



Keeping Toshiba Synchronized With the Speed of Business Through i2 MOST

i2 solutions had enabled Toshiba America Information Systems to efficiently manage the inherent challenges within its supply chain, but the electronics manufacturer found that it needed a better process for keeping the solutions in step with its rapidly changing business model. By utilizing i2 MOST services, Toshiba has increased the efficiency of its business model changes in a cost-effective fashion.

For manufacturers of computing devices, change is inevitable, perpetual, and swift. Companies that produce computers, PDAs, and servers must keep up with evolving technology – and with customer demands for new and improved functionality.

As one of the world's leading manufacturers of high-technology electronics, Toshiba America Information Systems operates under this dynamic business model. In order to manage the complex challenges it faces

in its supply chain, Toshiba implemented i2 solutions, including i2 Demand Planner,[™] i2 Supply Chain Planner,[™] i2 Demand Fulfillment,[™] and i2 Configurator,[™] to optimize its fulfillment process and the company's revenue and profit.

Toshiba uses Demand Planner and Supply Chain Planner to conduct monthly and weekly supply and operations planning processes. Toshiba utilizes the resulting plans to communicate with its suppliers. Configurator enables Toshiba to allow its customers to create customized orders on its Web site, as well as the Web sites of retail partners, including Costco.

While i2 solutions enabled Toshiba to streamline its planning processes and online ordering capabilities for its customers, the electronics manufacturer needed to find a better way to keep i2 solutions in step with its rapidly changing business model.



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Challenges

- Keep i2 solutions in step with rapidly changing business model
- Increase efficiency of changes to i2 solutions and related interfaces

Solutions

- Integrate i2 MOST consultants on-site with Toshiba IT staff
- Enable i2 MOST team to adjust models, to support applications, and to enhance application interfaces
- Capitalize on i2 team's knowledge of i2 solutions

Results

- Reduced time to make business model changes
- Ensured that changes are consistent with i2 methodology

Company Description

Toshiba America Information Systems, Inc. (TAIS)

is a leading vendor of portable computers. In addition to notebooks, the company offers portable and wireless solutions, Pocket PCs, projectors, and mobile server computing solutions for customers under the Toshiba brand name. Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., TAIS is composed of multiple divisions that provide computer, communications, and imaging products and services. TAIS is an independent operating company owned by Toshiba America, Inc., a subsidiary of Toshiba Corporation, which has global sales of over \$47 billion and more than 300 subsidiaries and affiliates worldwide.

*"The i2 MOST team is now resident as part of our team. **It looks virtually cost-neutral from our standpoint, and we also gained much more efficiency and speed in making changes. In the past, it might have taken us three to six months to make a change, and now we are making those changes in half the time.**"*

*— Scott Hampson
Vice President of Operations
and Supply Chain Management
Toshiba America Information Systems*

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"We were struggling with adjusting the business model and having our internal resources manage the i2 solutions so that they kept up with the speed of our business changes," said Scott Hampson, Toshiba's Vice President of Operations and Supply Chain Management. "We were going through some pretty dramatic changes, and we needed to have i2 solutions be in sync with that evolution."

Why i2 MOST?

Toshiba discussed these challenges with i2, and i2 recommended that Toshiba utilize the i2 MOST services. i2 MOST—which stands for Manage, Operate, Sustain, and Transform—is an integral component of i2's Business Optimization Services (BOS).

Designed to enable customers to better manage, operate, and evolve i2 solutions, i2 MOST ensures sustained value delivery by offering rapid response and resolution to application issues, minimizing the risk of downtime and ensuring uninterrupted business operations. A multi-skilled, on-site/off-shore team, consisting of functional and technical experts with rich multi-industry experience, delivers this service.

“One of the advantages is that we view the i2 MOST staff as part of our team,” Hampson said. “They work under the direction of our IT group on a daily basis. We direct them just like we would direct any of our other IT staff. It’s turned out to be a very good model.”

“We saw that i2 MOST had the capability to provide us with on-site resident experts in the i2 applications at a comparable if not reduced cost to what we were currently experiencing,” Hampson said. “But we were initially skeptical, so i2 proposed a pilot process where two resources would come on site and work in conjunction with our team to prove out the capability. That ended up being very successful, and that is what triggered us to continue the engagement and invest in the capability fully.”

i2 MOST’s Contribution

Toshiba’s initial apprehension about integrating the i2 MOST team into its organization quickly disappeared once the service was fully deployed.

“While we knew that the i2 staff would have in-depth knowledge of the i2 applications, our biggest concern was that they wouldn’t understand the interfaces that drove those applications,” Hampson said. “As part of the effort, i2 committed to us that we could use their resources and integrate them as part of our team.”

Now when a change is made to Toshiba’s business model, the i2 MOST team not only looks at the changes that are needed in the i2 applications, but also the changes that need to be made to the interfaces that support it. In some cases, the i2 MOST team actually drives and manages those changes as well.

“One of the advantages is that we view the i2 MOST staff as part of our team,” Hampson said. “They work under the direction of our IT group on a daily basis. They take that direction to work with the business team to either adjust models, or support the actual applications, or develop the interfaces that support those applications. We direct them just like we would direct any of our other IT staff. It’s turned out to be a very good model.”

Toshiba’s Results With i2 MOST

The i2 MOST team at Toshiba has become an integral part of the IT support team. Working together they have provided significant business improvements and achieved optimal performance of Toshiba’s planning systems.

The i2 MOST team provides technical expertise and rich domain knowledge to assist Toshiba in transforming its business.

“The i2 MOST team is now resident as part of our team,” Hampson said. “It looks virtually cost-neutral from our standpoint, and we also gained much more efficiency and speed in making changes. In the past, it might have taken us three to six months to make a change, and now we are making those changes in half the time.”

This efficiency is a direct result of the expertise of the i2 MOST team.

"The i2 MOST team ensures that the changes that are being made are being done in the most efficient manner and are consistent with the i2 methodology," Hampson said. "The primary value that i2 MOST brings to Toshiba is speed in which we can make changes and stay in sync with business model changes. Even when we have small enhancements or minor tweaks that we need to do, we can do those very quickly compared to our prior process."

"Before, it had taken quite a bit of time to make changes because our team was not as familiar with the i2 applications," Hampson said. "We either had to research it or contact i2 to understand what was required to make the changes. Now we have resident experts on site, and we can ask them directly."

It's this level of accessibility and immediacy that is of particular benefit for companies with a business model like Toshiba's.

"I would recommend that companies with a dynamic, frequently changing business model look at i2 MOST because they need the applications to adjust as quickly as their business processes are adjusting," Hampson said. "If you are in a dynamic industry that is going through a lot of fluctuation and a lot of business processes changes, it's worthwhile to look at the MOST capabilities because the on-site experts increase the speed with which you can react to changes in the marketplace."



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