

Retail Systems 99 Conference - New York

The latest A.M.P.A. meeting was held on Tuesday, June 8, 1999 at the Retail Systems 99 Conference.

Jon Beck - Venator Group

Jon Beck gave a talk on Makoro Implementation at Venator. Some discussions notes and Q/A follow.

Background:

- **Company Overview**
 - 45 operating divisions in 15 companies
 - 200 people who perform planning
- **Corporate Planning Group**
 - Sets calendar
 - Administration of plans
- **Hierarchy**
 - Div
 - Dept
 - Category (Class)
 - SKU

Jon's Comments About Implementation:

- **Progress:** Completed most of their objectives. It took a long time in company this size. Worked hard to get data to tie to financial systems. Makoro Version 3.2 some efficiencies. 6 months of testing was required. Complete test plan was developed. Business run project - not IT. 6 months to define design.
- **Technical:** Data integrity was a key factor for consideration. This installation was first for many technical areas (e.g. Oracle, SP2, AIX, etc.). Windows NT required good support.
- **Pilot:** Pilot is most important step. Pilot was full production system for small number of users. Never do pilots without actual user data. Both pre-season and in-season pilot was done.
- **Replenishment:** Replanning is not automated forecasting at this time. Trend & reforecast at category level.
- **Versions:** Original/Current/Forecasts/Prior Forecasts - at least 8 versions.

Questions & Answers:

Q: Is there a concept/strategy direction setting body at corporate level?
A: Being done more and more - but not in a total entity yet.

Q: Is interaction of planners and buyers good?
A: Varies by division (company).

Q: Are planners store planners as well?
A: Not at location planning yet.

Q: Level of planning?
A: Category (Class) Level in Dollars at Week Level.

Q: Do Company/Division numbers roll to total Corp?
A: Company numbers roll up to total Corp.

Q: Location planning right now?
A: Have comp/non-comp targets but not location planning.

Q: Is it one big database?
A: SP2 is complex - combination of UNIX boxes. Production is identical to test environment. Technically efficient Oracle site.

Q: Training approach?
A: On-line training/help created.

Q: Business process training?
A: Was done first by Business Process Trainers.

Q: Structure for project?
A: Corporate Planning in New York; hardware group in Milwaukee.

Q: What about class changes?
A: Immediate recalculate plan and actual after a re-class which can occur at any time.

