ECCO Ireland
Optimises sales performance with data-driven insights
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Competition is fierce in the footwear industry, and the race is on for companies to increase efficiency and boost sales, without compromising on excellent customer service.

ECCO Ireland teamed up with ProStrategy to enhance its analytics function with IBM technology and help store managers make smart, data-driven decisions.

Business Challenge

Fashion moves fast, and shoppers' tastes change even faster. How can retailers ensure they have the products that customers want in stock, when they want them?

Transformation

To get a clearer picture of its best-selling products and monitor sales performance across its stores, ECCO Ireland worked with ProStrategy to enhance its analytics capabilities with IBM® Cognos® Analytics.

Results

Eliminates the manual effort required to generate detailed sales reports

Supports healthy competition by comparing sales performance between stores

Cuts time to insight, helping ECCO respond quickly to changing market conditions

Business Challenge - Spotting the season's must-have products

Whether you're buying boots for your next outdoor adventure, sandals for beach lounging or comfortable shoes for daily wear, you expect stores to stock fashionable, comfortable footwear in your size. If one retailer doesn't have the right pair in stock, it's likely that they will lose your business to one of their competitors.

Consumers' high expectations create significant challenges for retailers. To meet demand both in-store and online, they need detailed insight into both sales and inventory. The ability to analyse data at the store level is critical to help them develop new strategies that will lift sales and boost revenue. Paul Lyons, Managing Director at ECCO Ireland, elaborates:

"Identifying which products are flying off the shelves before stock runs out is key to maximising our revenue.

To keep customers satisfied and avoid missing out on sales, we track a wide variety of sales metrics across each of our stores, and use this data to drive key decisions, such as which items to stock in each store and which staff members we should roster at peak times."

Speed is critical. The faster ECCO can identify which products are selling fast, the more chance it has of maximizing revenues on each product line. However, over time, the company found that its existing analytics solution was starting to delay mission-critical decision-making.

ECCO's legacy solution was slowing down the creation of the company's "ECCO Economy" report - a dashboard that details everything from sales to date, sales growth, and sales trends per SKU to the sales performance of each member of each in-store team. This active report, which can be accessed via a mobile device both online and offline, is used by all managers in ECCO Ireland's stores to support their daily decision making.

Transformation Story - Gaining a clearer view

Enlisting the assistance of IBM Business Partner ProStrategy, ECCO upgraded its analytics capabilities by implementing IBM Cognos Analytics, paving the way for smarter decisions and increased sales revenues.

"IBM Cognos Analytics came highly recommended by our long-established partner ProStrategy," says Lyons. "Compared to other analytics solutions, we saw that Cognos would provide the functionality and rapid insight that we required at a price point that matched our budget."

ProStrategy implemented IBM Cognos Analytics for ECCO on-premises and connected the solution to ECCO's ERP system - enabling the company to harness data from different areas of the business, including point-of-sale devices in each of its stores.

To minimise disruption and enable users to access their data in a familiar format, ProStrategy helped the company's business analysts to re-build the ECCO Economy dashboard in IBM Cognos Analytics.

"We were especially attracted to the self-service report building capabilities of Cognos, because they give our analytics team greater freedom to build, optimize and tailor reports to our specific needs. Furthermore, with an on-premises solution, we can maintain full control over our data and optimize performance by keeping the analytics platform close to our source systems.

"Thanks to the expertise and assistance we received from ProStrategy, we managed to implement the solution rapidly and effectively while causing minimal disruption to our business - helping us to maintain excellent customer service across our stores during the implementation phase".

Results Story - Striding ahead in a competitive market

By placing IBM Cognos Analytics at the heart of its operations, ECCO can dramatically reduce the time and effort required to generate sales reports, increase business agility, and promote a culture of healthy competition between its sales teams.

> **"It used to take our business analysts three days to consolidate data and build reports on all aspects of the sales cycle - now we can generate these reports automatically with IBM Cognos Analytics,"**
>
> — Paul Lyons, Managing Director, ECCO Ireland

"We only have to build a report once, and then we can set it to run on a regular basis—eliminating almost all of the repetitive manual effort involved in generating reports."

Because IBM Cognos Analytics delivers key reports automatically, the solution also empowers ECCO to react more quickly and strategically to changing market conditions.

Lyons continues: "Store managers no longer have to wait ten days to dig down into the performance of their store - with IBM Cognos Analytics, the figures are ready on the first day of the month. As a result, we can now react more quickly when an item is beginning to sell fast and re-orient our supply chain to avoid stock-out or lost revenue on that item."

To drive sales and engage its people, ECCO uses data from IBM Cognos Analytics to encourage competition between stores.

"Because IBM Cognos Analytics delivers accurate, reliable data on sales performance at the individual employee and store level, we can use this data to run competitions between staff members in each of our 16 stores," explains Lyons. "For example, we keep a running league table that tracks the sales performance of each store and offers employees the chance to compete for prizes such as discounted shoes, cash rewards and team building activities. This helps us to incentivise our staff and nurture a friendly, competitive environment in the workplace."

Lyons concludes:

"With IBM Cognos Analytics powering our reporting function, we are much better prepared to adapt and overcome the challenges that we will encounter as the retail industry changes in the future.

Ultimately, having the data we need to evolve our strategies easily at hand, will help us to ensure excellent customer service now and in the years ahead."

✉ To learn more about IBM Cognos Analytics, contact ProStrategy via email **getstarted@prostrategy.ie**