



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clarkston Consulting Builds Real-Time Visibility Into Unilever Home and Personal Care North American Supply Chain

Clarkston-Unilever HPC-NA team streamlined business processes from Order-to-Cash

DURHAM, NC (August 26, 2003). Clarkston Consulting, a nationally recognized management and technology consulting firm, announced today the completion of a unified, real-time view of the entire order-to-cash process for Unilever Home and Personal Care North America (HPC-NA). The new process will streamline the company's common business processes across the organization through the implementation of appropriate technology solutions.

In response to changing business pressures, Unilever HPC-NA set out to install a system that would provide a platform to meet future business needs, handle planned growth, and provide superior customer service capabilities. Clarkston helped Unilever HPC-NA replace 15 legacy applications with a fully integrated system and simplified business processes.

"Feedback on this project has been tremendous," said Fred Berkheimer, vice president of logistics at Unilever HPC-NA. "Customers are benefiting from improved processes and a seamless transition while employees are seeing the value of real-time customer data. Success can be attributed to our 'working partnership' with Clarkston Consulting. Clarkston had the expertise and knowledge to successfully guide this project from start to finish."

Unilever HPC-NA needed to better manage and fill customer orders from the moment of receipt, through the distribution process, to delivery at the customer's warehouse. Clarkston helped Unilever HPC-NA migrate their retail order management process from a costly mainframe onto an integrated client-server platform. This migration required the integration of multiple warehouse management systems, supply chain planning systems, pricing and promotion applications, and reporting database systems.

The Unilever HPC-NA - Clarkston team streamlined a variety of business processes including order management, order fulfillment, accounts receivable, and deduction management.

Throughout the project, Unilever HPC-NA and Clarkston worked to ensure that the implementation would be transparent to customers. Careful implementation planning and thorough testing paid off in the end. The majority of Unilever's customers experienced no disruption of service and commented on the remarkably smooth transition.



“By creating a tightly integrated team among Unilever and Clarkston employees, we were able to make a significant difference,” said Patrick Kearney, managing partner of Clarkston Consulting. “From streamlining internal processes to positively impacting customer service, we believe the project was a success. Most important, the entire transition to the new order-to-cash system was virtually invisible to the trade.”

About Unilever

Unilever is one of the world’s largest consumer products companies with annual sales of approximately \$47 billion in 2002. It produces and markets a wide-range of foods and home and personal care products, including such leading brands as Dove, Suave, Wisk, Lipton, Hellman’s, Ben & Jerry’s and Slim-Fast. Unilever operates in 88 countries around the globe and employs approximately 258,000 people. Visit Unilever at www.unilever.com.

About Clarkston Consulting

Clarkston Consulting is a nationally recognized management and technology consulting firm that creates successful business strategies and implements technology solutions. Clarkston’s business value acceleration approach bridges the gap between strategy and technology to build a sustainable business advantage for Fortune 1000 manufacturers within the life sciences and consumer products industries. The firm’s excellence has been recognized through numerous industry, vendor and client awards. Clarkston’s exceptional client satisfaction rating as measured by The Conference Board is heralded as among the highest in the consulting industry. To learn more about Clarkston, visit www.clarkstonconsulting.com.

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