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Customer:
Franklin Retail Solutions

Ernie Baske – Vice President of Technology

Industry:
Retail

Custom Solution:
Business Analytics, Business Integration, Business Performance Transformation, Performance Management, Leveraging Information

Project Name:
MVP

Overview

Franklin Retail Solutions, founded in 1998, is the #1 provider of in-store marketing and merchandising solutions in the Sporting Goods, Outdoor and Active Lifestyle industry. Their clients include Academy Sports, Dick's Sporting Goods, Sports Authority and REI among others.

Business need:

As a solution provider to Active Lifestyle retailers, Franklin Retail Solutions needed a better way to seamlessly track and manage their field staff's day to day in-store merchandising and advertising activities. The goal was to have the ability to track activities and roll them up into an enterprise level view of the business. Their goal was to integrate all business functions so they could leverage information in a timely manner to make good decisions quicker.

They also had the foresight that if they built the solution correctly, they would have the opportunity to license this solution to their clients who wanted the same business intelligence for their in-store marketing and advertising activities.

Solution:

MVP is a web based field force management solution for in-store adverting and marketing. It runs their entire business, from the floor to financials. They use it to operate their own business and they also license it as an in-store advertising and marketing solution. MVP gives Franklin Retail Solutions the ability to put the right person at the right store at the right time.

MVP is now their enterprise solution that gives them access to every component of their business and the ability to access all of their individual campaign data, as well as all of their financials.

Mr. Baske:

"Mainstream Technologies was referred to us as someone we should speak with before we made a decision to proceed with development. They were one of 15 possible providers whom we interviewed. After the initial interview, Mainstream made the short list. In the second round of interviews it became very clear to us that they were far and above the best fit. They understood the project. They understood our business. They had a clear understanding of the project from the outset and insisted on collaboration.

At the time, MVP was an idea. It was a concept which wouldn't support a waterfall development model. We needed a provider with whom we could collaborate with and rely on. Mainstream gave us solid talent, a high level of communication and a higher level of project management than we would have received by simply hiring a contractor.

Mainstream provided us a best of breed development methodology which combined elements of both Agile and Iterative development principles. We had an overall goal for the project, so Mainstream built it in pieces (i.e. Agile) so we could evaluate small portions of the code and measure success quickly.

They also employed Iterative methods at critical points in the development lifecycle where they delivered the project in stages to our group of super users. This allowed this group to comment and guide future development which minimized the potential for wasted effort.

We found that Mainstream was very knowledgeable about our business. They not only knew what we did, but they understood why! They even had the ability to wear our 'user's hat' and foresee their challenges so extra features could be built in as we moved forward.

The project was very big with a lot of moving parts. As the project progressed, we needed more resources than we anticipated. MVP became more complicated.   In fact, after launch, we needed several new enhancements to make it fully functional. The Iterative process not only helped us guide development and install these enhancements, it helped us begin to imagine what was possible with the solution."

Benefits:

"I'm glad we didn't go the route of hiring contractors. Mainstream gave us the 'best of breed' by combining Agile and Iterative methods.   They became an extension of our company for programming services. From the outset, they were the only firm I interviewed that approached the project as an extension of our internal team. This commitment to a partnership and collaboration created an environment that helped MVP accomplish all of our goals and more.

With Mainstream, we now have a new set of business and technology experts we can rely on. We ended up with a wider and deeper resource pool than I ever imagined.   When we do run into challenges on the business side, I feel comfortable going to them for their consulting services.

They ended up being an integral part of my project management style. I use them as a sounding board for solving the business or technology issues that crop up from time to time. Coming out of the project I was pleased with the breadth of services they offer, hosting, database support, as well as application support. They took all my worries away of launching a completely new application because I knew when I turned it over to them, it would be handled. They took a personal ownership of the issues and I didn't have to get involved.

For more information
Please contact Mainstream Technologies @ **501.801.6700**
Visit us at: **mainstream-tech.com**

Technology and Business Consulting Services used

Software:
.NET

Database:
SQL

Hosting:
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