

Retailer's New Buying and Planning Process Improves Efficiency and Inventory Decisions

Client Challenge

The client is a \$250 million retailer that serves service members and their families through more than 60 multi-category locations across the U.S. and online. This retailer offers a wide range of products, including apparel, hardlines, convenience items, uniforms, and home goods. With a streamlined organizational structure, the retailer operates with limited standardized processes and documentation.

In a previous consulting project, Parker Avery created a capabilities roadmap for the retailer, highlighting the necessity of a standardized, milestone-based buying and planning process. The aim was to enhance efficiency, refine inventory decisions, and optimize the retailer's lean structure. The client sought to establish consistent buying and planning processes to improve operational efficiency, clarify roles, and fully utilize existing technology to support its growth objectives.

Parker Avery Solution

The Parker Avery team of retail experts guided the client through the following activities:

- Facilitated a series of workshops to identify and detail each step in a new holistic process
- Identified timing, frequency, inputs, outputs, tools, templates, and owners for each process step
- Adapted leading practices to address the retailer's broad product assortment and unique operations
- Assessed current reports and tools for the ability to support future-state processes
- Created reference and documentation for training the new buying and planning process

Key project outcomes included:

- A new buying and planning process grounded in leading practices but customized to the client's unique business model
- Detailed RACI, reporting requirements, and meeting guides to support the new process
- An integrated calendar that identifies the timing and duration for each process activity across the various product categories
- Training modules, including online and classroom-based delivery, to support the implementation of the new process

RESULTS



BUYING AND
PLANNING
PROCESS
DESIGNED



DETAILED
PROCESS
DOCUMENTATION
DELIVERED



NEW
PROCESS
IMPLEMENTED
AND TRAINED

The retailer prioritized four steps in the buying and planning process according to the timelines associated with each product category. The client also began developing automated reporting to enhance the buying processes.

Upon complete deployment, the retailer's comprehensive buying and planning process will streamline decision-making related to product and inventory investments, thus bolstering the organization's growth objectives.