



Integrating people, process and IT



CASE STUDY

Specialty Sportswear Retailer Adopts “Best In Class” Solutions for Planning and Allocation

Specialty retailers rely on Planning and Allocation as a core solution to identify the ideal product mix to ensure customer satisfaction across all channels while improving the bottom line. A fine-tuned Planning and Allocation solution results in a more strategic view of inventory across the supply chain.

With continued growth in the North America market, an upgrade to the Direct-to-Consumer Planning and Allocation System was needed to provide integrated tools, processes and technology for Planners and Allocators to more efficiently allocate to support each sales channel including Ecommerce, Branded, Employee and Outlet.

Focus was placed on areas such as Key Assortment Planning, KPI, Business Methods and Custom Need Variables. RPE partnered with the retailer's Planning and Allocation teams to develop a Best Practice Future Process that leveraged the latest technology to create an efficient DTC Planning and Allocation Solution which included specific process steps combined with systems designed to leverage today's business needs and elevate tomorrow's opportunities.

Completing a 16-month Project on Time and Under Budget

As with any project of this scope, there are challenges that are sure to develop. RPE focused on the retailer's vision, tapping into the expertise of internal and external resources. Working with Solution Architects, the team was constantly pushed to ensure the solution met business goals.

KEY FACTS

Client: Specialty Sportswear Retailer

Number of Stores: 150+

Project Duration: 16 months

OBJECTIVE

Provide integrated tools, processes and technology for Planners and Allocators to more efficiently allocate to support each sales channel including Ecommerce, Branded, Employee and Outlet.

SOLUTIONS

- Planning
- Allocation

SERVICES

- Project Management
- Process Improvement
- Implementation
- UAT Testing
- Training
- Hypercare

“ RPE's guidance, leadership, project management excellence, professionalism and tenacity were instrumental to getting us successfully across the finish line. What we accomplished together in such a short time was truly amazing.”

SVP and Project Sponsor

In recent years, the retailer's Direct to Consumer business including Ecommerce, Outlet Stores, as well as Employee/Branded Stores all were driving strong results. The company's vision was to implement a state-of-the-art Planning and Allocation solution designed and configured to take them well into the future.

"This 16-month blueprint required input from many different functional areas, each adding a layer of complexity, but ultimately, adding clarity of purpose," said Mark Tobino, Project Manager, RPE. "Each team knew what needed to be done and had a detailed vision for how to get there."

RPE and the retailer spent the first several weeks creating a roadmap with the balance of the project executing the blueprint for success. RPE redefined the Future Process, identified gaps and then built a roadmap to support defining and building solutions. This included extensive UAT testing, detailed training manuals, on-site user training and on-site Hypercare to ensure success. By taking a Hypercare approach, the additional support helped users understand how to take advantage of the new Planning and Allocation solution to fully understand and maximize features.

This detailed, enterprise-wide roadmap was essential to getting the Planning and Allocation infrastructure to a desired end-state of efficiently supporting core business functions to lead to growth and success. All retailers require a long-term information technology strategy as the need to create a faster, agile and profitable enterprise is more important now than ever before.

Rising to the Challenge

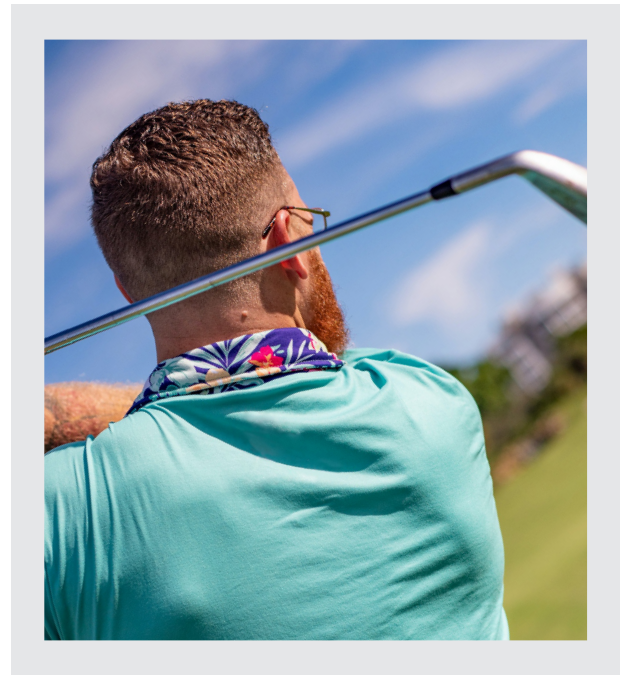
With any complex business model, there were obstacles that needed creative solutions. From how Comp Stores were handled to how the Allocation Dashboard needed to be configured, the team refused to compromise the vision.

"We tapped internal and external resources, we worked with the Solution Architects, and we constantly pushed to make the solution work for the client, even when it took us out of scope for answers," said Stacey Mendez, Senior Consultant, RPE. "We never do what's easy, instead, always doing what's right for the business."

The Execution of Excellence

Each subject matter expert within the retail company, or more commonly referred to as SME, helped define challenges, needs and nuances of the channel. By combining RPE's extensive experience with the client's SMEs in Planning and Allocation, a powerful winning combination was formed.

The team spent countless hours ensuring the Future Process was right, writing and testing hundreds of UAT (User Acceptance Testing) Scripts. The SMEs signed off on hundreds of pages of training materials,



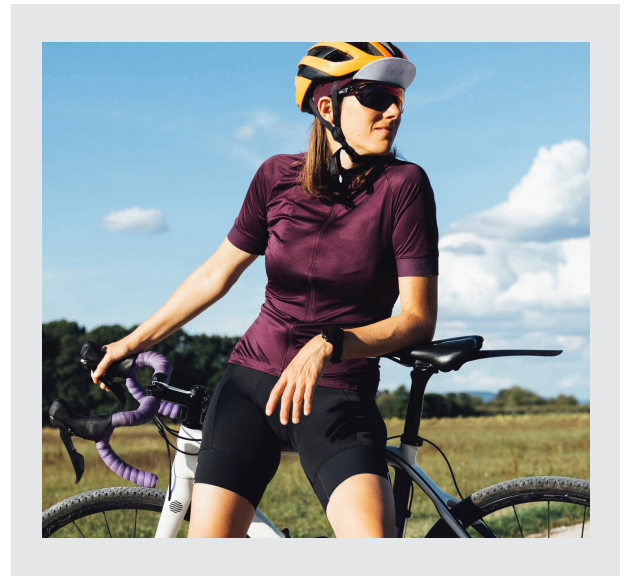
“ RPE has been an amazing partner, and we can attribute project success to their expertise and leadership. ”

Senior Manager, Omni Planning and Fulfillment

everything from Business Process workshops to end to end user Training. Together RPE and the client problem solved, pivoted and adapted where necessary, refusing to move forward until the business objectives were met.

Primary features and benefits from the Planning and Allocation solution include:

- New channel specific data points are now visible and prioritized.
- An increase in the depth and breadth of the plannable calendar allows for more reconciliation points between long range, annual and in-season planning capabilities.
- An ability to analyze attributed data from a seasonal or price cadence perspective within the solution, expanded business creativity and effectiveness for future business process.
- Business teams align on an omni intended pre-season planning approach that considers channel specific views/ dashboards giving teams the tools to be responsive to trend changes.



"We build systems, sure, but more importantly we build relationships and confidence. We build trust. We leave clients stronger, smarter and more prepared for the future, so they are poised to succeed," said Tobino.

Instructor Lead Training

RPE spent several weeks at client headquarters executing customized channel-specific training programs which featured a classroom setting and hands on learning. RPE led the training with the SMEs answering questions gaining confidence in the teams onboarding. The excitement that came with the realization of what was now possible grew every day.

Reaping the Results

From meticulous Project Management to heightened Hypercare, the project was completed on-time, under budget and with amazing results. The Planning and Allocation teams have fully embraced the future and the possibilities it holds.

The client was 'all in' and never allowed challenges to derail their determination to get the solution right. This "give and take" approach made the Planning and Allocation Solutions more powerful. In the end, the vision of what was possible exceeded expectations.



www.rpesolutions.com ■ 813-490-7000 Ext. 7353
info@rpesolutions.com

