Mobile Business Intelligence Solutions for Retail with Cisco and MicroStrategy

Today’s retail market is both highly competitive and increasingly global, requiring innovative approaches to essential business processes. In our current “big data” landscape, this requires data-driven decision making based on all the information available to retailers. From any location in the world, retailers need to analyze, understand, and act on massive amounts of information on customers, inventory, promotions, and sales. In this rapidly changing environment, stores need to gather data that allows them to:

- Find “riches in niches” by profiting from insightful information analysis
- Share operational insights immediately and effectively with business colleagues
- Make rapid business decisions based on sales, inventory, payroll, and exceptions data
- Achieve responsive inventory, ordering, and product mix management
- Improve the customer experience with more targeted marketing approaches

This need for actionable insight any place, any time, on any device requires robust business intelligence (BI) applications that are accessible on mobile devices across high-speed, secure networks.

The Power of Closed Loop Business Intelligence

In a closed loop business intelligence system, decisions can be made quickly and accurately, across any distance, by utilizing data input and write-back capabilities that enable rapid decision making. Executives and managers receive information and interact with reports by analyzing data, collaborating with colleagues, adjusting forecasts, and adding text or comments. Today these capabilities may be embedded on mobile smartphones and tablets, allowing decision-makers to traverse instantly from business insight to business action no matter where they are physically located.

The Cisco-MicroStrategy Collaborative Mobile BI Solution

Cisco®, the global leader in networking technologies, has worked with MicroStrategy®, a specialist in enterprise software platforms, to develop a Collaborative Mobile BI solution that features information-driven applications embedded with data-driven video conference capabilities. Based on powerful Cisco networking, this solution gives retailers a 360-degree understanding of store operations on the fly, including store vitals, employee and customer information, inventory, and current promotions.

**Business Intelligence:** MicroStrategy capabilities help transform retail business processes with real time information, optimized reporting, analysis, and monitoring, all supported by dynamic Cisco mobile collaboration. With built-in support for more than 300 mathematical, OLAP, financial, and statistical functions, retailers can create reporting applications that combine ease of use with unparalleled backend performance and reliability.

**Collaboration:** The power of collaboration is integrated into the BI application with Cisco Jabber™, a unified communications client application that provides presence, voice, voice messaging, and video calling capabilities. Personal contact to a desktop, phone, or mobile device becomes an immediate action based on the data: For example, a manager exploring store performance is able to note critical information, immediately locate and speak to the appropriate employee, and consult with them while continuing to perform data analysis.

Seamlessly integrated into the BI application, Jabber facilitates a tight-knit dialogue between stores, district sales, and corporate business functions—which, in turn, results in faster and more insightful decision-making. Whether by initiating corrective actions for negative trends or scaling positive actions, retailers can achieve improved business results in multiple areas of the business, as reported via the dashboards, reports, and alerts.
Code-Free Development: The MicroStrategy Mobile Application Platform allows stores to build essential mobile applications that deliver processes, transactions, mobile operations systems access, multimedia, and business intelligence in compelling, custom, native apps. Developers can embed workflows, multimedia, transactions, and powerful business intelligence tools using this easy-to-use, fast, and flexible platform.

Cloud Options: Retailers may opt to run the mobile BI solution on-premise or within cloud-based collaboration architectures. This robust cloud solution allows retailers to use a flexible, scalable, and agile platform to deploy BI applications faster, achieving a faster time to business capability and result impact. In the cloud, the application can be deployed and scaled to any number of users while relying on powerful Cisco mobility, security, and collaboration solutions.

The solution is tightly integrated with Cisco Jabber to enable immediate action on data.

The Cisco-MicroStrategy Solution at Work

The Cisco-MicroStrategy Collaborative Mobile BI solution allows retailers to take collaborative action in real time on key drivers that impact the business across multiple retail functions. For example, a product promotion tested at one store is analyzed through the MicroStrategy platform and found to be extremely successful. Managers can record a video training session within Jabber and immediately broadcast it to all store locations to scale the promotion across the retail chain, driving greater impact for the company.

As another example, while monitoring sales and inventory, the MicroStrategy software sends an exception alert—a highly popular item is out of stock in several stores. The alert includes data on the affected stores, the departments, and the responsible employees. The inventory manager launches a Jabber meeting from within the mobile solution to discuss the cause, working with the extended team to identify corrective actions and implementing a solution. The result: Rapid restocking, higher sales, and satisfied customers.

Why Cisco and MicroStrategy

Cisco and MicroStrategy work closely to offer powerful mobile business intelligence capabilities to retailers around the globe. Cisco is the world leader in networking and communications technologies, providing retail solutions to help manage, assess, and utilize critical business information. MicroStrategy is a trusted Cisco Independent Software Vendor (ISV) specializing in advanced data management.

The Cisco–MicroStrategy Collaborative Mobile BI solution offers significant benefits to retailers including:

- The ability to achieve higher sales revenues with better fill rates, inventory planning, and merchandising at the point of action
- Rapid cross-pollination of sales insights between stores
- Assurance of consistent yet localized training for associates
- Improved workforce productivity based on greater operational effectiveness
- Increased customer satisfaction, conversion, and retention
- Better, faster use of business operational information and insights to impact key metrics and business drivers

Providing business intelligence from any store, office, or warehouse around the world, the Cisco–MicroStrategy solution allows retailers to analyze data stored across the enterprise to make better business decisions based on the latest and most accurate information. Companies using either MicroStrategy or Cisco Jabber may take their investment to the next level to maximize the success of their mobile deployment.

For more information, please visit the Cisco Developer Network Catalog or contact your Cisco or MicroStrategy sales representative.

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