



# Apparel Case Study

## Working with Trading Partners to Improve your S&OP process

### Customer Benefits:

- Product and aggregate views of the requested, committed, and uncommitted production demand across product lines and manufacturing locations are all collaboratively managed within a single, centrally managed Excel driven database environment
- 100s of users can work at the same time on the same data “offline” and share cell-level changes when ready with the click of a mouse
- Dynamically manage vendor inventories at store, cluster, style, and SKU levels with key trading partners
- Making changes to lots of demand and supply data is easily done in Excel without clicking through lots of forms
- New product lines and changes to existing products take a lot less time to execute than with traditional tools
- A hosted solution means already stretched IT resources can focus on other priorities
- Two-way integration with manufacturing systems and ERP means data is shared seamlessly between multiple environments

### Problem Statement

Apparel manufacturers face tremendous product innovation pressure both to stay ahead of the competition and also to attract consumers that are driven by style, price, and other buying factors. This means they need to manage lots of new products and actively drive business planning with retailers and manufacturing partners.

While core transactional systems are essential for driving manufacturing operations like fabric purchases, collaborative tools are needed to drive interactions between trading partners.

A multi-billion dollar apparel company was looking to address the following business challenges :

- Forecasting between supply planners and manufacturing locations was run manually in spreadsheets for a key product lines— they needed it to scale to all products.
- Product lines and manufacturing locations overlapped in their data views, but Excel did not provide a way to access

control planning views for different users.

- Demand planners needed an environment where they could work with lots of data at once and easily make updates working offline.
- Inventory in trading partner locations needed to be managed by the vendor which made collaboration essential to planning store allocations optimally.

Extending their core transactional system just did not work for them. Their products changed too often and ease of use was essential which meant hard to use and rigid planning tools would not fit.

### Solution

The Boardwalk Collaboration Platform (BCP) gives this apparel manufacturer a flexible planning platform which is used for demand planning, supply planning, and vendor-managed inventory. Users are able to collaborate over forecast and planning data within the familiar Excel environment while securely and reliably managing the data across any number of

desktops and disparate data environments.

By using BCP, this customer now has a tool for managing trading partner collaboration within an environment that everyone already accepts— spreadsheets. All planning data is securely managed in the cloud and changes can be easily tracked and managed all the way down to the cell-level, so planning cycles can be managed to run their business more profitably.

Since deploying BCP, this customers has seen significant business benefits including:

- Effective collaboration has enabled sourcing optimization, tradeoffs and better source base utilization.
- Plan aggregation data has enabled them to negotiate fabric purchases knowing domestic, regional affiliates, and global requirements.

