

THE STING

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Founded in 1982, with their first store in Tilburg, the Netherlands, The Sting has grown to become a major Young Fashion retail chain. They provide cutting edge fashion, creative thinking, and operate a fair and honest business philosophy. Their successful fashion formulas and solid performance has enabled them to grow. With 80+ stores and 2,200 staff, The Sting operates across the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and the UK. It has also established a strong online presence and web shop (www.thesting.com and costesfashion.com). The Sting designs its own label fashion, and outsources production.



HIGHLIGHTS

- SAP Best Practice BW migration methodology
- Significantly faster business insight
- Increased sales process performance
- Much faster, shortened reporting periods
- Less load-time and significant database compression
- HANA supports the transformation to a high-performing company

SAP BW HANA POWERS 'REAL-TIME RETAIL' FOR A MAJOR YOUNG FASHION RETAIL CHAIN

CHALLENGE

SAP has been the core business system for The Sting for more than 15 years, with BW in place for much of that time.

"We have grown significantly as a business, and were finding that it took too long to do in-depth analysis in our BW system," says Bart Overbeek, Head of IT for The Sting House of Brands B.V. "The retail fashion market is fast moving, and we needed to provide 'Real-time Retail'. To enable this, we had to increase the performance of our analysis and reporting."

"It was important for us to be able to analyse trends in shopping behaviour, that we could use as input for the planning of our new fashion collection," explains Bart. "From the outset, we wanted our analysts to be able to undertake full reviews of business opportunities. SAP BW is capable of in-depth historical sales analysis and seasonal considerations that enable us to make accurate future predictions. All the data we need is there. We also wanted to provide an integrated customer experience, where our shops worked with our online presence; an Omni-channel, letting 'bricks & clicks' work together."

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SOLUTION

Working with SAP, The Sting determined that migrating their BW system from an Oracle database to SAP HANA was going to provide a significant opportunity to improve performance.

“Their consultants were knowledgeable and professional, we had no concerns. The project manager understood and made full use of the SAP Best Practice migration methodology.”

“We discussed the migration with SAP in the Netherlands and suitable migration partners,” says Bart. “SAP recommended two possible organisations. From this shortlist, we found that SOA People could demonstrate significant experience with migrating databases to HANA. This experience is scarce. Not on every corner of the street. For us it meant that the clear choice to lead The Sting through the migration was SOA People.”

“Their consultants were knowledgeable and professional,” continues Bart. “We had no concerns. Immediately we had a good experience. The project manager understood and made full use of the SAP Best Practice migration methodology. The two consultants working with him, one on the application side and the other on the database migration, were both skilled and experienced people, and good communicators.

“If you take on a company to do a job, because they are highly experienced, you expect there to be a plan and a detailed schedule of tasks and responsibilities,” says Bart. “This was the case with SOA People. Unusually, they had all the tools and documentation needed to deliver a standardised project. It was clear from the start that they knew what they were doing. With a clear approach, it was a refreshing experience.”

A commitment to an agreed scope, and adherence to a detailed migration plan, ensured that the project was delivered to the allocated budget.

“Previously, with such a large volume of data, we had to be selective to do timely analysis,” says Bart. “With SAP HANA, we can evaluate all the relevant data, more frequently. Our analysts now work with a super-fast system, that makes their lives easier. For The Sting, we can do significantly more analysis with the same resource. SAP HANA database has put our core on steroids.”

BENEFITS

Significantly faster business insight –

The migration to SAP HANA has provided immediate business value for The Sting. All relevant sales data can now be analysed, and more frequently, providing a complete picture for business decision making.

Increased sales process performance –

Now working with a super-fast system, The Sting can do significantly more analysis with the same resource.

Much faster, shortened reporting periods –

The Sting had expected that complicated database queries would take much less time. That has proved to be correct. What is also true is that every single report, complex or simple, is faster. “Every single user of the BW systems has had a better experience,” says Bart.

Less load-time and significant database compression –

saving on IT resource and infrastructure.



SUMMARY

“What I found appealing about this successful project, was that it was clear SOA People had the right experience. They proved this from day 1 of the project. Their people were passionate about their work, knowledgeable and skilled. They communicated with us, were in total control and organised. The ideal world. If you ask somebody to do something for you at a fair price then you expect them to deliver professional services. SOA People do that and have lived up to their promises.”

Bart Overbeek, Head of IT for
The Sting House of Brands B.V.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

- SAP ECC Retail 6.0 + SAP BW 7.4 (350 Gb data) for 350 SAP-users
- SAP ECC is running on Oracle + SAP BW is (now) running on HANA



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