

About Us

At **change++** we help you achieve your business objectives by improving the way you manage information.

We work with you to develop systems that gather data more efficiently, report on it quickly, analyse it easily and present it clearly, giving your managers an immediate view of business performance.

Through listening to what you want to do and drawing on years of experience working with retail and leisure businesses, we can recommend and implement better information systems that will directly increase the value of your business.

change++

Tragopan House
Beale Park
Lower Basildon
Berkshire
RG8 9NH

Tel: 0118 9843223

Fax: 0118 9843399

Email: info@changepp.co.uk

Web: www.changepp.co.uk

Marriott get their weekly sales reports 'in a flash'

Background

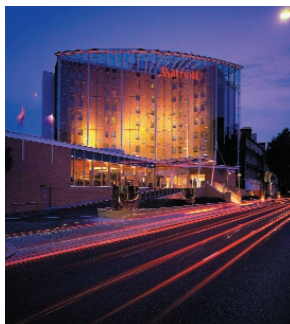
Most businesses, particularly those in the retail and leisure sector, want access to the most current view of trading available. Senior managers at Marriott Hotels (UK) were used to receiving weekly sales results on Fridays, as soon as possible after close of business on Thursday evening.



Figures for each of the 70 hotels' previous week's total revenue, room revenue, food and beverage revenue and room occupancy were routinely faxed to Head Office and entered onto an Excel spreadsheet. Despite the fact that the data had already been collected electronically by point of sale systems, the whole day would usually be needed to chase figures, key them into a spreadsheet, calculate area totals and distribute them through the business. Apart from the time issue, the potential for entry error and manipulation or inflation by hotel staff was significant.

Marriott finance managers knew the existing system was slow and error-prone, and asked **change++** to recommend a solution.

Solution



The key objective was to develop an automated system to accelerate data collection, processing and reporting. An additional benefit of an automated system is clearly the reduction of data entry errors, as the need for the manual transfer of data from one spreadsheet to another is eliminated.

change++ recommended importing data to a dedicated SQL Server warehouse from two key sources:

- The Serenata database: A SQL Server reporting database containing information collected electronically from the Fidelio point of sale system
- The Wolf database: An Oracle data warehouse for all Whitbread financial data.

Data is taken from the Wolf database where possible, giving the complete and accurate picture to the end of the last financial period. The data for the intervening weeks is sourced from the Serenata database, which can supply it in a timely manner.

In addition, budget and forecast data sourced from Excel spreadsheets is imported to the dedicated SQL warehouse once a month.

The new Weekly Sales Report is created in Excel and follows an identical format to the previous weekly sales report. Users can either view it on screen or print to A4. Intranet delivery via Adobe Acrobat .PDF files is optional.

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Benefits

The key benefit of the automated system is undoubtedly the ability to produce reports rapidly, saving several hours and much manual data entry.

The burden on the finance team is further reduced because the Excel spreadsheet used for the original report was complex and required considerable expertise to maintain and support.

The reduction in data entry means that data input errors are virtually eliminated, figures are automatically consolidated and data is available for other reports.

No manager input is required, as was previously necessary.

According to Paul Simmons, Marriott (UK) Group Financial Controller, "This system has radically improved our reporting of weekly sales. **change++** have proved professional, proactive partners and were very quick to respond to our requests."

The 'Flash' reporting system, as the business refers to it, has been so well received by Marriott that there are plans to expand it to include daily sales.