

Miami Dolphins

Threshold Consulting Assists NFL Franchise in Managing Ticket Sales, Creating Effective Marketing Campaigns and Managing Operations



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*Bill Galante
Senior Vice
President,
Operations
Miami Dolphins*

Exec Summary

The Miami Dolphins organization relies on Hyperion Intelligence™ to provide accurate, timely analytic reporting on all aspects of running the NFL franchise. Marketing and sales use ticket sales reports to measure campaign effectiveness and highlight games with available tickets. The recruiting organization uses a data mart and Hyperion to track college player statistics. Since the 2002-2003 season, the Miami Dolphins have seen increases in ticket sales and operating performance as a result of Hyperion’s easy-to-use analytic reporting.

Background

The Miami Dolphins NFL franchise has delivered outstanding football entertainment since 1965. In addition to the obvious challenges of managing and coaching athletes, it’s also a complex business operation that includes ticket sales, merchandise sales, concessions, and stadium and event management. Revenue generation from ticket sales (season tickets, groups, individual) is critical to the organization’s overall financial health. The goal is to sell out all eight regular season home games and maximize season ticket sales.

The majority of ticket sales are managed through TicketMaster. The Dolphins organization has direct access to TicketMaster data empowering them with critical information on the number of seats sold, at what price, for every game of the season. Inflexible reporting on that important data was a problem. Typically, data was culled from five or six TicketMaster reports and re-keyed into a spreadsheet that produced the management report

needed to understand ticket sale status. This cumbersome process was only done once, possibly twice, each week. It took one person at least an hour to create and distribute the report to Dolphins' management. Changes to TicketMaster reports, or creating a new report usually took several weeks for delivery.

With the completion of a sales and marketing data mart, the Dolphins' IT Director, Tery Howard knew a business intelligence solution was necessary to take advantage of the data. Her vision was a solution that would seamlessly access the data mart and empower decision-makers to create and access their own reports. In the Spring of 2002, her team researched all the leading business intelligence solutions including Cognos, Business Objects and Hyperion. The finalists were invited to demonstrate their solutions to the Dolphins organization.

A Hyperion Consulting Partner, Threshold Consulting, demonstrated Hyperion Intelligence using live TicketMaster data to highlight how Dolphins' managers could easily access, manipulate, analyze and report on data. After seeing charts, graphs and obtaining answers to their "hot button" ticket sales questions, Dolphins executives were convinced that Hyperion met their reporting needs. More importantly, they recognized that Hyperion's ease-of-use would enable business managers to be self-sufficient.

Solution

Threshold Consulting performed the initial installation including setting up a Hyperion Broadcast Server, OnDemand Server and Hyperion Intelligence clients, as well as creating several business critical reports. In less than a week the solution was operational. Threshold continues to be support the Dolphins by training new users, creating complex reports, and providing user assistance.

Key ticket sales reports are generated from a SQL Server 2000 sales and marketing data mart. Most reports are automatically run daily and e-mailed to recipients. Other standard monthly and annual

reports are run as required. The following topics are reported and analyzed with Hyperion:

- List of season ticket holders
- Status of season ticket payment
- Corporate box purchases, prices, and renewal status
- Daily, weekly, monthly ticket sales by season tickets, group and individual
- Tickets available for each game
- Total ticket revenue for each game

The Marketing organization uses the ticket purchase history to create campaigns to increase ticket and merchandise sales. For instance, if a block of seats is available for a particular game, an e-mail to the fan club and previous ticket purchasers will be sent to encourage ticket purchases. The group sales department also uses this information with the same strategy.

The sales and marketing data mart is also used to populate the Dolphins' CRM system with viable sales leads. Using Hyperion, past purchasers with specified buying behaviors are identified as future prospects and loaded into the CRM system for potential current year sales.

A separate SQL Server 2000 data mart containing robust data on player statistics and activities is used by the recruiting organization. The system tracks all college players eligible for draft from their college performance continuing through their professional careers. Ad-hoc Hyperion reports aid the process of identifying top draft choices and projecting player performance based on historical performance of players with similar attributes.

A series of Hyperion reports also streamlines the important communication process between potential draft-picks and Dolphins recruiters. Players complete forms and surveys throughout the draft process. Their responses drive a variety of actions. Hyperion reports identify actions that need to be taken with particular players. This increases the likelihood that

important actions are taken and enforces accountability. Equally important is the favorable, proactive image Miami Dolphins conveys to future players.

Results

The operations staff saves many hours per week by foregoing manual report preparation. In addition to the productivity gain, reports are generated daily, instead of weekly. “We now have a clear status of ticket sales every morning, without someone on my staff coming in early to prepare reports,” said Bill Galante, Senior Vice President-Operations, Miami Dolphins. “Instead of spending time preparing reports, staff can perform other high-value, revenue-generating tasks, such as selling more tickets.”

“We’ve saved at least one IT headcount with Hyperion. I estimated that IT would need at least one headcount to deliver reports from the sales and marketing data mart,” stated Tery Howard, Director of IT, Miami Dolphins. “With Hyperion, our decision-makers are able to use standard reports and some create their own ad-hoc reports without IT assistance. We didn’t hire the additional IT headcount.”

The finance department has saved multiple hours each week by using Hyperion to create and deliver management reports daily, instead of every few days. Prior to Hyperion, staff pulled data from several sources, input the data into spreadsheets to create reports and sent the reports to managers. Now, an automated report is delivered to managers via e-mail every day.

Throughout the Dolphins’ organization, business processes and information use improved with the Hyperion solution. There are no disagreements about data and numbers. It’s known that if a number came from a Hyperion report, it’s accurate.