



## KELLWOOD

**Customer:** Kellwood Company

**Web Site:** <http://kellwood.com>

**Company Size:** 2500

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Manufacturing

**Partner:** Covenant Technology Partners

**Partner Web Site:**

<http://www.covenanttechnologypartners.com/>

### Customer Profile

Kellwood Company, based in St. Louis, Missouri, is a leading women's apparel designer, marketer and distributor.

### Software and Services

- Products
  - Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 (now includes both Microsoft Office PerformancePoint Server 2007 and ProClarity)
  - Microsoft Excel 2007
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Integration Services
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Reporting Services

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## Kellwood Re-emerges Stronger, More Savvy with Microsoft BI Solution

**“Our company is stronger with BI. We just wouldn't be where we are today without it.”**

JoAnn Ashman, vice president of IT, brand and retail, Kellwood Company

For nearly 50 years, Kellwood Company has designed, manufactured and marketed many of the country's most popular women's clothing brands. With millions of SKUs and an ever-expanding portfolio, employees struggled with accessing and utilizing key business data with its existing ERP system. The company turned to a Microsoft® Business Intelligence solution and as a result has reinvented the way its employees work. Now with a self-serve reporting model, Kellwood is better optimizing its resources to ensure its retail products are among today—and tomorrow's—top fashion buys.

### Business Needs

In the fashion industry, trends come and go in shutter speed. Over the past five decades, Kellwood has continued to adjust and reposition its business and portfolio of brands to be competitive in this fast-paced market.

From its origins as the sole dry goods manufacturer for Sears, the company has grown into a dominant force in the women's apparel market. Today as a portfolio company of Sun Capital Partners Inc., the company manages a growing collection of premier brands, including Baby Phat, Vince, Fabulosity, Sag Harbor, David Meister and XOXO.

Kellwood produces millions of unique SKUs and sells its products to sales outlets around the country, from Macys to JCPenney. Employees rely on timely access to detailed information about its designs, production, sales, IT operations, quality assurance, and distribution processes in order to optimize its resources. Managing the business effectively is as important as the creative process itself.

With much of its key business data in a custom ERP system accessed from a legacy reporting tool, generating reports was not an easy task. “We had a real inability to get the right information to the right people at

the right time," said JoAnn Ashman, vice president of IT, brand and retail at Kellwood. "The legacy reports were static and inflexible, which prevented us from seeing an up-to-date view of our business," said Ashman. "It took days to load the data cube which meant we couldn't get the data in and distributed fast enough to make it relevant."

## Solution

With mounting reporting requirements from sales and showroom organizations, design and production staff, headquarters executives, and distribution warehouses, project manager Mike Bianchi undertook a pivotal project in the company's history—to implement a Business Intelligence (BI) solution.

After an exhaustive review of the technologies, capabilities and costs, the short list emerged quickly. "Microsoft's solution mapped beautifully to our needs," said Ashman.

### Partner Creates Long-Term Solution

With the guidance and expertise of St. Louis-based Microsoft Gold Partner Covenant Technology Partners (CTP), the first phase of the BI implementation focused on harnessing operational data, spanning a complex supply chain of participants—designers, pattern makers, manufacturing and distribution facilities, showrooms, sales organizations and retail stores. The solution needed to incorporate more than two million unique items and SKUs—many of which have a lifetime of only months.

As the building blocks, CTP deployed Microsoft SQL Server® 2005 and Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2007 (now includes both Microsoft PerformancePoint® Server 2007 and ProClarity).

In creating the data warehouse, CTP first reduced the workload on the Oracle production server. They leveraged SQL Server heterogeneous replication to synchronize a copy of the production ERP system's tables onto SQL Server.

According to Douglas D. Meyer, chief operating officer at CTP, "The data cube is now loaded nightly and analysis from it is refreshed throughout the day, making the information current and always available."

In addition, CTP extended the flexible design with SQL Server Reporting Services, SQL Server Analysis Services and custom Microsoft Office Excel® work. The new rendering extension enables employees to sort, filter and create custom reports about supply chain data in a single query that previously would have taken multiple reports and manual work to create.

To integrate with the existing financial solution, Bianchi and CTP used Noetix data warehouse views to provide an ETL source layer to pull the data out of the general ledger. Built using SQL Server Integration Services and a data mart on SQL Server, the solution gives Kellwood accountants the ability to quickly produce their financial reports and schedules.

Finally, CTP integrated Point of Sale transaction data feeds from retailers. Now, tens of billions of rows of transaction data are accessed to analyze product movement, returns and in-store inventory levels.

"The new design is all-encompassing because we can now quickly produce reports that integrate information from the original production orders, all the way down to distributor invoices and retail

sales," said Ashman. With hundreds of reports revamped and associates thoroughly leveraging the new BI system, Kellwood added executive dashboards to provide greater visibility into the key performance indicators.

## Benefits

### Self-Serve Model Provides Confidence

Nearly 500 employees across the enterprise now access the information they need, when they need it. According to Ashman, it's been a phenomenal turn-about. "We start every day with BI now. Our employees rely on it to do their jobs effectively."

### Faster Access to Data Improves Resource Utilization, Competitiveness

In the fashion manufacturing industry, there is a delicate balance between investing the right amount of time and money into developing a certain style to make it sell, without overinvesting and wasting resources.

Before the BI solution, it often took days and weeks to generate reports about resource allocations for each style. Now those same reports are done in minutes—many within seconds from a browser.

"We measure and track exactly what we're spending on each product line. Having this level of dynamic information at our fingertips has enabled us to make faster, more informed decisions about where we deploy our creative talents."

Kellwood SVP and COO Michael Saunders sees the new dashboards as its number one source of information. According to Saunders, "They are our control mechanism. They have allowed us to keep a pulse on the business and have transformed how we work at Kellwood."