

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

#### Company:

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Trade Publishing

#### Applications:

- Production Line Performance
- Top Sellers
- Operational Efficiency

#### Before MicroStrategy

- Disparate reports with minimal visibility
- Out of date information about customers, titles, and authors

#### Goals

- Improve operational and sales efficiency
- Consolidate numerous reports into a single mobile application
- Make dashboards accessible to all employees

#### After MicroStrategy

- Full visibility into time and costs of shipping and reprinting
- Improved operational efficiency
- Better monitoring and prediction of printing needs

## Founded in 1832, the Trade Publishing division of global learning company Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH Trade),

is one of the oldest trade publishers in the United States. Since publishing some of the best-known works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the mid-1800s, HMH Trade has become synonymous with America's finest intellectual and literary talent. Today, its distinguished author list includes: 10 Nobel Prize winners, 48 Pulitzer Prize winners, 15 National Book Award winners, and more than a hundred Caldecott, Newbery, Printz, and Sibert Medal and Honor recipients. HMH Trade has published many distinguished authors such as Philip Roth, Temple Grandin, Tim O'Brien, Umberto Eco, Lois Lowry, Chris Van Allsburg, and David Wiesner. HMH is also home to The Best American series®, The American Heritage® and Webster's New World® dictionaries, Betty Crocker®, Better Homes and Gardens®, How to Cook Everything®, The Gourmet Cookbook, and other leading culinary properties. Other titles include the Peterson Field Guides®, CliffsNotes™, Curious George®, The Little Prince, The Polar Express, books by J.R.R. Tolkien, and many more.

To manage such an extensive list of titles effectively, HMH needs full visibility into all aspects of the publishing lifecycle. From monitoring publicity, to tracking sales and stock levels of key customers, to overseeing warehouse inventory, decision-makers require access to critical information in order to meet demand for popular titles. Also, the time and costs associated with reprinting and shipping are high, so staying aware of demand while monitoring supply levels is key to achieving the full sales potential of a given title.

There are many challenges to tracking sales activities while simultaneously monitoring the publication, production, and reprints of book titles. Editors, Sales Managers, and Executives need easy access to up-to-date information about every customer, title, author, and product line.

### An Evolving BI Strategy

HMH's enterprise-wide business intelligence strategy has evolved over time, and today centers on putting real-time, actionable data into the hands of its employees and customers. To act on this vision, as tablets became the preferred method of sharing information, in 2010 the HMH Trade team distributed iPads to its sales and editorial management teams. Historically the HMH Trade team relied on ad-hoc and standard reporting



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– Ellen Archer  
HMH Trade President



*“The MicroStrategy tool has quickly become my go-to tool for any information related to the business. I use the tool for everything from tracking high level business line trends to seeing when stock of a specific title is due in the warehouse to running ad-hoc queries with ease.”*

– Paul Shannon  
HMH Trade SVP Finance & Operations

mechanisms, but as their requirements changed, a proposal was made to acquire a BI platform that would provide interactive dashboards and mobile applications.

After searching for a vendor that met the requirements of the Trade division, the Operations team selected MicroStrategy. Since implementing MicroStrategy, HMH Trade has been able to optimize overall performance by improving the flow of information throughout their organization. Today, HMH has a user community of over 400 employees, 90 of whom access their mobile BI application every day. The most recent success came in 2015, when HMH won the prestigious Ventana Research Technology Innovation Leadership Award. HMH earned this recognition for the success of INsight, the MicroStrategy Mobile application that the company uses to drive efficiency and productivity throughout their enterprise.

### Improved Business Operations with MicroStrategy

HMH Trade used MicroStrategy to pull from enterprise technology systems and integrate multiple data sources to create a single application that provides a holistic view of Trade operations. The goal was to replace over 300 reports with one highly integrated, user-friendly application. HMH Trade uses the MicroStrategy app to equip each employee with easily accessible dashboards and reports. With these tools, HMH Trade executives monitor product line performance against prior year actuals and current year budgets. They also review daily updates of top selling titles and customers, as well as incoming business for the current month and year. “This is an incredible tool that, as the head of the division, works wonders for me,” said HMH Trade President Ellen Archer. “It’s a great way for us to know where we are at any point in time and to project what’s going to happen over the next month and year.”

“MicroStrategy delivers measurable business value by helping us improve our operational workflows,” said Vince Benenati, VP of Operations. “We developed a Title Dashboard that serves as a portal to all title metadata, sales trends, print history, links to author contracts, promotions, publicity events, related websites, etc.—everything you need to know in one location.”



Bruce Nichols, SVP and Publisher, said, “I use INsight every day, partly to track sales, but also as my one-stop source for answers to all kinds of questions about our authors and titles. I love the visual interface—it’s very intuitive—and I can drill down to deep levels of detail with just a few clicks. Before we had INsight, I had to use multiple systems to look up some of this information, and I also had to rely on others for answers. Now I can click on the site or open my iPad app, and just get ‘er done immediately.”

### Improved Sales Insight and Management

The Trade Sales management team uses INsight to navigate unstructured data and gain a full view of all HMH Trade customers, products, sales territories, and more. Account reps monitor progress against their sales goals and drill down into Customer Dashboards, where they can track customers’ orders and identify what top-selling titles their customers have yet to purchase.

Laurie Brown, Senior VP of Sales and Marketing, said, “I have a two-hour commute every morning on the train, and the first thing I do after glancing at the morning paper is to open INsight. I look at daily sales to see how we’re tracking against budget, and I review sales territories and key accounts to see how the different channels are progressing.”

HMH also used MicroStrategy to build a forecasting model for sales reps to provide market intelligence on how new book titles will perform in their respective territories. “This application allows sales reps to project initial order quantities for their specific customers and sales channels, based on the sales activities of ‘comparative’ titles. The Supply Chain group uses these forecasts to identify optimal print order quantities, based on the field sales intelligence gathered using the MicroStrategy application,” said Brown.

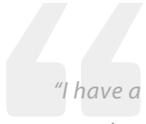
### Future Opportunities with MicroStrategy

There are an overwhelming number of publications on the market, which can make the development of a new and profitable book feel like a guessing game. “The best way to project the future is by measuring the past. Using MicroStrategy, we intend to provide the Trade management team with an automated profitability analysis for every title we publish, so they can analyze historical profitability trends and identify future opportunities for success,” said Benenati.



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General Interest



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– Laurie Brown  
HMH Senior SVP of Sales and Marketing

Matt Hasken, Director of Distribution, said, "The HMH distribution team has embraced the MicroStrategy application. The dashboard tool was key for the analysis we did leading up to a recent acquisition. We were able to visually model and compare distribution throughputs of both HMH and the acquired distribution centers. The visual modeling helped us make a final decision on where the acquired inventory should be stored and fulfilled."

"As we continue to grow and integrate new product lines, MicroStrategy will give us immediate visibility into the trends surrounding newly acquired titles. With this platform, there are infinite opportunities for us to make successful business and marketing decisions," concluded Benenati.