

# Philips Aligns Global Data Synchronization (GDS) Policy Across Product Divisions

## Capgemini supported the International Retail Board at Philips in establishing a joint GDS policy

### The Situation

Royal Philips Electronics of the Netherlands is a global leader in healthcare, lifestyle and technology, delivering products, services and solutions through the brand promise of “sense and simplicity.”

Philips wanted assistance in defining its Global Data Synchronization (GDS) strategy, selecting its GDS data pool, and supporting its International Retail Board (IRB) in aligning the GDS strategies of the three Product Divisions (PDs) that directly deal with retail customers: Lighting, Consumer Electronics (CE) and Domestic Appliances and Personal Care (DAP).

### The Solution

Capgemini initially brought its extensive GDS experience to help Philips Lighting define a GDS strategy and select its data pool. After that, Capgemini was asked to support the IRB at Philips to help develop an overall GDS policy across PDs.

### The Result

Workshops were conducted to help provide Philips with the right arguments to prove the value of GDS and the importance of aligning activities within Philips. As a result, Philips now has a joint GDS policy that aligns the views from the different PDs, in the context of the GDS demands coming from the key retailers.

“The successful implementation of the Global Data Synchronization program within Philips is an essential step in optimizing the business relationships with our key accounts in the retail domain. Capgemini was selected for its specific industry knowledge on the topic of GDS as well as the ability to help Philips translate strategy into concrete actions.”

Bart Luijten,  
Sr. Director, Retail Information Management,  
Royal Philips Electronics



This policy enables Philips to act in a consistent manner to retail customers, and thus add more value in the collaboration with these customers. This alignment is especially important toward the major retail customers that are being served by all three Product Divisions involved.

**How Philips and Capgemini Worked Together**

Philips is a executive member of the Global Commerce Initiative (GCI), which is an industry driving force of representatives from leading consumer products manufacturers and retailers committed to streamlining collaboration between them. Global Data Synchronization is a basic foundation for improved collaboration. This is an area where Capgemini has been a thought leader over the last five years, working closely with GCI and its members.

GDS ensures that basic data such as the item and location information stored by one company matches the corresponding data in the systems of its business partners by using a network of data pools. This mechanism of data synchronization is globally standardized by means of a global data dictionary and global message standard. Leading consumer products manufacturers and retailers are currently strongly pushing GDS.

Capgemini brought in its expertise and experience in GDS, which was gained from working with a large number of retailers and manufacturers globally over the last few years. Capgemini supported and facilitated two workshops, where representatives

from the three PDs gathered to align their activities. Capgemini provided input to the “case for GDS” at Philips, as presented to the International Retail Board.

The IRB asked for a common GDS policy across PDs. Capgemini organized a number of sessions with representatives from these PDs, in which an analysis of the current practices and an assessment of alternative scenarios provided the basis for the overall Philips GDS policy. Capgemini led this activity. After a few iterations, the final GDS policy was delivered to the IRB. The IRB subsequently approved the policy and it is now the leading guideline for GDS activities in the different PDs.

Capgemini was able to accelerate this process by bringing in the relevant experience (from a consumer products manufacturer perspective, from a retailer perspective and from an industry/standards perspective). This provided Philips with the right arguments to prove the value of GDS and the importance of aligning activities within Philips. In addition, Capgemini successfully facilitated the process of establishing a joint GDS policy by aligning the views from the different PDs, in the context of the GDS demands coming from retailers.



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