

Our Selection of CPG Analytics Tools

When all you have is a hammer,
everything looks like a nail!



Overview

CPG manufacturers have no shortage of data available for analytics, with the level of detail and frequency of update varying widely between sources. Stakeholders each have very different use-cases, with some wanting very granular, store specific, daily information, and others looking for a top-line view of business performance.

The biggest issue we have seen is trying to use one tool to solve every problem. In concept, a single tool simplifies the selection process, but in reality, it leads to using technology for things that it just is not meant for – like trying to drive a screw with a hammer.

At TR3 we partner with a wide array of CPG users, and we have evolved to an effective blend of capabilities. In fact, we empower our users to decide which approach works best for them and their unique goals. Here is a guide to how we approach data analytics.

Spreadsheets Rule For Analyst Number Crunching

There are a lot of different tools available, but the tried-and-true foundation to start with is the spreadsheet. Spreadsheets are nearly a universal tool because analysts have intimate knowledge of the technology and find the ability to independently manipulate spreadsheets critical. Therefore, all of TR3's outputs and data feeds have the option of spreadsheet delivery. This facilitates sharing work product and collaboration within existing team activities, without disrupting existing processes.

Data Visualization – The “New Kid On The Block”

Data Visualization is a hot technology, and for good reason: it is both a powerful and flexible way to view data. TR3 manages a high volume of data for our customers (from both retailers and internal systems), so we partner with data visualization providers like Tableau, PowerBI, Domo, and others. Some customers want to utilize their internal tool of choice, while others take advantage of our hosted Tableau cloud platform.

Regardless of which platform is chosen, data visualization tools are a valuable asset, particularly in their ability to support less structured exploration of data and reduce reliance on canned, inflexible reports.

Alerts!!!

It is more effective to push out alerts for critical business issues, rather than forcing users to search for what they need. An alerts engine that can be easily customized to automatically push out notifications to users is a valuable asset – think of it as your 24x7 business monitor.

The key to alerts is the flexibility to set thresholds and priorities so that this an invaluable asset does not turn into the proverbial “Boy Who Cried Wolf”. When you find the right balance, your team will react when they receive alerts; send too many and they will quickly become desensitized.



■ Don't Bury The Headline

When emailing out reports in high volumes, recipients will take a few seconds to decide if they will actually read them, or just press delete. Take advantage of a subject line to provide key insights. Few executives can resist looking at an emailed report with a subject of "Sales Up 120% year over year".

Typically, the challenge this presents is that either an analyst needs time to write a topline summary (delaying what is valuable information and consumes skilled resources), or reports will be sent with generic labels as headlines ('daily sales flash'). Neither is a good option.

TR3's innovation, "SmartText" includes brief, automated topline summaries (e.g.: 'Sales up 7% across top departments', 'OTIF score dropped below 98%, at risk of fees', 'Retailer price increase of 9%'). These SmartTexts provide a pre-read for recipients, helping them decide if they want to read further.

We think of it as including the added value of what an analyst would draft, without the manpower and delays.

■ One Click Fixes:

Business Process Automation layers in software with powerful business logic that automates an entire business process to improve the efficiency of your team. Think of it as turning a 15 step, time intensive process into a single click of a button.

TR3 provides prebuilt business processes that serve as the "easy button" to get the job done. For example:

- Identify the top priority replenishment issues and provide a recommended course of actions for each
- Respond to inventory issues by electronically pushing product directly where it is needed
- Forecast recommendations based on recent activities and trends, with the option of sending to a retailer in their preferred format or sharing internally
- Identify the biggest risks, and corresponding, recommended actions to improve your OTIF performance

Having an arsenal of dozens of business processes will shift your team from digging through data to identify the problems to instead focusing on solving issues.

■ So, What's The Point?

There is no single, do-it-all technology that will address all of your needs. Over the years, TR3 has found that our customers require a suite of tools to meet the needs of their teams. When it comes to leveraging data to drive business performance, beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder, so successful teams need to be prepared with a well-stocked toolkit, to deliver insights to stakeholders for when, where and how they want it.