



The CCI Journal

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Advanced analytics provide clear channel insight

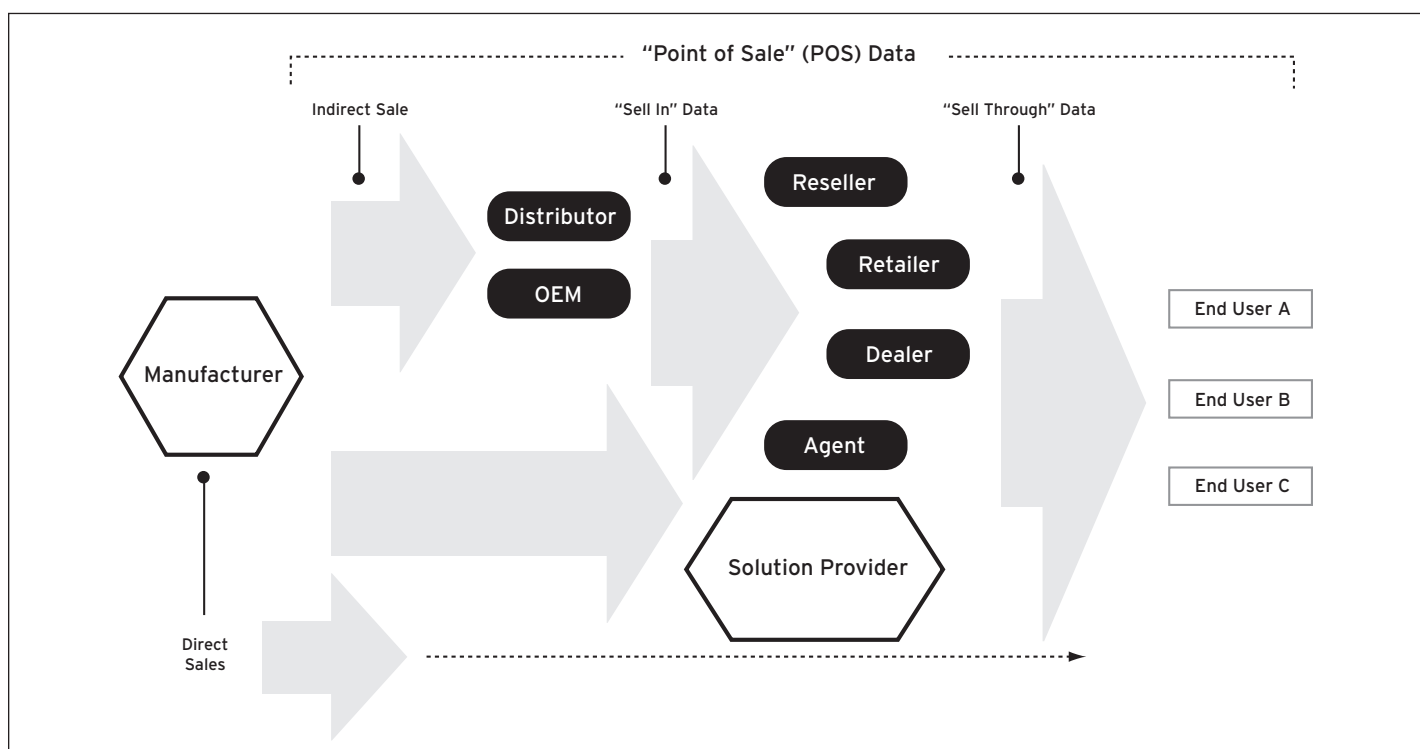
Do you spend more time collecting data than analyzing it? You are not alone. The University of California at Berkeley research shows more data has been created in the last three years than in the past 40,000 years and predicts that the total amount of data collected will quadruple in the next two years.

has uncovered glaring deficiencies in data collection and analysis.

Obtaining timely and accurate point of sale (POS) data is a challenge. Partners often do not submit POS data in a timely fashion, and there are few guarantees as to data quality and completeness. Compound this with

clients, CCI has identified pressing issues companies face as they gather, store, manage, and analyze POS data:

- > Manual, time consuming processes
 - The majority of companies still rely on POS data transfer through Excel, Access databases and email. Data arrives in inconsistent



Compounding the issue of rapid growth, critical data is spread over multiple IT systems, computers, spreadsheets, etc., and is often processed and analyzed manually. Both data quality and integrity suffer under the current disjointed processes, making it hard to use the data to understand your critical business metrics.

The inability to gain a "single version of the truth" makes it impossible for companies to use the data when making strategic decisions and can even hide current market opportunities. Perhaps nowhere is this a more prevalent problem than with channel sales and marketing data. Only recently have channel sales and marketing efforts begun to receive the executive attention that they deserve. This attention

different formats for every submission, and you end up with a big headache! However, pressure is mounting to improve timely data collection, ensure accuracy, and enhance analysis and reporting capabilities. Increasingly complex distribution structures, intense global competition, and legislative regulations such as Sarbanes Oxley require ever larger volumes of data to be collected with greater integrity in order to remain competitive and legally compliant. Also, business decision cycles are now measured in hours, not days or weeks, and partners have little time and patience to spend on meeting POS data submission requirements.

Companies looking to effectively use POS data must resolve critical yet common issues. Working with our

formats and is often stored in multiple locations. Administrators manually load, normalize, and aggregate POS data for analysis. This approach results in high administrative costs, is non-scalable and introduces an unacceptable level of error.

- > Cumbersome or incomplete reporting
 - Given the sheer volume of data, analysis is exceedingly difficult and time consuming. Reporting becomes a complex task with no guarantee of actionable results.
- > Not real-time
 - Today's competitive climate mandates that business decisions be made quickly to remain relevant. But the reality is that companies

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NOVATO'S DEBRA DELANEY TRANSFORMS MARKETING TECHNOLOGY COMPANY, USHERS IN RAPID GROWTH

Debra Delaney, CCI's President and CEO, was awarded the Technology Woman of the year by the North Bay Business Journal on June 26, 2006. This award annually names outstanding women "for their success and contributions to the business community as leaders, innovators and visionaries." The article below is printed by permission from The North Bay Business Journal

NOVATO – When Debra Delaney came to CCI in 1998, the channel sales and marketing services provider was operating under an outdated business model and declining customer lists.

As chief operating officer, Ms. Delaney had the choice of sprucing up the company for a quick sale or turning it into something else entirely. She chose the latter course.

"I could see the time was right for outsourced services, and it made sense to automate at least some of them with software," said Ms. Delaney.

One of her first jobs after studying finance and accounting at UC Berkeley had been in the accounting department of Round Table's corporate office where she participated in migrating the books from ledgers to a mainframe computer.

"The process was fascinating. People thought it would mean we'd work less, but of course it didn't," she said. "What it did do was allow us to keep track of even more data but to automate and simplify the operations and make more in-depth analysis possible. It frees you up to concentrate on creative solutions."

Ms. Delaney wisely automated CCI's services in blocks, knowing that some clients would want control over certain processes. Right from the start most of the software was Web-enabled, and by 2000 CCI's hosted services were 100% online, enabling the company to expand its market worldwide.

CCI now serves 150,000 users globally, with customers in the technology, telecom and office products markets. Autodesk, Sony and Toshiba are clients.

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The way I see it...



Bill Kelly is CCI's Executive Vice President and he helps companies define objectives, evaluate strategies and implement programs that achieve measurable results.

Adding Value to POS Data

Virtually every organization captures POS data for some aspect of their day-to-day business operations. The data capture may be manual - email, Excel and Access, or be fully automated, web accessible, and centralized. However POS data is collected, very little of its value is leveraged for strategic business decisions. Imaginative uses of POS data can improve market coverage and maximize true partner value, especially for organizations selling through complex distribution channels. But what does that mean?

Realizing the True Value of POS Data

Almost every channel marketing executive will tell you that clean, accurate POS data is necessary to track inventory, issue warranties, generate basic partner performance reports, and calculate co-op accruals, sales commissions, and SPIF's. Some channel executives understand the value of overlaying POS data with additional, external data sets. However, few actually do it. How can such integration be valuable to your organization? What types of external data sets provide usable metrics?

3rd Party Integration

Quality POS data will tell you how much of each product each of your partners sells over a given period of time. That is great for calculating co-op accruals but tells you virtually nothing about the business characteristics of a given partner. Overlaying existing partner POS data with 3rd party demographic data can, for example, help determine ideal partner profiles. Taken a step further you may choose to map ideal partner profiles against existing market penetration to reveal gaps in market coverage. You can then target partners to add or remove from your partner matrix.

Applying census statistics to POS data yields a great wealth of channel intelligence. Organizations may choose to visualize regional social, economic, political, environmental, or infrastructure characteristics based upon any number of relevant data points and identify untapped markets. Credit-worthiness ratings are another potential source of

vital channel intelligence. One such use of these ratings is partner risk factor evaluation. This information integrated with POS data can help determine your existing mix of high/low yield/risk partners, guide future partner recruitment efforts, and govern partner credit limits.

Independent Research

Another avenue to take involves actively researching your channel partners. You may choose to perform this research yourself or, perhaps more cost effective, outsource it to a 3rd party who will report back to you with actionable results. In my experience, the immediate results of Internet research are tough to beat. You might be surprised at the volume of partner information available on the Internet these days. Partner websites alone provide a wealth of knowledge. You can find out if they are actively selling competitive products over yours, what industries they say they service (compared to what you have on record), and research case stories, whitepapers, references, and trade association memberships. Try a Google News search of each partner's business name to see if any recent developments warrant closer attention.

You may also consider some tried and true research methods like calling partners with short surveys or visiting key accounts to check in and learn a bit more about their business operations and corporate culture. In these days of fast-paced impersonal communication, a little personal contact and interest can mean a lot.

Why Should You Care?

The truth is, what you don't know about your channel partners can hurt you. Worse, what your competitors know about your channel partners, that you don't, can hurt much more. Using clean, accurate POS data for analysis and reporting is only the tip of the iceberg in creating value. Overlaying that data with external information such as 3rd party data sets, census statistics, and independent research will provide your organization with the intelligence required to climb to the top in today's fiercely competitive global marketplace. The bottom line is that you need to know whether or not you have the right partners selling the right solutions to the right customers. Take a look at how your organization currently uses POS data. Chances are you have a gold mine of potential channel intelligence right under your nose - you just need to learn how to use it. ❏

To find out more about CCI conducting a Program Readiness engagement for your company, please call Bill Kelly at 888.260.2667, extension 210.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

CCI needs your help in refining our next generation POS offering. Our Sightline product will contain numerous enhancements and new capabilities. We need your feedback and ideas to ensure we incorporate your requirements. If you would like to learn more about Sightline or have suggestions, please call Chris Kullar at 415.493.3243 or e-mail him at Chris.Kullar@CCIconline.biz.

Advanced Channel Analytics

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operate with "Yesterday's News" when it comes to POS data and channel program management. Strategic channel marketing decisions suffer from data lag and do not satisfy current market conditions.

- > No data integration with external data sources - like channel sales and marketing program data
 - POS data on its own can tell a company a lot about business performance and is readily used to track warranties and calculate incentives. However, actionable insights can be uncovered by overlaying POS data with external data sets and through combination with other channel data. The result is a powerful tool for analysis, which enables companies to calculate, analyze, and maximize true partner value.

BENEFITS OF EXPERIENCE

For over 23 years, CCI has developed an extensive knowledge of how to address critical data capture, quality, and analysis issues. Our research and experience tell us that an effective POS solution must be:

- > Centralized & secure with global access
 - Distribution partners and channel partners need to be able to quickly upload, view, and manage their POS data. Channel sales and marketing departments require the ability to view, manage, analyze, and produce actionable reports from that POS data.
- > Reliable and scalable
 - Quick and consistent system platforms minimize costly business interruptions, lost data, and ensure that your company receives the information it needs in real-time. Hosted solution providers

that house their servers and storage in secure co-location facilities provide maximum uptime and minimum maintenance downtime.

> Automated

- Automated data upload, cleansing, normalization and aggregation allow companies to realize significant efficiencies and corresponding cost reductions. Automation preserves data quality and integrity, improves competitive position through faster analysis and reporting, and aids in compliance issues by providing fully auditable data trails.

> Actionable and informative

- Be it a stand-alone POS system or one enhanced with external data sets and combined with other channel sales and marketing program data, an effective POS solution must incorporate a logical and intuitive interface with actionable dashboards and reports. For channel sales and marketing departments, that means more time marketing and selling and less time processing and analyzing.

The effective use of POS information is the basis for data-driven channel sales and marketing. It is essential for efficiently targeting, engaging, and growing revenue from partners and recognizing and rewarding true partner value. Also, usable POS data plays an invaluable role in planning, targeting, communicating and measuring the results of your marketing efforts. In other words, the effective use of POS data is indispensable in getting the right products to the right partners at the right time and price. ❏

DEBRA DELANEY

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PROPELLING THE COMPANY TO GROW

Ms. Delaney was named president in 2003, and since then CCI has enjoyed an annual growth rate of 45%. Its 17-member staff has grown to 51. Revenues since 2001 have grown 400%.

Customer retention is now a whopping 96%, an impressive figure in a highly competitive industry where companies are quick to ascribe losses to inefficient marketing and incentive campaigns.

"Our competitors offer various pieces of our suite, but none can match the breadth of what we offer, nor our track record," said Ms. Delaney.

Nor its president's eye for the empowerment of advanced technology. She is currently overseeing a complete rewrite of CCI's software, using the newest Web programming environments.

"The new tools are wonderful, enabling

more flexibility and speed of change than ever before. Customization that used to take weeks can be done in less than a day."

Under Ms. Delaney, CCI has expanded into a larger space in Novato and just opened an office in the Midwest to enable the expansion of customer service and support operations.

"One of my greatest challenges is learning how to grow larger and still retain the culture that makes people want to work here. How do you hold onto the advantages of a small company while growing into a larger one? Any success at CCI is directly attributable to its employees."

Outside CCI she lends her energy to the Ritter Center, a nonprofit agency that works to prevent homelessness in San Rafael. Ms. Delaney and her family have volunteered there since the early 1990's. Her four children grown, she's been increasingly generous with her time, serving as president of the board of directors since January 2005. ❏