

customer success story



alfred angelo

Leading Wedding Gown Maker Alfred Angelo Gets Hitched to Breakaway Technologies and Cognos TM1

As a rapidly growing company, Alfred Angelo needed a real-time approach to consolidating, viewing, and editing large volumes of multidimensional data to achieve the next level of success. Breakaway Technologies designed and implemented an easy-to-use solution that streamlined the company's annual budgeting, monthly forecasting, and monthly reporting processes through a more efficient data collection and automation system.

Alfred Angelo is the world's leading maker of wedding gowns and bridesmaid dresses. For 75 years, the family-owned company has outfitted bridal parties in elegant, affordable designer apparel. It features 55 stores in California, Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ohio, as well as a warehouse facility, and has more than 3,000 employees.



Breakaway Technologies

Corporate Office
385 Oxford Valley Road
Suite 322
Yardley, PA 19067
P 215-369-7200 ■ F 215-369-1161
www.breakaway-inc.com

Challenge For most of its 75-year history Alfred Angelo operated as a wholesale business, but in the past five years the dressmaker has become a retail-focused operation. Going from zero to 55 stores in a short period of time, the company experienced rapid growth, which produced new challenges.

As a wholesale business, its financial reporting was manageable using Lawson Software's financial-management product. However, as more legal entities formed with the addition of the Retail Division, the financial consolidation process became a major headache and data flow throughout the company became difficult to manage.

A great deal of Alfred Angelo's data collection, consolidation, and reporting was done manually because the Lawson system could not handle the company's new business-model requirements. Monthly financial reporting was taking too long and data analysis was very time consuming. As the number of legal entities increased, the dressmaker's problems multiplied.

With plans to continue its rapid growth at a rate of about 15 new stores each year, Alfred Angelo needed a real-time, streamlined approach to budgeting, reporting, and forecasting ever increasing volumes of multidimensional data to achieve the next level of success. So the company turned to the experts at Breakaway for help.

Solution Alfred Angelo determined that Breakaway would be the best team to implement Cognos TM1, which offers an Excel-integrated user interface. The company's employees can now leverage their existing Excel knowledge, while relying on TM1 to source the data. In addition, TM1 supports a RAM-based, memory-resident rules engine that allows for real-time calculations and "what-if" modeling impact. "Breakaway was an integral part in designing and implementing our TM1 application to help us get the right information to the right people in an easy-to-use format," says Al Heinzmann, Alfred Angelo's Finance

“Breakaway was an integral part in designing and implementing our TM1 application to help us get the right information to the right people in an easy-to-use format.”

—Al Heinzmann

Finance Manager, Alfred Angelo

Success Metrics

- Changes to the P&L can be evaluated in real time
- Using TM1 as a centralized data source eliminates data outside the system and provides a single version of the truth
- Automated rules calculate credit-card fees in real time
- Company-wide forecast templates can be generated and populated in fewer than five minutes

Breakaway Technologies

Corporate Office

385 Oxford Valley Road

Suite 322

Yardley, PA 19067

P 215-369-7200 ■ F 215-369-1161

www.breakaway-inc.com



Manager. “They also helped us improve our processes.”

With TM1, the company’s data was centralized and the reporting steps were automated, giving employees the real-time capability to view and analyze data from either the store level or a consolidated, company-wide perspective. “We literally push a button and all the updates are made on all the appropriate financial statements,” says John Fogliano, Alfred Angelo’s Manager of Finance and Administration. Employees can also now run reports in Excel, a format necessary for the dress-maker’s finance operations.

Today, the company analyzes data more easily with TM1. “This unique platform enables us to have a snapshot of many entities at one time, a valuable feature not available with Lawson,” says Heinzmann. “We can provide monthly store performance rankings for management and create other weekly reports that help us control expenses.” With these weekly reports and monthly forecasts, the company not only remains on top of its current business, but is able to project future expenses and revenue.

Return on Investment With Breakaway’s successful implementation of the Cognos TM1 system, Alfred Angelo is saving 41 valuable days each year by eliminating the need for employees to enter data manually. The company is also saving significant amounts of time running monthly sets of reports in

TM1: the time it takes to complete a retail store report has been reduced from two hours to just 15 minutes per person. The new wholesale report process is saving 186 staff hours each year.

Employees are also making more informed decisions that affect the future of the company—with confidence. “TM1 has enabled us to conduct ‘what-if’ scenarios,” says Heinzmann. “We have more access to valuable information and are better able to make smarter business decisions to help our company continue its rapid growth pattern.”

The company is seeing additional benefits on the budget side: by creating and distributing templates in TM1, the finance team is able to focus on strategic initiatives. “We now have a much more complete picture of our budget, much earlier in the process,” says Fogliano. The company is also realizing significant improvements in the forecasting process. “With TM1, ad hoc forecasts can be created in fewer than five minutes, providing the ability to create a model forecast that populates budget and actual for all of our legal entities,” he adds.

Alfred Angelo is grateful for Breakaway’s level of professionalism and dedication. “All the members of the Breakaway team are extremely knowledgeable and responsive,” says Heinzmann. “They were very thorough throughout the project and provided us with excellent service.”

About Breakaway Technologies, Inc.

Breakaway delivers superior business solutions by using and recommending technologies that add value to our clients’ business decision process, while providing the scalability that enables growth. We focus on solutions and results, and are constantly identifying ways to help our clients gain a competitive advantage, reduce operating costs, and assess performance across the enterprise.

Unleash Your Wisdom

Philadelphia, PA

215-369-7200

Dallas, TX

972-819-2030

Chicago, IL

312-840-8204

Irvine, CA

949-476-3700