PepsiCo cuts sales analysis time by up to 90% with Trifacta on Azure

Background

Consumers enjoy PepsiCo products one billion times a day in more than 200 countries and territories around the world. PepsiCo’s Collaborative Planning, Forecasting, and Replenishment (CPFR) team provides data and analyses that enable effective retail sales management. The team also collaborates with large retailers to supply the right quantities of product for their warehouses and stores.

Supplying too much product results in wasted resources. Supplying too little means that they risk losing profit—and they must reconcile with unhappy, empty-handed retailers. An empty shelf also risks consumers choosing a competitor’s product, which has harmful, long-term effects on the brand. To strike the right balance between appropriate product stocking levels and razor-thin margins, PepsiCo continually refines sales forecasts. PepsiCo adopted Trifacta on Microsoft Azure cloud platform to wrangle disparate data, fueling their sales forecasts and analyses with clean, connected and timely data for faster and more accurate results. With Trifacta, the CPFR team reduced the end-to-end reporting time by 90%, giving them a competitive advantage in the retail space.

Challenges

PepsiCo’s customers provide them with reports that include warehouse inventory, store inventory, and point-of-sale inventory. PepsiCo combines this data with its own shipment history, production numbers, and forecast data. Each customer had their own data standards, which didn’t correspond with each other (let alone PepsiCo’s system). For example, PepsiCo relied on UPC codes to identify each product, while customers created their own internal numbers. Wrangling this data involves a number of challenges from both business and technical perspectives.

Business Challenges:

• The ability to quickly standardize data across all retailers—and speak the same language as their customers—was critical to preparing data faster for their forecasting and planning efforts.
• Unable to deliver sales forecasts in a timely fashion for management to steer the course on sales.

Technical Challenges:

• The time-consuming effort on combining retailer’s data and PepsiCo supply data, which could take up to six months.
• Using Excel for analysis was error-prone.
• Lacking an efficient, automatics way to spot errors, leading to potentially costly outcomes.

It was clear that in order to drive faster time to better forecast results, a modern cloud data preparation solution that can streamline the existing data wrangling process is critical.
Solution

To bring coherency to the data, PepsiCo turned to Trifacta. To achieve greater efficiency and scale, PepsiCo selected Microsoft Azure as the cloud platform to store and process their sales data. Now reports run directly on Azure, without involving multiple steps with Access and PepsiCo servers. This process allows analysts to directly manipulate data using Trifacta.

Benefits with Trifacta

The adoption of Trifacta on Azure helps the CPFR team drive the business forward, increasing visibility into customer orders. Key benefits include:

- **Faster time to identify and resolve issues**: Trifacta’s visual profiling capabilities allow the team to easily identify gaps and outliers in the data to get ahead of larger issues.
- **Expedited data preparation**: Trifacta provides machine learning-powered data transformation guidance automates data preparation, therefore dramatically reduces the time spent on the overall data cleansing and transformation process, resulting faster time to results.
- **Improved productivity**: With automated data prep, Analysts are freed up from the arduous data plumbing work and can now focus on more value-add tasks, such as analyzing the data and interpreting the results from the analyses.
- **Stay competitive**: Being able to deliver more accurate and faster sales insights with clean, connected and trusted data allowed PepsiCo to gain a better understanding of the market, stay agile, drive more sales, and beat the competition.

PepsiCo now spends less time preparing data, and more time finding insights. Mike Riegling, Supply Chain Data Analyst at PepsiCo, said, “Now we’re not taking our time putting the data together; we’re spending our time analyzing the data, telling the story, and finding problems.”

Gaining insight from customer data faster than ever has enhanced PepsiCo’s process to offer its customers best-in-class service. It has also given PepsiCo a huge competitive advantage over other CPG businesses. PepsiCo can now predict trends, adjust sales, and ultimately sell more of the right product to improve their bottom line. Riegling commented, “We’re able to turn customer data around and present it to the rest of our company, in a way that everyone can understand, faster than our competitors.”

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