



CUSTOMER STORY

Amer Sports transforms sales and compensation planning using the Anaplan platform

Finland-based Amer Sports Corporation offers a portfolio of some of the world's leading sporting goods brands, including Atomic (snow sports), Salomon (trail running, hiking, and snow sports), Wilson (racket sports, golf, and team sports), Suunto (sport watches), Mavic (cycling), and Arc'teryx (outdoor activities). The company is always looking for better ways to innovate, both in the products it offers to consumers and in its organizational processes so that it can better serve consumers and more effectively compete.

Use Cases

- Sales planning
- Sales compensation

Challenge

- Lack of consistency in setting sales targets across a portfolio of distinctively different brands competing in diverse and highly seasonal markets
- Managed target-setting in very large spreadsheets that did not provide scale and made performance analysis onerous
- Very manual data consolidation because spreadsheets could not integrate with the company's SAP system
- Difficult-to-detect errors or misalignment in key performance indicators (KPIs) once gathered into spreadsheets
- Challenging process of accurately accounting for different selling strategies and measuring unique metrics for each of its brands

Solution

- Sales compensation solution live in less than 40 business days
- Sales targets consolidated, set, and compared from different perspectives
- Sales rep visibility into predicted payout using a “motivation curve”

Results at a glance

- Sales team motivated by having better visibility of period-end results
- Rapidly realigned sales roles to support new selling strategy
- Reduced time to set sales quotas and targets by an estimated 70 percent
- Increased transparency and accountability across sales leadership
- Implemented a solution that is now only routinely managed by business users

Having started his career as the commercial manager of Amer Sports' snow sports brand Atomic, then taking on responsibility for all the sales activities of Amer Sports brands in Germany, and now overseeing sales for all of EMEA, (Europe, Middle East, and Africa), Thilo Dörr, Amer Sports' Global Sales Development Manager, knew all about the various ways the company's different brands and regions set quotas and rewarded sales success. As the Amer Sports brand grew and diversified, Thilo also knew that operating with a single one-size-fits-all sales role no longer met the changing expectations of the company's diverse customers and intermediaries. To support the transformation of the company's sales planning and sales compensation processes, Thilo was looking for a platform that would improve productivity and consistency while being flexible enough to address the special requirements of its diverse brands.

In the past, all sales planning, quota- and target-setting, and compensation management was done locally on spreadsheets. This meant little consistency, no way of consolidating results, and limited opportunity to identify and replicate best practices. Each product line is unique based on season, region, and consumer, but sufficient similarities in the sales processes could also be standardized—such as, for example, the seasonality of its summer and winter sports brands. All the company needed was a solution flexible enough to accommodate the outliers.

Amer Sports needed to undergo a business transformation to better align its organization and resources to its changing markets. For Thilo, this meant developing a way to ensure incentives were aligned to KPIs and that the company had end-to-end transparency on how performance was impacting reward potential.

Together with his team, Thilo chose the Anaplan platform to improve the company's core sales planning and compensation processes. Anaplan provided flexibility, which is something that Thilo saw the other vendors simply could not deliver.

New processes and changes to selling strategy rapidly implemented

Thilo and his team already had determined how they wished to set sales targets, construct incentive plans, and calculate bonuses in spreadsheets and were happy with the balance they had achieved between standardization and flexibility. However, they had no insight into whether each country was basing targets from the same KPIs, and they had no way to confirm the accuracy once the data was in a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was so large, it took seven minutes to open, and they were never able to consolidate the data across the 17 countries in the region or cut the data to view performance by brands and seasons. The spreadsheet was also never able to link to the company's SAP systems. With support from Anaplan, Thilo's team quickly replicated this process in the Anaplan platform, together with a reconciliation routine to ensure that consolidated bottom-up sales targets set locally always met top-down expectations. Amer Sports was live with its compensation solution in less than 40 business days.

At the same time, Thilo was under pressure to push through the restructuring of the EMEA sales team. With Anaplan, this was easily achieved: Individuals were assigned to their new roles with the appropriate quota-setting process, and agreed compensation plans were automatically inherited.

Instead of having hundreds of almost identical sales roles, Amer Sports was able to shift to having various roles addressing the needs of different customers.

"Now we have not only one role, but four roles, and can better address the needs of our brands, customers and consumers, seasonality, and the complexity of the countries," said Thilo.

"We've estimated a 70% reduction in time spent target-setting. This has freed up our field sales managers to spend more time with their sales teams and their customers."

- Global Sales Development Manager,
Amer Sports

Key benefits

Amer Sports has seen many benefits from using the Anaplan platform, including:

- **A highly motivated sales team:** Giving salespeople access to predictive analytics that show forecasted period-end results and the lower and upper threshold of their projected bonus helps keep them motivated.
- **An estimated 70 percent reduction in time spent on target-setting:** Previously, it took one week during each half-yearly sales planning cycle to set targets. Now, using the Anaplan platform, it takes less than one day—giving back field sales managers valuable time to spend with customers and their sales teams. Because of Anaplan's automation and integration, analysts are no longer needed in each country to extract data from the company's SAP system and rework it into spreadsheets—yet again freeing time for more value-added tasks.
- **A better way to set targets:** Sales targets can now be consolidated and viewed across multiple dimensions, such as territory, brand, and account, unleashing many more possibilities for scaling and adjusting targets in the future.
- **More consistent reporting:** Transparency and accountability have improved dramatically since only the sales targets are entered locally, while the actuals are uploaded centrally so that everyone is forced to use the same data and KPIs.

The Future

Thanks to the flexibility of Anaplan, Thilo's team is routinely looking for ways to extend their solutions and processes. They are looking to expand their use of the Anaplan platform into territory planning. They now live by the mantra of setting "demanding but achievable targets" and insist that because the Anaplan platform is so flexible, anything is possible.

About Anaplan

Anaplan is driving a new age of connected planning. Large and fast-growing organizations use Anaplan's cloud platform in every business function to make better-informed plans and drive faster, more efficient planning processes. Anaplan also provides support, training, and planning advisory services.

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