilities and benefits are available to internal CMG departments and publisher clientele, including:

- Ability to react immediately to business needs and especially to new sales opportunities
- Elimination of double and triple data entry
- More time in store verifying store condition and merchandising products when needed
- Greater customer satisfaction
- Promotion of enterprise wide information consistency, visibility and governance
- Minimized data replication and duplication across CMG systems
- Increased confidence in data quality



A virtual Application Data Hub layer based on the Composite Information Server.

THE RESULT

- 3% efficiency gain throughout CMG's workforce
- Time needed to collect operational data reduced by 50%
- Reports produced within 24 hours of collecting information from the field
- More comprehensive analysis reports available within 1 week
- Ability to adjust initial orders to specific locations
- ROI = \$750,000 in the first year