

LOGISTICS TECH EDITION

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The Navigator for Enterprise Solutions

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LONGBOW ADVANTAGE

TRANSFORMING SUPPLY
CHAIN MANAGEMENT DATA
INTO KNOWLEDGE



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TRANSFORMING SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT DATA INTO KNOWLEDGE

By Justin Smith

“You work hard and most likely wear many hats. You should require the same of your data, and more specifically, you should expect the same from your technology partners who manage your data”, says Alex Wakefield, the CEO of Longbow Advantage and Rebus® Data Services.

However, there is an outdated notion that suggests data is the new oil. This analogy might have been great if the data was dirty, difficult to find, could only be used once, and was controlled by a few powerful companies. Fortunately, nothing can be farther from the truth. “Data should always be available, easily accessible, controlled by you for your purposes, and used in as many different ways as you can imagine,” adds Wakefield. Today, data is more like the sun than oil. The sun is clean, cheap, always-on, and used limitless times in a variety of ways, which is where the value of data services dawns upon the supply chain and logistics landscape.

Data Services software offers companies the ability to use the same data set repeatedly to deliver multiple value streams to their specific business. The most effective (time- and cost-wise) way to leverage data is to work with someone who knows the operations

and data structures of the business vertical in question. Generic enterprise data and analytics companies are alien to the nuances of supply chain workflows. They are often ill-informed about aspects such as perfect order, labor productivity, or even calculating OTIF. It can be very costly to pay them to figure it out, not to mention that traditional BI platforms are not architected to handle volume growth. This is where Longbow Advantage turns the table with its software Rebus® Data Services. Consider the case with one of their customers.

Rebus® was connected to one of its food manufacturing customer’s WMS networks across North America. Because the client is proficient with its distribution technology, they had configured product on hold to be managed within their WMS. “They asked us to show them all of their holds across their network, and within a week, we built a dashboard showing them their holds in real-time. Not only did we build a custom dashboard, but every user also had access to it (we don’t charge for users),” states Wakefield. “We never had to go back and ask questions or clarify what they meant. We knew exactly what fields to use to provide the report. They told us that it just took us a week to build in Rebus®



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what they had been working to create for the past two years.”

The example stands as a testament to the success that Longbow Advantage enjoys across supply chain execution systems for a variety of manufacturing, retail, logistics, and distribution customers. Including hundreds of projects completed on-time and on-budget and a crowd of raving fans in the supply chain space.

EVOLVING TO SERVE THE EVER-CHANGING MARKET NEEDS

Today, Longbow Advantage operates as a supply chain technology company uniquely built to provide best-in-class WMS, LMS, and TMS implementation and integration skills and an unprecedented level of supply chain visibility, flexibility, and transparency through its Data Services Platform, Rebus®. “We’ve used our years of knowledge and experience to build a leading software in the supply chain space,” says Wakefield. Longbow Advantage’s journey started in

2002, a time when companies of all sizes were wrapping their head around ways to streamline their warehouse and workforce management implementations, upgrades, integrations, and deliver enhanced customer experience. As one of the leading supply chain consulting services firms, Longbow drew on its deep expertise in best-in-class WMS, LMS, and TMS implementation and integration skills to ensure faster implementation and lower total project cost. Penning down new chapters of its success story, the 17-year old Longbow evolved to serve the ever-changing market needs in the realm of supply chain execution.

Longbow’s evolution over the years can be attributed to its innate ability to reinvent itself by leveraging innovation and its vision ‘to be a technology partner that re-defines the possible.’ Today, the company is replicating the success it achieved with consulting services in building its software, Rebus® Data Services. “Supply chain execution systems generate huge amounts of data, and

frequently in disparate and disconnected systems. Supply chain software is good at running logistics operations, but it’s not built to show your operation in real-time across your network. We combined our operational and software knowledge in the logistics space with leading data management technology and processes to build software—Rebus®—that delivers data services for aggregating and harmonizing those data sets and presenting them back to our customers in ways previously unavailable to them,” says Wakefield.

TRANSFORMING OPERATIONS WITH REBUS

Rebus® Data Services pulls logistics data from the client’s supply chain execution systems to deliver value in different areas of the business—from business intelligence and advanced analytics to labor management, quality assurance, industry benchmarking, and performance and process optimization. It provides actionable insights into the real-time workings of the most complex distribution environments. With Rebus®, logistic professionals no longer have to wade through big data applications, trying to find the bits of data relevant to their operations or limit their insights to only one area of operations.

The platform stores and presents all of its supply chain data in one place and blocks out the irrelevant noise. Previously, companies generating massive data in the supply chain execution space had no good ways of looking and using the data in real-time beyond spreadsheets. Rebus®’ value-added data services allow them to look at the logistics data points across their operations. Enabling them with the ability to easily create visualizations to show the cross-functional KPIs that matter most to their business.

DEEP LAYER OF INSIGHT INTO REAL-TIME WORKINGS

The uniqueness of Longbow stems from its ability to merge data and analytics technology with supply chain execution and the logistics space. They leveraged cutting-edge technology components

along with its own IP to build a full-stack, vertically integrated solution. At the core, the solution presents customers with a pre-determined way of extracting data from their systems and ingesting it into Longbow’s database. This backend database is where Longbow manages data for its clients. It harmonizes, cleanses, and makes the data ready for use through the data preparation service. “Rebus® also empowers clients from day 1 with a layer



of a pre-determined set of industry-standard benchmarks and algorithms, dashboarding, and visualization,” adds Wakefield. “We get you 75% of the way there, so you don’t need to start with a blank sheet on every project.” Longbow’s team of experts hold in-depth knowledge of understanding the data structures of the systems they receive data from, which allows them to determine which data they need and how to get it in a lot less time and money than a company from the data and analytics industry.

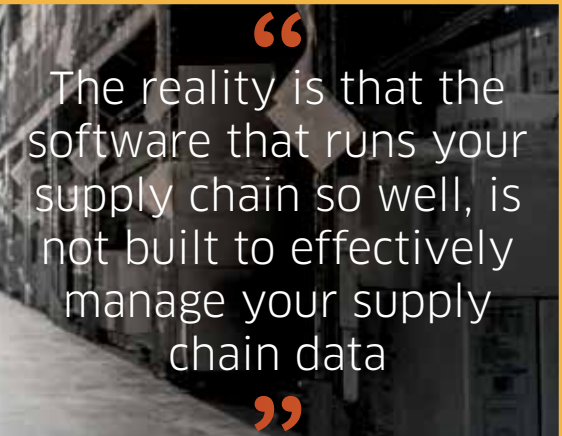
The full SaaS solution equips users with pre-determined, industry-leading algorithms, analytics, KPI metrics, and processes. Designed to enable quick and cost-effective implementation, Rebus® is an easy-to-use platform that can be seamlessly set up and configured in as little as two weeks. This high configurability and quick implementation played an instrumental role when Longbow recently assisted a leading global food and

beverage and consumer packaged goods company in cost-efficiently deploying Rebus® Analytics across 40 sites in just four months—a fraction of the time it takes for a traditional enterprise BI tool. The Longbow team also implemented Rebus® Labor—a tool that creates visibility into resource utilization—for the client at 30 sites in seven months, seamlessly replacing the client’s existing enterprise BI and labor management solutions.


NOWHERE TO GO BUT UP!

Scripting similar success stories, Longbow has helped a leading life sciences distributor to deploy the Rebus® platform at their distribution centers. The solution enabled real-time visibility into labor utilization at a multi-building, campus environment, reducing the distributor’s overtime by 30 percent. Deploying Rebus®’ real-time analytics, the number of redundant employees was reduced as they could be utilized for different warehouse operations. Furthermore, Rebus® helped the distributor reduce inbound carrier wait time in the yard and improve the doc turnaround time and throughput of the inbound trailers for outbound shipments, because they were able to provide their drivers real-time status of the order coming out of the warehouse. “When we connected to this distributor’s warehouse management system, we started pulling in hundreds of millions of records and noticed that there were tens of millions

of duplicate and orphaned records,” says Wakefield. “We quickly identified the problem, fixed the root cause, and cleaned up the records, which improved the overall performance of the WMS. Once we cleaned up the noise, they found a number of ways to improve their operation. “With Rebus®, the client was now able to identify potential delays the morning of and even the night before. Further, visibility provided by Rebus® into order status was extended to



their key customers, effectively using Rebus as a customer portal for order status. Here’s what the client’s Director of Operations and Continuous Improvement has to say about the engagement with Longbow, “Rebus® helps us make sure we are putting our efforts into improving processes and investing in technology, we are getting the returns in the right areas, and it’s driving the best results.”

In a nutshell, Rebus® comes with no cost per user, no painful upgrades, no expensive fees, and can be connected seamlessly to additional supply chain software or sites for gleaning more insights. Moving ahead, Longbow plans to continue to empower its customers and the supply chain industry to find new ways to create value streams based on the intelligent data sets that it ingests. With most of its customers based in North America, Longbow Advantage is also planning to expand into the European markets and go global by 2020. 

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Top 10 Logistics Tech Solution Provider - 2019

Logistics—the backbone of every business and the foundation of their growth have been growing significantly in recent years. Call it the emergence of e-commerce or the rising literacy among the consumers about digital platforms, the logistics industry is witnessing its most revolutionary and exciting time in over a decade. Many factors including disposable incomes, continual urbanization, and multi-income household have impacted consumers of the developing and developed economies positively. On the same note, these retailers are on the lookout for logistics technologies and solution providers that offer efficient inventory management and warehousing solution, thereby assisting users to arrive at informed purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, integration with smart glasses backed by augmented reality and Artificial intelligence will make deliveries in the logistics industry much easier by hands-free route searches,

face recognition for error-free deliveries and personalized deliveries. The use of digitization in the logistics industry is further expected to bring about a significant reduction in procurement and supply chain costs while giving a considerable boost to the overall revenues. This next generation of successful supply chain management is also expected to leverage IoT, Data Analytics, Big Data logistics, and edge computing for yielding real-time automated insights and for making informed purchase decisions.

Following this trend, CIOReview has compiled a list of 10 Most Promising Logistics Tech Solution Providers of 2019 that are transforming the e-commerce and logistics industry as known presently.

We present to you CIOReview's "Top 10 Logistics Tech Solution Provider - 2019."



Company:
Longbow Advantage

Description:
A supply chain technology company uniquely built to provide not only best-in-class WMS, LMS, and TMS implementation and integration skills, but an unprecedented level of supply chain experience and expertise

Key Person:
Alex Wakefield,
CEO

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