Brown-Forman

Gaining a Harmonized View of Global Product Data

SUMMARY

Brown-Forman needed a Master Data Management solution that could handle vast quantities of product data across multiple global locations. They aimed to have a better view of their global landscape and use that data to inform their product decisions. Their first challenge was that data for the same product was handled differently according to the location it came from. Semarchy helped them to devise a solution for harmonizing data, leading to improved data accuracy and reliability. They were able to gain insights more quickly and efficiently and cut back on project timelines. Brown-Forman continues to scale their data harmonization efforts and is seeing benefits across departments, including improved pricing and marketing strategies.

OVERVIEW

Brown-Forman is an American company based in Louisville, Kentucky. They are one of the largest companies in the wine and spirits business and manufacture multiple well-known brands across the globe. Known labels such as Jack Daniels, Woodford Reserve, and Finlandia fall under their umbrella.

With products spread across global markets, the team at Brown-Forman lose visibility over 80% of their products once they are shipped to various locations and entities. In order to answer basic questions such as "how is Jack Daniels performing against the competition" for any given location, Brown-Forman purchases data on their products as well as competitor's from consumer insight companies such as Nielson and IRI.

Brown-Forman needed a way to bring global data together for a more holistic view, as up until recently, it was siloed by location and only used to inform local market strategies. They wanted to answer the question, "how well are our Brown-Forman products doing compared to others across the globe?"

A key challenge is that the consumer insight companies providing their data record data using different conventions in different global locations. For Jack Daniels alone, there were over 2000 variants in datasets.

Brown-Forman knew they needed a Master Data Management tool to harmonize their datasets. Semarchy made their short list of vendors due to factors such as capability to manage large, global datasets and experience in MDM. Ultimately, Brown-Forman chose Semarchy because they could implement xDM quickly, the interface was simple and intuitive, it has the ability to scale with their business needs, and it adds value across the enterprise.

Mike Homer, Senior Manager, Master Data Management at Brown-Forman says the term "partnership" came up frequently among users when they checked Semarchy reviews, and this is something they have found truly valuable. "Without their guidance we wouldn't be where we are today."

BUSINESS DRIVERS AND DATA CHALLENGES

Brown-Forman identified key challenges with their data, particularly that it was siloed in different locations and recorded using different conventions. They needed a solution to harmonize their product data and ensure every business unit was speaking the same data "language." Business drivers included:

- To centralize global product data into a "single source of truth" with conventional treatment of that data.
- To gain better product data insights across their global footprint and understand how they compare to competitors globally.
- To identify common challenges for their global brands.
- To discover opportunities for products with similar competitive environments.
- To inform their pricing and promotion strategies across different locations.
- To discover where they are outperforming and underperforming, both regionally and globally.
- To better-inform leadership decisions.

THE SOLUTION

Brown-Forman designed an initial product model and found xDM made it easy to test the integrity of that model. Through the review process, they exposed a significant problem. To effectively utilize "fuzzy match", Semarchy recommends that not more than a few clusters have more than 100 data records. Brown-Forman had some very large match clusters, with one having over 5000 records and more than 200 clusters with 100+ records.

Semarchy's Solutions Architect team worked with Brown-Forman on their proposed product model and helped them to come up with a game plan to manage those large data clusters. Data owners would confirm match results, the resulting match records would then be assigned an ID, and finally, the IDs would be used for an ID matched entity.

With a solution in-place, Brown-Forman tracked their product harmonization efforts and found positive impacts on KPIs and increased trust in downstream reporting. They report that the dashboard view has led to an informal competition among data owners to see who can get their data harmonized and successfully keep it that way.

RESULTS

Semarchy has allowed Brown-Forman to harmonize global product data and meet their business objectives for MDM.

- They're able to see first-hand their brand performance at regional and global levels. The harmonized data has become the preferred dataset for global and regional teams.

- They discovered some unexpected competitive product interactions across different

- geographies.

- The global brand teams can more easily see what is working, what needs improvement, and where they can be more effective.

- They are able to take a global approach to price positioning vs. their competitors.

- They can take advantage of machine learning systems to help with forecasting and price elasticity models.

- They can scale the harmonized data approach to both internal and external datasets. They aren't limiting themselves to just the data provided by third-party data collectors and teams within the business are bringing them data harmonization opportunities as they see them.

- They can view external data alongside their P&L for the very first time.

- Unified data has provided them with a common language making it easy to communicate across business units and vendors in any location.

- Project timelines across business units have been sped up because the data teams need to access has already been harmonized.

Brown-Forman continues to work with Semarchy and is bringing in new data sources, harmonizing that data as they go. They continuously evaluate their data strategy, ensuring they remain efficient. An ongoing goal is to work with Semarchy to improve their external fuzzy matching process. By moving the harmonization dashboard into xDM, they will create a one-stop-shop for data users. They're also working on building workflows so that data owners can easily respond to harmonization needs.

Semarchy, a leader in the data integration and master data management markets, enables organizations to rapidly generate business value from their data. Its' unified platform enables organizations of any size, to quickly discover, govern, manage, integrate and visualize critical information scattered across applications.

Semarchy is available as an on-premises platform, is natively available on most popular cloud marketplaces, such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Google Cloud Platform (GCP), and managed as a service and is supported by a rich ecosystem of software- as-a service and professional service partners.

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