

SPIRITS PLATFORM

Leverages Cloud, Board Planning and BI for an agile, innovative entrance to the premium liquor market



AT A GLANCE

Company

Spirits Platform

Industry

Liquor Distribution

Location

Botany, NSW

Solution

BOARD, Microsoft CRM, SharePoint, Office 365

Function

Finance, Supply Chain, Sales & Marketing

Key Points

- As a small start-up in an industry dominated by multinational corporations, Spirits Platform had to quickly develop a sophisticated technology capability to underpin its national liquor distribution business.
- Within six months the company deployed a cloud-based customer relationship management (CRM) system, developed a business intelligence (BI) platform with strong budgeting, forecasting and analytic capabilities, and provided staff with mobile access to all systems.
- The solutions enable Spirits Platform to analyse company, partner and market data, to anticipate trends and develop appropriate sales, marketing and supply chain strategies.
- Less than a year since opening its doors, Spirits Platform has successfully established itself as an agile, innovative competitor in the premium liquor distribution market.





The Company

Spirits Platform provides Australian sales, marketing and distribution for premium spirits brands. It was formed in 2015 when a group of industry veterans came together to create an independent organisation capable of providing the focus, expertise and brand building support essential for spirits brands to succeed in Australia's crowded market.

Management's philosophy was – and is – simple; attract and responsibly build premium brands. It's a message that clearly resonates with the liquor market. In less than 12 months the company has built a brand portfolio including Cointreau, Licor 43, Tia Maria, Sierra Tequila, Chartreuse, Opal Nera, Remy Martin and Louis XIII Cognac.

The Need

The management team at Spirits Platform encapsulates almost 100 years of experience. They know the industry, its brands and customers very well. However, to get the new company off the ground, they still required systems and processes that would allow them to transact.

"From the time we got the green light we only had a nine week period to set the company up and start trading. We spoke to Professional Advantage and outlined the challenge. They got all the basics done in time, and then working together we completed all our core systems within six months."

David Moore
Director

Drawing on their learnings, they mapped out the kind of systems that would be needed to support the company now and into the future. With the majority of staff out on the road visiting customers, an intranet and mobile CRM were key. Intelligent planning tools and business analytics were also crucial early tools.



Challenges

As a distributor with no direct visibility into end customer purchases or trends, Spirits Platform relies on data provided by customers such as independent bottle shops, clubs, hotels and retailers to understand sales, customer inventory and to identify market trends. Without a good BI system capable of drawing in data from a large variety of sources, accurate forecasting, budgeting and planning would be almost impossible.

The Solution

For advice and assistance building the new systems, Director, David Moore, approached Professional Advantage. He outlined the company's needs along with the provisos of speed and cost. Whatever solutions were to be built, it had to happen quickly and at a price point suitable for a fledgling organisation.

Professional Advantage recommended BOARD an integrated BI and CPM platform, Microsoft CRM, Microsoft SharePoint and Microsoft Office 365 the foundation technology components for Spirits Platform. All were solutions that Moore and his team had worked with previously. They were familiar with the applications and knew they would work.

To meet the imperatives of speed and cost, Professional Advantage also suggested adopting cloud solutions. This would ensure the fastest possible time to deployment, and avoided the hardware, costs of an on-premise deployment. The cloud also supported Spirits Platform's need for employee mobility.

RESULTS



Mobility ensures staff can connect to the business systems and conduct business from anywhere in the world.



By using cloud solutions, Spirits Platform has avoided the need to employ in-house IT expertise.



All sales and marketing activity is thoroughly analysed and measured; at all times the team can identify and understand the effectiveness of promotions, price discounts and the like.



The experiences of the company's first year are now being used to map out areas for improvement, and to inform budgets, forecasts and plans for the coming 12 months.



Visibility has allowed management to develop an in-depth understanding of where the business is going including the profitability of each brand.



By drawing in and analysing data from internal and external sources, BI enables Spirits Platform to overcome the problem of distance between distribution and the end customer, ensuring the company has a full, accurate view of its operations.



The depth, quality and speed of business information is paying off in agility, which can be seen in Spirits Platform's speed to market and its ability to swiftly adapt to changing business or market circumstances.





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