

BACKGROUND ON BUSINESS

Remaining A Constant In Shifting Markets

by *Lars Nyberg*

(NAPSA)—For many companies, the rules of business have changed. “Commoditization”—and the declining profit margins associated with this market dynamic—has become one of the main challenges facing most industries today. From the entertainment field to telecommunications, commoditization is a growing trend. The shift has shortened business cycles and required even faster



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decision making. The complexity of those decisions has increased, while any room for error has decreased. In addition, the demands of a global marketplace require companies to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. So how do you compete effectively in this new environment?

You follow an old-fashioned business principle: Build relationships with your customers. The key to creating lasting and valuable customer relationships is information. Companies must be able to transform the massive amounts of data they collect into a usable, actionable resource.

Then they must get that information into the hands of their employees on the “front lines” of customer service—all in real time. That’s where technology comes into play to provide a single, integrated view of a business—an integrated decision architecture, the foundation of which is an enterprise data warehouse. That’s where true knowledge management begins.

For example, imagine you are in the courier business. You have a disabled plane in Seattle with 20,000 packages on board, some with delivery guarantees. In less than 15 minutes you need to decide how to handle the situation. To make the best choice, you need a variety of information, including: What is the profitability by package? What is the strategic value of each customer (beyond profitability)? What is the service history of each customer? Once you’ve prioritized your packages, you still need to consider what’s going where, alternative shipping options, etc. Situations such as these illustrate the complexity of the decision itself and the importance of ensuring that employees on the front lines have

access to the relevant data and the tools to turn that data into information, fast.

Decision making is not a static process, and an enterprise data warehouse is the only technology foundation that can deal with all the variables—and all the realities—of doing business today and tomorrow. An enterprise data warehouse brings various sources of data together into a single enterprise-wide picture of an organization. The technology enables companies to put the power of information in the hands of employees who need it, when they need it. That empowers workers to make better, faster decisions—and for many businesses, that has become the real bottom line.

For more information, visit www.ncr.com or www.teradata.com.

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