



# Apparel Case Study

## Working with Trading Partners to Improve the Seasonal Planning Process

### Customer Benefits

- Sales, merchandising, finance, production, and operations teams spread globally across multiple time zones can all work collaboratively using a single, centrally managed digital ledger technology
- 100s of users can work at the same time on the same data “offline” and share net changes when ready with the click of a mouse
- Making changes to lots of demand and supply data is easily done on the desktop without clicking through lots of forms
- New product lines and changes to existing products take a lot less time to execute than with traditional tools
- Leveraging a digital blockchain ledger technology increases the visibility, trust and relevance of plan data
- With time-based transactions, machine learning can be leveraged to drive course corrections within operational processes, thereby continually improving the application
- Two-way integration with manufacturing systems and ERP means data is shared seamlessly between multiple environments

### Problem Statement

Apparel manufacturers face tremendous product innovation pressure both to stay ahead of the competition and also to attract consumers that are driven by style, price, and other buying factors. This means they need to manage lots of new products and actively drive business planning with retailers and manufacturing partners.

While core transactional systems are essential for driving manufacturing operations like fabric purchases, collaborative tools are needed to drive interactions between trading partners.

An apparel company was looking to address the following business challenges :

- Planning between merchants, production teams and vendors was run manually in legacy systems resulting in long process iterations.
- Product lines and manufacturing locations overlapped in their data views and they needed different planning views for different users.
- The users wanted an environment where they could work with lots of data at once and easily make updates working offline.

- Exchanging data between systems was labor intensive, error prone and did not scale.

Extending their transactional systems just did not work for them. Their products changed too often and ease of use was essential which meant hard to use and rigid planning tools would not fit.

### Solution

The Boardwalk Blockchain Digital Ledger (Boardwalk) platform gives this apparel manufacturer a flexible digital ledger planning platform used for assortment planning & forecasting, seasonal planning, production planning, sizing, and PO generation and order management. Users are able to collaborate using legacy tools while securely and reliably managing the data across any number of desktops and disparate data environments.

By using Boardwalk, this customer is able to leverage patented address level information management, transaction chaining capabilities, inferencing and machine learning, plus the ability to ensure that all parties only see their sensitive data. Blockchain technology ensures that the transactional agreements can be trusted and verified which has enabled this

customer to gain greater trust, visibility and transparency across its entire supply chain.

Since deploying Boardwalk, this customers has seen significant business benefits including:

- Reduced process cycle times from 6 to 1-2 weeks
- Eliminating manual touches has recovered 40 person-months for the 100 users process over a quarterly cadence
- Improved frequency of data collection has resulted in a 1-4% reduction in inventory
- Predict late deliveries 60 days in advance, with over 90% accuracy; reducing stock-outs
- Aggregate annual savings of seven figures returned to the bottom line to invest back in the business



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