

The ABP Group

Invenio implemented a SAP Media Sales and Distribution solution

The ABP Group (also known as the Ananda Bazar Patrika Group) is an Indian media company headquartered in Bengal. In 1922, The ABP Group first came out as a four-page evening daily, with a circulation of 1,000 copies a day. Now, the group have evolved into a media conglomerate encompassing 11 premier publications, three 24-hour national TV news channels, one leading book publishing business and several mobile and internet properties.



Business Challenges

Due to such an explosive growth over a short period The ABP Group found themselves struggling with a number of issues around the order, delivery and subscription management processes. They also found themselves struggling with maintaining good levels of customer support due to a general lack of readily available data. Along the same lines, management found the process of generating reports and analysis from the data they held a cumbersome task, with the data often being incorrect or out of date by the time it was made available.

Invenio were challenged to design an end-to-end solution for the newspaper and magazine circulation and subscription process, utilising the SAP system they already had in place. During this process, Invenio's experts were to map each and every sales challenge (from retail to subscription, export, hawkers and town sales) and distribution process for each point of sale within the business, along with tracking the transport process and collecting end customer data. They were then challenged to develop a system that could do these tasks, and many more, automatically, eliminating the need for manual labour.

Invenio's Solution

Invenio's expert consultants were able to utilise the existing SAP framework within The ABP Group and create a complete map of the retail and sales process, including contracts, sales quantity planning, sales orders, delivery, post goods issues, returns, short delivery, billing for subscriptions and many, many more interwoven elements. Invenio were then able to install the IS-Media Sales and Distribution module, which is an end-to-end solution specifically designed to handle newspaper and magazine circulation. Through the IS-Media Sales and Distribution Module, Invenio has managed:

- Different types of sales channels
- Multiple types of contracts
- Retail, agency sales and combo sales
- Subscription sales
- Distribution of periodicals and dailies

Along with the ability to collectively manage and view each of these processes, IS-Media was also able to create a defined and automated pricing structure for The ABP Group, which encompassed copy price, trade discounts, air freight, cash discounts, bonuses, free allowances, waste paper value and subscription offer price. The solution was also designed with a route determination tool for the distribution of newspapers and magazines for the retailer, as well as the subscriber, making distribution planning a much simpler, faster task. Invenio was also able to:

- Build various interfaces for newspaper printing
- Provide a solution for last minute printing quantity changes to accommodate breaking news cases
- Design a billing process including invoices, credit memos and debit memos, that match the billing schedule for various channel customers
- Provide detailed analytics reports, MIS reports, distribution reports and all reports related to the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC Reports) at the push of a button

The Results

As a result of customising and installing this comprehensive solution, The ABP Group were able to see real, tangible business benefits very quickly. Sales quantity planning and monitoring modules meant that print order quantities could be planned out in advance, reducing wastage. Increased visibility of up to date information, inventories, customer orders, pending deliveries and credit status all allow management a much more complete view of business performance, allowing for effective forward planning based on historical data. This solution also:

- Implemented quality checks and validations at various levels, vastly improving the quality of service and data
- Created a highly integrated system which works seamlessly with other, complimentary modules such as FICO (Finance), MM (Materials Management) and PP (Production Planning)
- Error free pricing, due to the automated pricing system
- Increased productivity and efficiency as the repetitive manual processes had been removed. This streamlines all business processes and makes it much easier for them to collect data for analysis.
- MIS Reporting capability means that management can now generate relevant and accurate reports quickly, helping with timely analysis and quick decision making
- Reduce the complexity of the overarching business thanks to a neatly designed system of workflows
- Increased the volume of acquisition and retention for subscription based products
- Implemented various customer centric features within the subscription sales process such as amortisation, suspension, termination, offer transfer and address change, all of which help ABP Group retain and explore the subscription business further
- Increased data security thanks to an integrated SAP system that can control the consistency, accuracy and security of data

Overall, a well-designed and automated system means that The ABP Group now have a higher level of visibility and control over the sales and distribution elements of their business. With the level of human interaction significantly reduced, the business can work more efficiently and deliver customers a consistent, smooth service.

ABP considers Invenio as an extended family now

Amitabha Sinha, Executive, ABP