



## ATEN International

### *ATEN raises planning to new level with Wolverine's Collaborative Demand Management Solution*

#### Company Profile

##### Company Focus

Manufacturer of connectivity components.

##### Industry

Computer peripheral IT

##### Business Focus

High demand connectivity components including: KVM, USB and Fire-Wire

##### Wolverine Products

Demand Manager  
Promotion Manager  
Lifecycle Manager  
Inventory Manager  
Event Manager

##### Implementation

Less than 60 days

##### Benefits

- 20% reduction in levels of inventory
- 15% improvements in forecast accuracy
- Ability to perform top-down and bottom-up plans.

*"Based on our ROI measurements, Wolverine2.0 has delivered us a 20% inventory reduction in finished products and a 15% improvement in forecast quality."*

- Kevin Chen, CEO, ATEN International

#### Business Overview

ATEN is a premier manufacturer of KVM, USB, FireWire and other connectivity products. The company was established in 1981 to meet the growing need for worldwide connectivity and peripheral sharing products. Since that time, ATEN has established world-class standards for quality and cutting edge technology and is the largest manufacturer of USB, KVM, FireWire and other connectivity products in Asia.

#### Business Challenge

Business planners and senior management at ATEN prepare forecast plans at the product family level as well as at a geographic region level. As ATEN grew larger and more successful, the time demands on the field sales organization increased and the planning functions were escalated upwards, farther away from the field sales level. The planning process involved a top down, management-driven set of expectations that were not reconciled with a bottoms-up view from the field. Management had to apply subjective evaluation criteria to all forecast plans and the results became less reliable.

In addition, rapidly evolving markets, fierce competition and critical time-to-market production considerations made it extremely difficult to develop and

consolidate reliable bottoms up forecasts in acceptable timeframes. ATEN's uncompromising drive for Total Quality production meant that effective planning was critical for long term growth and profitability.

As a result, there was an issue with the quality of the plans and estimates. ATEN's Management only felt comfortable with plans that considered less than three month timeframe.

#### Business Impact

The inability to plan farther into the future meant that ATEN often encountered situations that required immediate restocking orders and higher than planned logistics expenses. On frequent occasions critical orders had to be placed on back order and the customers business was at risk.

#### The Wolverine Solution

Once ATEN recognized their planning problems, they turned to Wolverine for a comprehensive Collaborative Demand Management. Both Wolverine and ATEN's executive management committed resources to a core project team that conducted extensive interviews with key business managers and planners. The joint team analyzed all planning related

issues and developed a comprehensive project roadmap.

Wolverine's Professional Service staff built product and geographic references in Wolverine2.0 that represented how, what and where ATEN field sales sold their extensive product offerings. The new system would enable ATEN planners to generate collaborative plans among users over a wide area without requiring them to have to change how they did their planning significantly.

A second initiative was launched to integrate Wolverine's Collaborative Demand Management solution with ATEN's legacy ERP system. One of the project goals was to leverage the investments already made in ATEN's existing IT environment and pass data bidirectionally, as and when needed. A final consensus forecast needed to be passed to the ERP system where it triggers MRP for production and material planning.

The final initiative included end user training. ATEN trained both traditional planners and 'power users' that would be able to extend their use of Wolverine2.0.

Prior to the official 'go-live' date, ATEN tested the full function system in a three week dry run. This exercise was successful and the system went live in November 2003.

## Benefits

The Wolverine Collaborative Demand Management solution enables multiple levels of ATEN's management, sales, marketing and planning can all collaborate and share critical market info and build forecast plans while referencing the rest of the corporate information. Forecasts are planned for all major product groups across all geographies. Because users can collaborate with each other and see other factors affecting the overall plan, it is now possible to create rolling three month plans in a real time basis.

Wolverine system allows ATEN to synchronize all user inputs and in the event of any large discrepancy, an event is created and responsible parties notified automatically. The Wolverine Collaboration Platform monitors a set of user defined exceptions such as "Stale forecast plan", "Advance stock-out warnings", "Advance overstock warnings" and alerts the appropriate users in a timely basis. The system provides intelligent resolutions and can be configured

to take remedial action automatically in the event of certain conditions.

ATEN's marketing is now able to view the effects of past promotions and forecast their impact on future initiatives, much earlier in the planning cycle. Supply planners and sales can review current and projected inventory levels assuming multiple usage and demand scenarios. Inventory can be redistributed according to predetermined allocation policies in the event of shortages.

The following quantifiable and subjective benefits have been observed since ATEN implemented the Wolverine's Collaborative Demand Management solution:

- Reduction in finished product inventory by 20%.
- Improvement in overall forecast accuracy by 15%.
- Increased cross functional collaboration.
- Significantly improved visibility into medium range forecasts.
- Reduction in stock out situations that incur high logistics costs.
- Better efficiency in Sales planning and management.

---

**For additional information please contact:**

**Wolverine Decision Technology  
9 Cushing Suite 250  
Irvine, Ca. 92618**

**[www.wolverinedec.com](http://www.wolverinedec.com)  
tel. +1.949.450.1680**