

AVON Products Inc.

USER ORGANIZATION

AVON Products, Inc.

LOCATION

New York, NY

INDUSTRY VERTICAL

Beauty Products



DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

Avon's purpose is to create a world with more empowered women by providing earnings opportunities that help women achieve independence. In 1886, 34 years before women in the U.S. earned the right to vote, Avon's founder, David H. McConnell, gave women the chance to earn an income through direct selling. Avon's 6 million independent representatives sell the company's lines of high-quality fragrance, makeup, skincare, personal care and haircare products in over 100 countries around the world. Avon's core values and philanthropy dedication, including over \$1 billion in contributions, have resulted in numerous humanitarian awards.

PROBLEM

With 6 million independent agents around the world, and a \$6B business to run, the need for online report distribution and viewing is paramount. Avon's existing online report distribution solution was aging, the annual maintenance fees had increased significantly over the years and Avon was not satisfied with the level of service and cooperation provided by the vendor.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Avon was faced with the monumental task of converting to a more modern, cost-effective solution, including all of the cleanup related to many years of aging archives. This had to be completed within a very aggressive timeline predicated by the expiration date / renewal date of their existing report management product.

Avon's choices were straightforward; either resolve the issues with their current vendor and renew that expensive contract or convert to a new solution. Continuing with the current product seemed like a short-term solution at best. Converting to a new solution had all the typical risks of any project based on cost, scope and schedule. The search for a replacement product included discussions and comparisons among solutions offered by IBM, Computer Associates, Allen Systems Group and SEA. The decision criteria included, at a minimum, the delivery of like-for-like functionality with the existing product, the ability to build a custom API to interface with another Avon application and a Portuguese language-enabled version of the User Interface.

SOLUTION CHOSEN

The SEA Professional Services team had shown a high level of knowledge and expertise, which instilled confidence in their ability to convert Avon's report management solution to SEA's TRMS solution. Finally, the overall total cost of ownership (TCO) for the SEA solution was significantly less than the current tool and vendor.

The decision was made -- convert to SEA's TRMS with a strict 90-day deadline! A key component of the decision was the SEA Professional Services team, and the tools and methodologies available to automate much of the conversion.

As stated by a key Avon stakeholder:

“ Plan A is to complete this conversion in 3 months.
And, Plan B says, ‘see Plan A!’”.

CONVERSION CONSIDERATIONS

The TRMS conversion, deployment and integration effort was a very well-orchestrated joint effort.

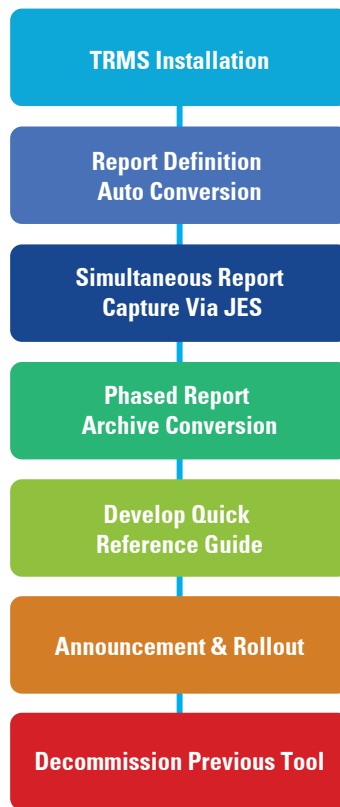
Besides a very tight, hard deadline, some of the key aspects included:

1. TRMS usability was a key. Given the time constraint, formal training to 800+ users was not an option. The solution needed to be so user friendly that all users could effectively access their reports using nothing but a short Quick-Reference Guide.
2. Within Avon there were two distinct organizational entities that used the tool, one based in North America and one based in South America where the users speak primarily Portuguese. Both entities had to be converted simultaneously and, in addition to the other challenges, SEA needed to provide a Portuguese version of the TRMS user interface.
3. All 6000+ Report Definitions in the existing tool were automatically and quickly converted to TRMS format using an automated SEA utility. Simultaneously, Avon used this as an opportunity to get rid of many obsolete report definitions.
4. Ten million (10,000,000) archived reports had to be systematically migrated from the existing tool's archive into the TRMS archive. Through combined effort of the SEA and Avon teams, a methodology was structured and automation put in place to migrate the reports in large groups (10000 at a time) to the TRMS archive while maintaining the original retention periods (2 weeks to 10 years) and archival data.

IMPLEMENTATION MILESTONES

The Avon team and the SEA Professional Services team worked hand-in-hand to perform the conversion with a goal to complete all steps within 90 days.

The SEA Professional Services methodology included the following major milestones to ensure this project was managed and delivered 'on time and on budget':



RESULTS

The conversion was completed within the 90-day goal! Both companies consider the project a great success.

Users were seamlessly converted to TRMS to view their online reports using simple redirect instructions and the use of the Quick Reference Guide, and SEA was able to provide the Portuguese language version!

All older archived reports were migrated to the TRMS archive, eliminating unwanted, obsolete, versions.

Avon is now well positioned for the future with a positive vendor partnership with SEA, a modern TRMS implementation, a cleaned-up report archive, and right-sized TCO for their report management solution!

CONCLUSION

The almost unrealistic deadline was met because of the knowledge and dedication of the Avon team combined with the migration expertise and level of automation provided by the SEA team, and the quality features and functions of the TRMS report management solution.

About Software Engineering of America (SEA)

Established in 1982, Software Engineering of America has built a global reputation as a leader in datacenter software solutions. SEA is one of the most successful companies in the datacenter software industry, with products used at thousands of installations worldwide. Over 10,000 data centers of all sizes and configurations are utilizing one or more of SEA's products, including 9 of the Fortune 10 as well as 85% of the Fortune 500 Companies.