

Demand Forecasting and Replenishment System Selection

Thorough assessment and selection of a solution set that will demonstrably improve forecasting, planning, and reporting capabilities, while providing better support and efficiencies to customer-facing roles.



The Client

The U.S. headquarters of a multi-million-dollar international kitchenware retailer, selling through a distributor model vs. directly to consumers.

The Challenge

The client relied heavily on a homegrown, Excel-based demand forecast planning system, originally built to achieve a forecast by planning every SKU by warehouse each month. With a team of six working on 1,000 active SKUs across nine warehouses, the client realized they were quickly outgrowing the Excel-based system.

Faced with excessive wait times to open an item in the system, coupled with the highly manual process and extremely time-consuming reporting, the client understood they needed a simple, out-of-the-box, exception-based solution with robust and timely reporting capabilities. They reached out to Parker Avery for assistance to select an appropriate solution based on deep industry expertise and an objective, fact-based, proven methodology.

The Parker Avery Solution

The Parker Avery team reviewed and assessed the client's current state to gain a deeper understanding of the company's need for a new demand and inventory forecasting/planning solution, transition requirements for planning and merchant roles, as well as functional documentation for a handful of standard reports. Parker Avery performed the following activities:

- Developed/prioritized forecasting and replenishment business requirements
- Identified potential software vendors, both large and small, to give the client exposure to a broad industry mix
- Evaluated RFP responses to identify four vendors for onsite demonstrations
- Developed detailed "day-in-the-life" demonstration scripts and coordinated logistics for the demonstrations
- Created an online scoring tool to quickly capture feedback and assess results
- Coordinated follow-up technical evaluation calls
- Crafted a communication transition plan
- Designed new and revised roles for key merchandising positions
- Created report mock-ups with associated measure calculations
- Drafted detailed business case(s) and executive summary to aid decision-making

The Result

The client narrowed to two vendors to continue negotiations. When the selected solution is implemented, the client expects capabilities to react more swiftly to business conditions and provide better support to field resources that have direct access to consumers with less chance of backorders or unfulfilled demand. They also expect a 300-600% ROI in the first year of the project.