Resultant | RuffleButts

RuffleButts Moves from Point A to Data Warehouse in Three Months

When Matt Tischler joined RuffleButts as CFO in 2021, the company had been growing rapidly and—like so many organizations that experience rapid expansion—needed to get its data analytics up to speed. RuffleButts had new private equity funding and a greater need for detailed reporting. Although NetSuite had provided a solid foundation, the company was not able to fully utilize the data. Tischler felt an urgent need to establish formal, deeper reporting.

"I wanted to have a scorecard of what's going on in the business," he said, "but anytime you develop something like that, it generates more questions—and that's where I hit a wall with NetSuite CSV exports. You get to a point where you want to know what's behind the number—but need four hours to go figure it out."

Tischler needed to be able to drill into the data, and he knew he had to build the infrastructure to do it.

About RuffleButts

Founded in 2007, RuffleButts is an e-commerce clothing company that launched with a signature ruffled diaper cover and has grown to offer swimsuits and apparel for kids of all ages.

RuffleButts had an answer to its first question in just **7 hours**.

OUR APPROACH

RuffleButts was growing fast but still a small, lean company. Tischler had a clear vision of where he needed to go but also knew he didn't have time or budget for "an army of DBAs and data engineers" to get there. He had an IT staff of two whom he could not supplement and refused to overburden. He also had a big sale coming up and wanted to be ready to learn from the data it generated.

Building a data warehouse can mean months of discovery and build time before the client sees any results—at which time the company has outgrown its original need. Our approach was to create a prototype and iterate from there. It's discovery and build all in one, and it lays the foundation not to answer one question but to give the client the tools to answer whatever questions arise.

We helped RuffleButts establish a SaaS tech stack, and about seven hours later Tischler had an answer to his first question.

"That's the beauty of rapid prototyping: You're going to get an answer to your first question right away, and that's going to open up a thousand other questions. But you're prepared. You're ready to answer all the questions you don't even know yet to ask"
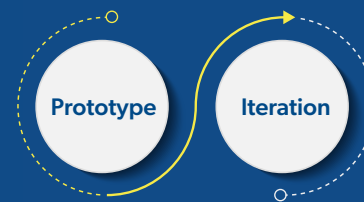
— **MICHAEL TANTRUM**
National Sales Director, Resultant

Traditional Approach

Discovery → Build → Acceptance → Deployment
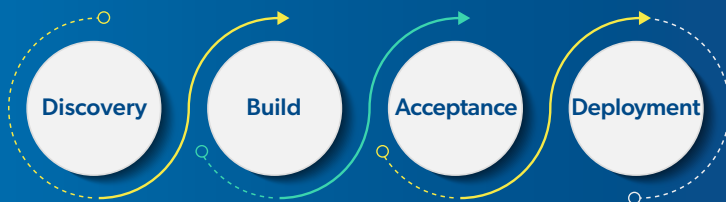
- Several months
- 1,000+ billable hours
- Answers one question

Rapid Prototyping

Prototype → Iteration

- A few weeks
- About 300 billable hours
- Prepares you to answer any question within the sphere of data

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THE SOLUTION

Our team built the data warehouse using a star schema, which groups numerical data in a central location and then describes it using reference points like product breakdown, sales by region, and so on. The reference points extend from each data point, creating a structure that presupposes just about any question RuffleButts might ask of its data, meaning growth and additional analyses won't require further engineering.

"Matt was able to dream of an idea, have us test it in real time with him, and have answers available the next morning," Tantrum said.

One of the dangers of a traditional data warehouse project is that the company you were at the start of the project isn't the company you are when it ends. The questions have changed. That happened even during the quick turnaround for RuffleButts, but the difference is that the warehouse is built to evolve along with them.

THE OUTCOME

RuffleButts moved from one person providing sales data to the team to a self-service dashboard that any employee could access as needed to drill into data. What would have taken hours now is available immediately and is in the hands of the people who need it—who use it every day to run their own analyses and create their own workbooks or dashboards so they can understand the business.

"Everyone is speaking the same language and everyone has the same answer. When I first joined the company, I could have asked ten people what we did in sales the day before, and I'd have gotten ten different answers based on how they configured their reports in NetSuite. But there's only one right answer."

Tischler has been impressed with the reliability and flexibility of the system, which has seen very few issues and enabled quick pivots in reporting metrics that provide answers to ever more sophisticated questions—factors that Tischler says the private equity firm has been "blown away" by: "Getting the warehouse in place, training employees on Tableau, and making sure everyone is working from the same definitions has transformed how we operate."

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