Data Consistency Reduces Product Time to Market by 60%

Company:

Viking Raja Group

Industry:

Retail

Region:

Europe

Solution:

Product MDM

Executive Summary

Viking Raja Group provides business supplies and services to companies and individuals in 56 countries through a network that includes 1,800 stores, websites and business-to-business structures. In Europe, it operates in 13 countries, supplying everything from IT equipment and furniture through to document services and daily consumables such as pens, paper and printer toner. The company has sales of approximately €14 billion and employs about 56,000 people.

Their challenge was that there was no internal consistency of product details. Staff were therefore spending too long inputting product data, and the time to market for new products was too high. Customers were not always getting the information they needed.

To solve this, the company implemented Stibo Systems Master Data Management (MDM) solution for product information to create an environment where perfectly formatted data only needs to be inputted once, regardless of the source.

The Business Payoff

The solution means that Viking Raja Group has reduced its time to market for new products by 60%.

Because of automated processing, the error rate has dropped significantly, and the company is now free to look to the future and add more client data to the MDM environment.

The Customer Experience

After establishing the basics, the MDM team wanted to put more data online. "With our old way of working, this would have given rise to a lot more work," said Norbert Donders, Manager of Product Data Management. "But now that we've set up a structure and tools, we only need to set up the product data once."

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Challenge

At a certain time, customers were demanding increasingly detailed product information, but since this came from numerous departments as well as third-party suppliers, data lacked any consistency. "The departments responsible for our publications and merchandising were spending too long categorizing products," explained Donders. "While we should have been focusing on selling products, sometimes it seemed like we were only processing data."

Indeed, so many staff members were spending so long standardizing product data that it was affecting the time to market for new products.

Solution

The company's search for a more streamlined process led its small project team to consider Stibo Systems MDM solution.

Starting with one country, one region and one channel, the company identified key data on products, customers and locations. This was stored in a central repository and used to feed the organization's other systems, such as its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

An inventory of guidelines then ensured that each department would know what information it was expected to supply, who was responsible for data entry and how it would all be combined.

Results

By ensuring the right criteria of data are met, all data in the MDM system is created to a gold standard, a so-called golden record, regardless of the data's origin. This "do it once, do it right" methodology ensures that consistency is maintained across all channels and all countries.

The result can be seen in an incredible improvement in efficiency. "By implementing a content management system that's fed with data from MDM, we're able to develop our online catalog 30-40% faster," said Donders.

"Using master data has also improved our online search functions, meaning that our customers can now find products more easily with fewer searches being abandoned prematurely.

As our websites are now fed with MDM, rather than manually, we've also managed to reduce the number of errors."

"" MDM is not an IT issue but the responsibility of the whole business. The MDM manager is a service provider within the company."

—Norbert Donders, Manager of Product Data Management

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