How Tulip's Blueday helped a specialty apparel retailer transform to a customer-centric operating model that drove 2% comp growth chainwide

Overview

A thousand store, multi-national specialty apparel and beauty products retailer wanted to transition from an operating model which emphasized merchandising and standard task execution to one that made serving the customer their top priority. Central to this transition was the ability for each store to focus their teams on delivering a great customer experience without neglecting the operational and merchandising tasks that still mattered, all with no increases in labor budgets. How would it be possible to do everything they did before plus a new set of activities without additional resources? The retailer chose Tulip's Blueday solution to give their store managers the tools and answers they needed to make this new model work.

Operating model shift reveals data gaps

Before Tulip's Blueday, the retailer believed they were advanced in how they used data to improve store performance. After all they had their data organized in a central data warehouse, displayed into multiple reports and dashboards that were distributed to every store regularly. However, in the field, store managers and shift leaders felt overwhelmed. Key datapoints were scattered across too many reports and not organized in a coherent structure.

As a result, it was near impossible for an average store manager to spot trends or forecast risks without spending hours a day pouring over the data. Hours they needed to be on the floor running the store. Even in those cases where a shift lead could correctly interpret the data, there was still no concrete guidance on what they should do going forward. This lack of usable data hindered store managers and shift leaders from understanding where they could use their labor assets more effectively to best serve the customer.

> " *We had goals. We had reporting. We had dashboards. We had assessments. But before Tulip's Blueday, we didn't have them all integrated and at the right level of detail to be actionable.* "
>
> – VP, Operations

The right data enables a quick adoption of the new operating model

This specialty retailer partnered with Tulip to fix the problem. They piloted Tulip's Blueday with one of their strongest stores believing that if this high performing store could improve, then every store could. The Blueday solution's impact on their key metrics – sales, conversion, basket size, and employee productivity – was dramatic. So dramatic, in fact, that the retailer cutover every store to Tulip during the fourth quarter in order to better capitalize on their busy season. The entire North American fleet – over 1,000 locations – went live with the Blueday solution simultaneously and never looked back.

On-boarding was fast and easy across the stores. Store managers and shift leaders found the system intuitive, natural, and fast. Rather than store managers having to use yet another system to do their job, Tulip's Blueday enabled them to stop using ungainly systems and to cut back on the hours of analysis they used to perform. In fact, the retailer retired over 25 reports they no longer needed. Tulip's Blueday allowed managers to quickly understand the risks to their KPIs and what steps they could take – when and with whom – to reduce those risks and to optimize the customer experience.

The system's embedded analytics helped spot where peak performers could be scheduled more effectively, where staffing gaps or overlaps existed, along with good and bad times to get operational activities done, enabling the store managers to perform all their necessary activities without increasing the total labor spend. Shift leads were able to provide specific coaching to members of their scheduled crew because they could quickly see the strengths and opportunities within their team, and how that matched to expected traffic. Instead of shift leads passively hoping they would have a good day, they now felt empowered with strategies on how to make it a great day.

> *We turned Tulip's Blueday on and it worked! It quickly unleashed the power of our associates... and created an environment where they felt proud of the way they were servicing customers at the end of each day.*
>
> **– VP, Labor and Operations**

> *In my 20 years in retail, I have not been this excited about a tool that clearly has a huge impact on everything from team member's performance, to the bottom-line sales numbers, and ultimately the customer experience.*
>
> **– Regional Manager**

The results

Despite being one of the best stores already, Tulip enabled the pilot store to achieve more than a **20% revenue improvement**. The all-store cutover was also a huge success. The retailer experienced one of its best holiday periods ever. Chainwide, **same-store sales increased 2%**, with chain leaders directly attributing a large portion of that to Tulip's Blueday solution.

Tulip's impact went beyond sales gains. The system's robust analytics and intuitive workflow allowed store managers to **save an estimated 6 hours per week**. Using the insights that aligned to their key KPIs, store leaders were able to quickly adapt their labor strategies to best serve their customers. Their focus shifted from being task managers to being business managers who could directly impact the store's results. Further, associates were empowered with more knowledge about store goals and their role in achieving them.

Learn how to power your fleet of store associates with mobile technology.
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