



CUSTOMER STORY

StoreBound

Decoding demand and supply uncertainty lead to a winning ecommerce strategy

Introduction

StoreBound is the fastest growing houseware company in the US. They have developed and launched over 200 products (and counting) and sell them to customers online through Amazon and their own website under the Dash brand. You can also find their products at large retailers like Target and Bed Bath & Beyond. StoreBound are also the makers of the Sobro connected furniture line.

Industry

- Retailer – Household Goods and Appliances

Solution

- Demand Planning and Forecasting
- Inventory Optimization
- Replenishment Planning

Challenges

StoreBound was growing at a rapid rate, and with reseller brands and complexity rising, spreadsheets were unable to support their planning processes and provide accurate forecasts, as Vice President of Operations, Jim Schreiber, can attest:

“We had three spreadsheets, and our business relied on them. Every day, the operations and finance teams prayed the files remained stable and stayed linked. Anytime something went wrong, it was an all-hands emergency to fix.”

With so many people working on so many sheets, planners often ran into “conflicted copy” issues, which occur when more than one person is editing a document.

This process only grew in complexity as the business expanded, making onboarding and training on legacy systems a nightmare.

The clunkiness of the process also meant employees were constantly cleaning up data and there was never enough time to manage exceptions, leading to slower reaction times.

Working with missing or inaccurate data, planners experienced an expanding forecast bias, with significant variances between forecasted and actual outcomes.

“It got to the point where we couldn’t get a grip on inventory, fill rates were varying and generally dropping, and the costs of storage and lost sales were hindering our growth. Who wants to work with a company that can’t fill orders? The pandemic was responsible for many of these issues, but we also didn’t have the right tools in the right place at the right time.”

With these challenges mounting in scope and urgency, the team knew they had to make a change.

“We fought the fact that we needed an entirely new process and were in denial of all the band-aids we kept putting on our existing tools. But one day, we woke up and realized it was time to pull the band-aid off. We knew we weren’t going to survive with home-grown hacks and a roll of digital duct tape.”

ToolsGroup Solution

StoreBound turned to ToolsGroup. “From the first conversation with ToolsGroup, everyone on the RFP process was impressed. It felt like we were talking to people who wanted to know our business and wanted to work together to make it better.”

The goal was simple: implement a tool to speed up reaction time, improve planning team efficiency, and get better visibility across the business.

To meet this goal, StoreBound selected ToolsGroup Demand Forecasting and Planning, Inventory Optimization, and Replenishment Planning.

The demand module integrates with the existing ERP (Netsuite) to create a base forecast that incorporates seasonality. The team now has a wide array of new tools like supersessions, special actions, and slice-and-dice reporting and can adjust easily for promotional activity.

Inventory is now optimized by service level. Service level planning pinpoints the optimal service level for each individual SKU based on business objectives and constraints. Thanks to automation, ToolsGroup took charge of the data, accounting for factors like lead time and lot sizes and allowing planners to manage exceptions instead of a constant deluge of data.

ToolsGroup also reduces manual work by creating purchase order proposals and helps the team set purchasing budgets.

Results

Just a few months after go-live, the company is already finding new ways to use and slice data to help control costs.

- **Customer Service:** The team now uses a direct-to-consumer order lines forecast to plan call center volume and better anticipate labor.
- **Logistics:** By sorting replenishment proposals by port pairs, the team can more accurately forecast ocean shipping needs.
- **Warehousing:** The new system enables sharper direct-to-consumer shipping forecasts and better plans for piece pick space and labor.

With the right tools for the job, StoreBound has hit its stride, enjoying a comprehensive and efficient process and ready for whatever growth and challenges the future holds.

+ About ToolsGroup

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