

Tailor-made Technology

Sky IT Group and IBM® sew up an intelligent solution for a leading fashion design company



Trends may come and go, but Elie Tahari has managed to stay at the forefront of the fashion apparel industry for more than 25 years. In fact, since 1974, the Elie Tahari Collection has remained the must have choice for style conscious women across North America.

In the 80's, Elie Tahari's sophisticated and feminine designs bridged the gap between ultra-pricy designer fashions and casual inexpensive clothing. In the late 90's Elie Tahari launched the Theory sportswear line, which incorporates the use of innovative stretch fabrics. Current day, Elie Tahari is designing a luxury, travel clothing line. The most prestigious retailers in North America as well as around the world carry the Elie Tahari Collection.

Elie Tahari is an enterprise that's more than just fashion savvy; when it comes to making critical business decisions, the company knows what it needs.

"Access to information that helps us understand and forecast what the consumer wants is vital, and technology that can help us do that will give us a strong competitive advantage," says Mr. Elie Tahari, President and CEO of Elie Tahari. The information Mr. Elie Tahari speaks of is internal company and external retailer data, as well as Internet-based demographic intelligence about the end consumer.

Sky IT Group, an IBM Premier Business Partner in New York City, which specializes in providing business intelligence solutions to the apparel and retail industry, had the fitting solution for Elie Tahari. "From our review of their project backlog, it was very evident that 70 percent of their requirements were related to information accessibility," explains Jay Hakami, President of Sky IT Group. "Therefore, we presented a solution for tapping into that data and reporting it on the Web throughout their organization."

"Our working relationship with IBM was extremely important in this endeavor," adds Mr. Hakami. "Together we bring knowledge about the industry, infrastructure, applications and tools to provide a total solution to the customer's business problem."

"Sky IT Group's retail industry expertise, coupled with the IBM eServer™ iSeries™, resulted in a perfectly tuned inventory management system for Elie Tahari. This Web-based solution provides quick-and-easy access to a wide range of key data - precisely what the customer needed."

Paulo Carvalho, IBM Vice President, iSeries Sales, Americas



“With WebFOCUS, Elie Tahari is able to retrieve data directly from where it’s housed on the IBM eServer iSeries...”

– Jay Hakami, President and CEO, Sky IT Group

Sky IT Delivers Information in High Style

The Elie Tahari organization has made a name for itself through innovation in both clothing design and its way of doing business. The company’s namesake, Elie Tahari, has led the way with an impeccable sense of style and by employing unique ways of reaching his market.

To maintain the company’s foremost position in an increasingly competitive retail environment, Mr. Elie Tahari knew it had to improve its information systems – especially for inventory management purposes. “We realized we needed to increase accessibility to data across our organization and, more importantly, be able to execute on that data. With that capability, we could better identify in-demand products, and therefore, reduce the amount of inventory in our warehouse,” states Mr. Elie Tahari.

Mr. Elie Tahari wanted a solution that could draw on information from multiple platforms. From the end users’ perspective, “a Web-based solution would make access to data that much more intuitive and facilitate remote access,” says Mr. Elie Tahari.

IBM - The Right Fit

Elie Tahari’s solution consisted of a comprehensive reporting platform known as “InSeam”, architected and designed internally by Elie Tahari’s Development Team, based on WebFOCUS*. WebFOCUS is a business intelligence product developed by Information Builders, Inc., a New York City based leader in Business Intelligence software.

“With WebFOCUS, Elie Tahari is able to retrieve data directly from where it’s housed on the IBM @server iSeries, build drill-down capability and even display a picture of the style, next to the relevant data, to allow middle and senior executives to make decisions based upon facts” explains Mr. Hakami.

As for hardware, Elie Tahari upgraded their existing IBM equipment to a larger iSeries server to increase production capacity and allow for future growth.

“The up time on the iSeries is much higher than anything else we’ve used in our organization and the cost to maintain it is very low. The data on this system is mission-critical, and having it on the iSeries platform has definitely been a benefit,” says Mr. Elie Tahari.

User Buy-In

“Within Elie Tahari, this initiative was originally viewed as strictly a technology project. My experience is that technology projects don’t usually work – they have to be spearheaded by someone in the user community,” says Mr. Elie Tahari. “Therefore, we identified a user to whom the solution would most apply, then showed that person what it could do. It was an easy sell.” From that point, the designated user helped champion the solution across the organization.

IBM Business Partner:	Sky IT Group
Solutions:	IBM @server iSeries, Server Consolidation, Data Warehousing, Business Intelligence, WebFacing (WebSphere®)
Serviceing:	Eastern United States
Customer Target:	Apparel, Manufacturing, Distribution, Retail, Cross Industry

Controlling Inventory

What has this technology done for Elie Tahari’s inventory management challenges?

Good things, all around. Consumers and retailers are getting the Elie Tahari products they want on a timely basis, and the Elie Tahari organization has been able to streamline their whole inventory management process.

“With the information we now have available, we can be more accurate in choosing the correct products for our consumers, and we get the products out of our warehouse quickly. That translates directly into cost savings,” explains Mr. Elie Tahari.

Data by Design

Since internal and external data sources have been centralized into one Web-based platform, access to information has increased substantially. That means Elie Tahari’s management can now execute strategic business decisions based on information that’s accurate and up-to-date.

For example, if a retailer’s order shipment is being held back by a credit issue or order confirmation, an email is automatically generated to the appropriate department so the situation can be resolved immediately.

What’s next on the drawing board? True to Elie Tahari style, the company never stops moving ahead.

“We’re looking at adding more systems to further increase automation across the business. Then, we’ll work toward full data integration for even greater efficiency and customer service,” says Mr. Elie Tahari.

With IBM and the Sky IT Group designing the right solution, Elie Tahari looks better than ever.

For additional information on how **Sky IT Group** can help your organization, contact us at **866-SKY-3500** or visit our Web site at **www.skyitgroup.com**