



*“Our Data Warehouse was in a crisis.”*

*Charlie Weston,  
CIO, Winn-Dixie*

## TURN IT AROUND CASE STUDY

### Background

Winn-Dixie is one of the largest food retailers in the nation and ranks 182 on the FORTUNE 500® list. Founded in 1925, the Company is headquartered in Jacksonville, FL. Winn-Dixie operates supermarkets throughout the southeastern United States and the Bahamas under the Winn-Dixie, Winn-Dixie Marketplace, SaveRite and City Market banners. In the summer of 2004, Winn-Dixie began an Information Technology restructuring program that included:

#### **Reorganization of the Database Management Team and Update of the Enterprise Data Warehouse**

Winn-Dixie's Database Management and Enterprise Data Warehouse teams were operating as distinct, unrelated entities. The Enterprise Data Warehouse held better than 4 terabytes of analytical data, mostly in support of Electronic Sales and Marketing — crucial product sales data and loyalty card trend information. The existing Enterprise Data Warehouse had failed under the direction of prior managers, and it suffered from data validity issues, an unstable operating environment and an overall inability to deliver reliable analytics. The standing CTO was charged with creating processes and hiring, organizing and deploying internal IT personnel to resolve the data warehouse issues and complete implementation.

#### **Reorganization of the IT Quality Assurance Service Team**

Prior to the initiation of the restructuring program, the IT Quality and Project Management Office (PMO) teams were not operating as effective partners. They lacked responsibility and skill definition, processes to minimize response time, effective communication procedures, and end-to-end understanding of Enterprise software.

### Objectives

The Arrington Group was initially engaged to manage the IT Turnaround of the Database Management team. Upon completion, they were engaged to assist in the operational turnaround of the Enterprise Data Warehouse, which they stabilized as directed. On the heels of this success, The Arrington Group was engaged to assist with the IT Turnaround of two Service Teams. Working with the Chief Information Officer, Human Resources and other Executives and Senior Managers, The Arrington Group established the following list of objectives for each turnaround assignment.

#### **Database Management and Enterprise Data Warehouse Turnaround**

- Determine personnel needs and work with Human Resources to reorganize and deploy existing personnel using a pooled-service model, hire new personnel and establish processes and responsibilities for each team member.
- Either groom and recommend for promotion existing personnel to manage and lead the Database Management team or actively recruit for the position.
- Using industry standards, develop best-practices, processes and procedures for modification, implementation and on-going maintenance of Winn-Dixie's extensive data warehouse.
- Consult with senior Marketing and Sales management to establish and prioritize requirements.
- Coordinate with IT Directors on Data Management and Enterprise Data Warehouse procedures to stabilize the environments and manage expectations.
- Negotiate, on Winn-Dixie's behalf, with NCR for on-going service agreements and ancillary Professional Services contracts.
- Aid in selecting a new Enterprise Data Warehouse manager to take the stabilized Data Warehouse to the next level.



### Service Team Turnaround

- Re-engineer the IT Quality Assurance team by establishing, building and implementing a pooled team structure; revise testing requirements definition by removing unnecessary administrative overhead; and implement better operating procedures focused on a five-criteria model to fit the varying needs of the organization rather than “one size fits all,” which had been the prior management’s direction.
- Evaluate and make recommendations to aid the current PMO manager in fine-tuning processes within the PMO to provide regular, comprehensive project reviews; re-classify the PMO project managers and project administrators; and employ Myers-Briggs Type Indicators to aid in PMO interactions.

### Results

The Arrington Group approached this project as they do all projects, following their philosophy that experience and planning are the most critical elements. They understand that the Client requires a long-term solution and not a “quick fix”. Winn-Dixie utilized The Arrington Group in a variety of capacities, based on the individual needs of each division; from evaluation and recommendations to complete management of the restructuring process. For each turnaround assignment, The Arrington Group developed a plan that met Winn-Dixie’s needs and meticulously set about executing it.

To improve the reputation of the Database Management team and to separate the Enterprise Data Warehouse team from its past failures, The Arrington Group recommended a temporary merge of both teams under the name of Data Services. The Data Warehouse team was consequently spun off as a successful, cohesive team. In the end, Data Services, Data Warehouse, IT Quality and PMO teams had all the tools required to maintain and enhance present and future products and services.

The Data Services team has been upgraded from a team of “operational DBAs” to a service-oriented, data management organization providing services that include advanced data modeling as well as traditional data management services. This team works hand-in-hand with both the Data Warehouse team and the application portfolio owners to encourage a seamless line of communication. Consequently, operational and historical decision support data requirements are managed harmoniously at Winn-Dixie, supporting day-to-day operations along with providing the Marketing and Sales departments with crucial data to launch effective campaigns, monitor sales and track results using their extensive data warehouse.

The IT Quality Assurance team has been completely re-engineered from the ground up, resulting in an overall reduction in costs, cycle time and defect rate of IT applications. Today, the team has a wide range of testing techniques to fit specific needs of individual projects, along with a pool of experienced professionals who help ensure a standardized process for managing and reporting defects. Because IT Quality Assurance works efficiently with the PMO and is now flexible in their approach to varying projects, they are now an enterprise partner for success.

The Arrington Group was able to identify crucial needs and systemic problems, develop all necessary processes, acquire all essential resources and implement all programs. They successfully completed all projects under schedule and under budget while meeting or exceeding all of the goals set by Winn-Dixie.

### About The Arrington Group

The Arrington Group understands Information Technology (IT), end-to-end and provides products and services to Executive management. Their products and services, including specialized packages and customized professional consulting, offer solutions to some of the most challenging areas within the IT organization. The Arrington Group knows that “When you succeed, we succeed.”