

# Supply Chain Innovations

## MDL's MIDAS Gold Sales Data Warehouse

When you buy a sales data warehouse you know that it will be able to handle data on warehouse stocks, sales, dues and discounts. You make the investment in the expectation that it is going to be the solution to all your problems, as it provides you with the answers to all the important questions, including the Ultimate question of Life, the Universe and Everything<sup>1</sup>.

However, once you let the operational people feed data into it, and then you start manipulating that data, you find you've opened Pandora's Box. What was an indistinguishable mass of numbers becomes individual statistics which give incredibly important and valuable information about customers' stock holding and stock turns and order profiles. And it is easily visible to all, at the click of a few buttons.

Here is a sample of what MDL's MIDAS Gold now offers us.

1. We can look at stocks which are held outside of MDL's physical control. MDL has worked with Waterstone's in order to be able to provide information on their overall position on sales to end-consumer, which can be sorted by units and value. A stock movement column indicates the unit sales which could be used for rep commissions, returns, and overall stock holding for this and the previous week. It is even possible to drill down to branch level to compare stock holding by branch as well as other ratios of interest to those in sales, logistics and production.
2. It is also possible to integrate this information with Booktrack sales data as well. We have further expressed our wish to the Waterstone's IT team that their data transfer includes their category code so that we can "fine tune" even more our review of their stock holding.
3. With those publishers with a global reach MDL has been able to provide similar functionality by taking stock and sales data from sister companies. This has provided the Production and Logistic teams with valuable data about the performance of individual ISBNs and series around the world, allowing them to plan for, or to postpone, reprints based on a more global awareness of the success or failure of the product being reviewed. In addition, this improved view of the global stock position can be matched against the product sales forecast to make daily review of the tracking of actual sales against budget.
4. A chance to target sales forces to improve electronic ordering ratios by comparing sales reps' and area performance.
5. An opportunity to reduce error ratios by reviewing MDL's credited mistakes by customer by type of mistake, identifying process improvements both within MDL and within the customer goods-in processes.
6. The ability to monitor warehouse despatch performance by customer.

What started as a simple sales data warehouse with typical functionality of geography and customer, discount breaks, backlist/frontlist reporting and a number of other weird and

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<sup>1</sup> TM Mr Douglas Adams

wonderful combinations has transformed into the most valuable tool MDL possesses to understand the full cost of the supply chain.

MIDAS GOLD provides MDL with all the answers. And we now even understand why the answer was 42.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> TM Mr Douglas Adams