

Australian Geographic

Merchandising Information Solution

The Mission

To equip the marketing and merchandising team with timely, reliable and relevant information to support critical business decisions.

The Solution

- Biko Technologies were tasked to provide a suite of new merchandising management reports
- The solution was delivered using Crystal Reports and Microsoft SQL Server relational database.
- Data is extracted from Australian Geographics' mission-critical, IBM AS/400 based back end retail and financial application. It is then imported to SQL Server.
- The reporting suite delivers key performance information in a concise manner to enable real business decisions.

The Result

- The merchandising team now have new insights as to the performance of specific products as well as information to support business decisions concerning range, stock levels etc.
- Information that took a week to compile manually is now available with virtually no effort.



The Customer

“Not only did Biko deliver the technical solution they promised, they also advised us on the best way to achieve our business requirements.”

Biko’s blend of technical know-how and retail expertise gives them a unique advantage.

Their can-do attitude and diligent follow up ensured we achieved our goals with minimal fuss.”

*Mr Camryn Turner
Chief Financial Officer
Australian Geographic*

Australian Geographic

Merchandising Information Solution

Australian Geographic started in 1986 when Dick Smith established the quarterly journal as a way of showing Australia in a positive light and inspiring young people to share in the great adventure of being Australian.

Since then the company has developed to include 44 Australian Geographic Stores as well as a mail order service. The stores grew out of members' demand for mail order and catalogue products, which focus on enhancing our geographical knowledge, promoting adventure and Australian craft.

Old Meets New

Australian Geographic utilize a mission critical retail, inventory and financial application suite which runs on an IBM AS/400 platform.

While this system provides a solid and dependable transaction processing base for the business, obtaining concise and poignant merchandising information was not a simple matter.

The solution which Biko Technologies have delivered takes transactional and stock movement data from the AS/400 and detailed budget figures from a range of Excel spreadsheets.

This data is imported automatically to a SQL Server database where a suite of Crystal Reports are used to present relevant merchandising information.

The Approach

In deploying the solution, Biko Technologies approached the project by contributing a combination of technical, analytical and retail skills.

The up-front focus was on understanding the business objectives and mitigating project risks.

Realising the benefits

Information which previously took days to prepare, or that was not feasible to prepare at all is now readily available to the management team.

Critical information concerning the performance of product lines and relative performance of product categories is readily accessible.

The Future

Moving forward, Australian Geographic have a platform upon which to deliver further management information.

Biko will also web-enable the current solution to make the information available where, when and by whom it is required.

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