

Case Study

Connecting Group M



Connecting and synergizing the world's largest media investment group

In today's dynamic media landscape, GroupM teamed up with Avanade to provide a holistic automated solution to track and capture information and data across its global offices

Business Situation

Founded in 2003 as part of the WPP Group, GroupM is the world's number one media investment management group in terms of billings. The group counts Maxus, MEC, MediaCom and Mindshare as its family of agencies. As the parent company, GroupM offers clients, advertising media selection services such as media planning and buying, content creation, digital media, ROI and consumer research, internet marketing, and social media marketing through its agencies.

While the agencies that comprise GroupM are all global operations in their own right with leading market positions, GroupM's primary focus is to maximise the performance of its agencies and lead collaboration in performance to enhance activities such as trading, content creation, digital, finance, proprietary tool development and other business-critical capabilities. Today, GroupM's success and track record has seen it grow to 400 offices in 81 countries around the world with global staff strength of over 18,000.

As the leading company in the industry globally, GroupM continually strives to stay ahead of the competition through its innovative culture. A truly global business operation, GroupM's main challenge was in the collaboration and consolidation of information and data across its many offices around the world. "With data from the various global offices not tied in any cohesive way, this made collaboration and management of the information challenging. Global client reports were generated manually and these could take up to a month to create, making the whole process inefficient," said Darrell Ryman, Senior Vice President, Avanade Greater China.



From Accenture and Microsoft

“As a truly global business, one of our key challenges was consolidating information from multiple different business systems across countries. Consequently, we knew we needed some type of data warehouse and process that would help automate the gathering and consolidation of information,” said Paul Gilbert, Global Applications Director, GroupM.

The Avanade Solution

As an existing global partner that helped GroupM develop and create a comprehensive media management solution for its agencies, Avanade presented a dependable track record of implementation. Avanade, which recognised and understood the complex needs of the business, was selected to provide an automated global solution that would help GroupM extract, transform, and load (ETL) data to a global data warehouse which will help track and capture ‘the state of advertising data’.

“We turned to Avanade to help us execute our vision, partially because they were an existing partner with a strong track record of delivery, but also because we knew that Avanade could be relied on not just on technical expertise but the ability to focus on a workable business solution,” said Gilbert.

Leveraging Microsoft technologies, Avanade created a global data warehouse solution using Avanade’s ETL framework and Microsoft’s SQL Server 2008 R2 capabilities. The first phase was implemented in three primary markets in the UK, Mexico and Thailand. The solution automatically collects and consolidates data from

each country’s local source systems into a local data warehouse. This data is then replicated into the global data warehouse. The end to end solution operates automatically without user intervention.

Business Benefits

With the implementation of the solution, GroupM is now empowered with an automated global solution that helps capture multiple data sources from its agencies worldwide and can easily generate local and global cross-market reports in a streamlined and simplified process, reducing the long hours needed to manually complete the task. Now, GroupM has the ability to drive collaboration with its global offices and derive insights to better make informed decisions.

“Despite the complexities of the implementation including different time zones, language and market needs, Avanade really stretched the goals and completed the pilot phase within nine months. This allowed us to see immediate results and we can now generate global client reports within minutes,” said John Donnarumma, Chief Information Officer, GroupM.

The new system captures data on all types of advertising including online, TV and outdoor advertising and helps provide the necessary business intelligence for GroupM to make informed decisions based on information monitored, including customer spend, ad ratings, placements and target audience reach.

“We’re really pleased that GroupM has managed to see instant results with their investment and further enhanced their competitive advantage. The

right business intelligence tools can enable deep and fast business insights, and the collaborative approach taken with GroupM has been a key factor in this” commented Craig Dower, President, Avanade Asia Pacific.

Avanade’s alliance with GroupM is set to continue with the next phase of implementation extended to 15 markets globally, which will provide around 70% worldwide coverage. The roll out is expected to be completed within three years.

“Avanade understands our business and we see our partnership growing into a strategic and long-term relationship, driving our competitive advantage to spearhead even greater business growth. Today, we’re really proud of our success and leadership position in the industry, and we look forward to working with Avanade and continuing to grow our business,” said Donnarumma.

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About Avanade

Avanade provides business technology services that connect insight, innovation and expertise in Microsoft® technologies to help customers realize results. Avanade’s services and solutions help improve performance, productivity and sales for organizations in all industries. Additional information can be found at www.avanade.com.

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