



CASE STUDY



Decision-Making Made Simple

Sunshine Mills, Inc.,
Red Bay, Alabama

Sunshine Mills is a pet food manufacturer based in Red Bay, Alabama. After over 50 years in the industry, this family-owned business has grown into one of the top producers of pet foods and pet snacks in the country, with more than 600 employees and annual sales of over \$165 million. Sunshine Mills operates six production plants in the Southeast.

“DTN ProphetX puts everything in one place, so it really simplifies the information-gathering and decision-making process. It’s a tool I have to have to stay competitive.”

Sunshine Mills

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Sunshine Mills

What they were up against.

Sunshine’s products compete with some of the best-known brands in America — icons like Alpo, Kibbles & Bits, Friskies, and Gravy Train sold by publicly held giants like Nestlé, Purina, Kraft Foods, and Del Monte. To stay competitive, it’s critical for Sunshine to maintain strict cost control throughout its operations. Sunshine buys everything that goes into the product and the manufacturing process—grains, proteins, natural gas, packaging, and more. The company needed information that touches all the different markets it operates in, and that information needed to be timely and presented in a way that could help staff make purchasing decisions.

What we did to help.

Sunshine chose DTN ProphetX[®] and immediately found it to be the easiest to use and to offer the best value of any system available. Staff were impressed with the robust set of decision support tools built into the solution — especially its wide variety of charts and technical tools.

What the impact was.

Since choosing DTN ProphetX, the solution has become an integral part of the Sunshine staff’s daily routine. They check the system first thing every morning for news and an overnight trading update, and look for anything that might affect the company’s key markets during the day. Staff also look at both domestic and international weather using a news filter that automatically sorts and finds what they need.

When staff discuss the company’s risk management position and strategy with executives, they print charts from DTN ProphetX. They also find the solution delivers a lot of value on the transport side of the business. They are able to keep an eye on weather conditions to make the most efficient use of Sunshine’s truck fleet and to help ensure driver safety.

In addition, the real-time information from DTN ProphetX has proven critical in staying competitive. For some decisions, the staff needs to have instantaneous quotes — and the solution provides this, allowing them to make decisions based on the latest, best information in the market.

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