



Business challenge

Having conducted numerous market and product research studies over the years, the company wanted to better utilize this gold mine of information, which was scattered and hard to access.

Transformation

Working with IBM Business Partner Absolutdata, the business used AI to make it possible to cross-reference and draw meaningful conclusions from its own critical market research as well as third-party reports by creating a unified report repository, supported by IBM® Watson® and IBM Cloud™ technology.

Results

Cuts reporting times drastically

by locating relevant studies and data in seconds instead of days

Delivers new insight

with AI-backed search functions and a holistic view of research data

99.99% availability

thanks to a reliable, security-rich cloud architecture

Dairy, food and beverage manufacturer

Unlocking new insights with a central, AI-managed research library

The business is a large, vertically-integrated dairy company and a leading food and beverage manufacturer and distributor in the Middle East. Since its humble beginnings, the business now has multiple food and beverage lines, several state-of-the-art dairy farms and processing plants spread across several continents.

“Now everyone in the company, no matter which brand or department, can instantly find exactly what they need.”

—Suhale Kapoor, Executive Vice-President and Cofounder, IBM Business Partner Absolutdata

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A research problem

As a food and beverage leader, the business relies on having accurate, usable information to help it effectively brand, target and market its products to consumers. And to stay at the top of the industry requires a lot of hard work.

Each month, the company conducts a healthy amount of primary research—product testing, concept testing, flavor testing—while also collecting a variety of market-related reports and purchasing third-party research data. On average, the business is in the process of developing or bringing to market 65 new products at any given time, and these consumer-packaged goods will only be added to the firm's already impressive collection of brands.

"In tracking their products, they've ended up with a lot of reports in their system, lying in various folders," adds Suhale Kapoor, Executive Vice-President and Cofounder of IBM Business Partner Absolutdata. "They have a gold mine of data available, but it's not cataloged in a formal way so that they can search for specific findings." Instead, these files were stored on personal workstations or servers spread across sites throughout the corporation, so when employees wished to compile or cross-reference these research studies, they required a large amount of manual labor—if the employees even knew where to begin their search.

"They wanted to know the answer to both simple questions as well as complex," adds Kapoor. "Questions from— 'Who drinks their milk?' to 'What is the penetration of a competitor's sub-brand in a given region?'"

To make answering these types of questions easier, the manufacturer began looking for a new strategy for storing and searching through its data. And ideally, this improved visibility would be delivered in conjunction with the firm's existing IT assets, avoiding the need to log in to a completely new platform.

Finding the solution

After considering many options, the firm chose to work with Absolutdata to create a centralized, easily-searchable library for its research data. As a first step, the Absolutdata team worked with the business to compile the market and product records it had collected over the past three years, uploading these documents to a common IBM Cloud repository.

"One of their key concerns was if the cloud was secure," recalls Kapoor. "But when we say that we're an IBM partner, clients are more confident. We are able to show them that their data is going to go into a security-rich location, which is IBM Cloud." As these documents were uploaded, IBM Watson Discovery technology automatically analyzed the files,

identifying key details and metadata so that the record could be properly stored within the new research library.

To make locating specific facts and records easier, Absolutdata supports this library with an AI-based search tool trained using IBM Watson Knowledge Studio and a custom chatbot built using IBM Watson Assistant technology. Now, users can simply type natural language question to find the needed data, and they can even rate the accuracy and relevance of the results—feedback that the system will use to self-learn and refine future searches. Further, the manufacturer's employees can edit the response text given by the search tool to clarify or amend details surrounding the research files and corresponding metadata.

"They are leading the technology makeover in the region," explains Kapoor. "They are one of the first consumer products companies in the Middle East to start using AI, and with the help of Watson and the capability that we have built on top of it, they can access solutions with the click of a button."

With a focus on convenience, Absolutdata also integrated the new research library and corresponding AI-based search tool into the client's main intranet site. In addition, the IBM Business Partner created an app for both the Android and iOS platforms that allows users to access both the research library and chatbot from

their mobile devices. And to further enhance the usability of the solution, the Absolutdata team also developed an integrated, real-time performance dashboard and reference glossary to complement the library.

The right answer

By coordinating with Absolutdata, the manufacturer can empower its staff to more easily convert research insight into direct market action. Users no longer need to waste time repeating misplaced research studies or manually searching through countless file servers.

"They now have a one-stop shop for our consumer marketing information," comments Kapoor. "From one place, they can find all of their research, as well as any third-party studies—economic and market reports—they have purchased. Now everyone in the company, no matter which brand or department, can instantly find exactly what they need."

The improved search capabilities have also cut hours if not days from reporting timelines. "Before, they would spend an enormous amount of time to find research from a few years back," adds Kapoor. "And sometimes reports would go missing after an employee left the company and the only copy was on their personal laptop. Now they can access everything on their cell phone."

He continues, explaining: “Just finding the right document isn’t enough. Some of these reports have over 400 pages, but the search tool now takes them to the page.”

Further, the client is pleased with the convenience of the Absolutdata solution. By integrating the tool into the corporate intranet, users can rely on single sign-on access to view research records, and the mobile app makes critical data more readily available, even outside of the office.

Finally, not only did the IBM Cloud environment provide a security-rich environment, but it also delivers an architecture that’s designed for high availability, yielding 99.99 percent uptime. And the Watson™ platform proved the ideal AI framework. “When we use an API from Watson,” concludes Kapoor, “it’s faster and much more intelligent. So once we train the solution, there’s hardly any manual intervention required.”

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Solution components

- IBM® Cloud™
- IBM Watson® Assistant
- IBM Watson Discovery
- IBM Watson Knowledge Studio

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM solutions featured in this story, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

To learn more about its AI-based solutions and what Absolutdata can do for you, please visit: [Absolutdata](#)

About Absolutdata

Founded in 2001, IBM Business Partner [Absolutdata](#) develops scalable, AI-based enterprise solutions and analytics services that allow its customers to transform the way they make decisions. The firm’s offerings include predictive modeling, machine learning, and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions as well as its cloud-based Navik AI platform. The business is headquartered in San Francisco with its main delivery center located in Gurgaon, India. A global company, Absolutdata employs approximately 450 staff members and operates through a network of international offices located across the US, UK, Singapore, Dubai and India.

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