

Tailoring IT to changing markets: REALTECH helps YOMO streamline its systems

Faced with rising volumes of data and the euro changeover, leading Italian food group sitia-YOMO S.p.A. needed to streamline its IT environment. REALTECH Italia S.p.A. helped YOMO plan and implement a tailor-made solution to system management issues, including state-of-the-art data archiving. The IT specialist also delivered ongoing technical support, and monitored and optimized system performance.

: success story

sitia-YOMO S.p.A.



Marco Cipelletti,
IT Manager
at sitia-YOMO S.p.A.

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In Italy, the YOMO group is a leading manufacturer of dairy products and fresh food. Headquartered near Milan, YOMO has around 600 employees. The group also owns and markets other brands: Merlo, Pettinicchio, Torre in Pietra and Mandria. YOMO distributes its products throughout Italy via some 500 sales agents. Seven distribution centers and 50 transit points enable daily deliveries to between 40,000 and 50,000 retail outlets.

Dramatic increase in data volume

In recent years, the group has extended its product range to meet market demand. As a result, the volume of data to be managed has risen significantly.

To cope with the new business processes and the rising volume of data, YOMO implemented SAP R/3 in early 2000. This allowed the centralization of financial accounting and controlling. The complex sales network, previously managed using an AS/400-based solution, could now also be handled via the ERP solution and completely automated. Today, the IT landscape comprises an AS/400 system for production and human resources management, and the UNIX-based SAP environment with the FI, CO, SD and MM modules.

Initially, YOMO had expected the amount of historical data stored in its database to increase from 200 gigabytes to 500 gigabytes. However, within only one year of the SAP implementation, the volume of data had increased dramatically. In fact, the Oracle database tripled in size, becoming one of the largest in the industry.

Managing such quantities of information is costly, but it allows YOMO to conduct targeted marketing, and provides important insight into sales patterns. To reap these benefits, system sizing has to be regularly monitored to match capacity with changing requirements.

Another critical issue between 2001 and 2002 was the euro changeover. YOMO handles some 12,000 orders daily, and enters around 60 gigabytes of data into its systems every month. The currency conversion therefore presented a considerable challenge.

Technology consulting and support

In early 2001, YOMO opted to partner with REALTECH. As a leading provider of software and consulting services, REALTECH had the proven application and technology skills required to streamline YOMO's IT landscape, and to master the challenges of the impending euro changeover.

To optimize YOMO's entire IT landscape and enhance system performance, it was essential to reconfigure the database, and to carry out a systematic archiving process. Furthermore, plans had to be drawn up for the introduction of data warehousing. Collaboration also included second-level support. To ensure a smooth conversion to the euro, YOMO's systems had to be analyzed and optimized. In addition, a test environment had to be implemented for the introduction of the new currency.

Lightening the load on YOMO's systems

As YOMO intended to put its systems offline for five days from November 1, 2001, the date scheduled for the euro changeover, steps had to be taken to minimize the disruption caused by downtime. REALTECH and YOMO drew up a detailed plan of action, and began to carry out in-house training. The partners also began to define which data needed to be archived in order to provide users with online data as long as possible.

Streamlining the system was especially complex, since it was necessary to reconfigure the system database – something YOMO had never attempted before. How-

ever, the changes delivered a number of significant performance enhancements. Analysis, monitoring, and reconfiguration continued until mid July-2001.

The next project phase involved archiving data from early 2000. YOMO and REALTECH began with data on the company's inventories before going on to deal with invoices and orders.

Trials for the euro conversion were conducted during the test phase. The first, on the database for April (1.3 to 1.4 terabytes), lasted 21 days; the second, on the same database, took 17 days; and the third – in mid-October – lasted one week, and was performed on a database from which most inventory data had already been archived.

The system went offline at 10 p.m. on October 31. *"The actual conversion began on November 1. Our system was back online by November 5, half a day earlier than expected, which reduced our costs,"* explains Marco Cipelletti. *"The transfer of archiving management knowledge from REALTECH to YOMO allowed us not only to master this particular challenge, but also to identify the application activities that were slowing down our system and generating redundant documents,"* adds the IT Manager.

In early 2001, administering the database was a daunting task. By early 2002, however, YOMO had this well under control and was looking at other ways of optimizing data management. *"In collaboration with REALTECH, we decided to develop an archiving approach to prevent our system from growing excessively, and to help us cope with data warehousing issues".* Against this background, YOMO and REALTECH recovered the data archived during the project, and decided which and how much information would be managed via the SAP Business Information Warehouse. The SAP solution further reduces the amount of data that the group's core systems have to deal with, ensuring that capacity problems are a thing of the past.