



Benchmade & SPS Commerce: An Analytics Success Story



Executive Summary

Benchmade is widely recognized for its quality pocket knives, making it a preferred choice of law enforcement officers, government officials and outdoor enthusiasts. The company offers more than 300 SKUs at outdoor, hardware and sporting goods retailers nationwide.

A few years ago, a new sales executive brought in SPS Commerce and its full-service retail analytics solution to better equip sales teams with insight on sell-through and inventory. This data-driven culture has developed trust with the company's retail customers, driving confidence in and acceptance of their sales proposals.

“Retail analytics from SPS Commerce eliminates the guesswork for our sales teams.” – Alex Calnan, National Accounts Channel Manager, Benchmade

Company Type: Supplier
Industry: Sporting Goods
Headquarters: Oregon City, OR
SPS Product: Analytics
Customer Since: 2014

Challenge: Eliminate guesswork for improved sales and demand planning.

Solution: Deliver sales and inventory insight to sales team using SPS Analytics.

Results: Elevated trust with buyers and increased sales.

Using Sell-Through Data to Build Buyers' Trust

Benchmade's data analysts use weekly point-of-sale analyses to monitor sell-through and inventory levels. SPS Commerce Analytics provides information they need in a user-friendly interface.

“Our sales teams use the insight from SPS Analytics to help them prepare for line review meetings and dig into how our products are selling in specific stores,” said Calnan. “We are confident in the data and the knowledge of our business that it provides.”

Buyers often change roles or move to other companies. Benchmade found that by demonstrating an understanding of product sales using retail analytics, their team quickly gained trust with new buyers. “Buyers rely on us for insight. Using SPS Analytics,



we gain clout by demonstrating a deep knowledge of the market and how to improve sales at our customers' stores or on their e-commerce sites," shared Calnan.

Tracking Inventory to Drive Sales

SKU-level inventory is the most essential metric that Benchmade tracks. "If it's not on the shelf, you can't sell it," explains Calnan.

Therefore, Benchmade monitors its inventory levels at retailers and proactively reaches out to buyers if quantities are low and reorders are needed, or if quantities plateau as this may represent a misplaced pallet.

"We see sales spike in the winter when our new products ship, as well as during the holidays," said Calnan. "During these times, we watch our inventories closely, making sure that retailers have enough of every SKU for their in-store and online customers. SPS Analytics makes this insight easy to uncover so we can act quickly."

Identifying Opportunities with Retail Analytics

Benchmade uses years of historical sales data, paired with market data from the NPD Group, to approach buyers with changes to assortments. These fact-based suggestions often result in new orders.

Dashboards in SPS Analytics provide Benchmade with sell-through data by store and SKU, comparing it against average store sales. Its visualization capabilities make it easier to spot trends and issues with ease.

"If website sales of an item have declined, SPS Analytics will tell us," said Calnan. "We use this insight to determine how to improve. For example, we may need to update photos or rewrite the product description. If we don't know there's an issue, we can't fix it."