

Retail case study

Coldwater Creek® Soft Surroundings

Coldwater Creek and Soft Surroundings migrate to a joint SaaS environment on our Merch Insight solution.

A unified SaaS environment helped two retail brands reduce costs, streamline operations and increase their purchasing power.



At a glance

Company

CW Holdings, LLC

Brands

Coldwater International, LLC and Soft Surroundings International, LLC

Industry

Apparel, accessories, footwear and home decor

Location

Ft. Lauderdale, FL and St. Louis, MO

Challenge

Unify two retail brands into a single SaaS environment to reduce costs, streamline operations and unlock efficiencies through automation

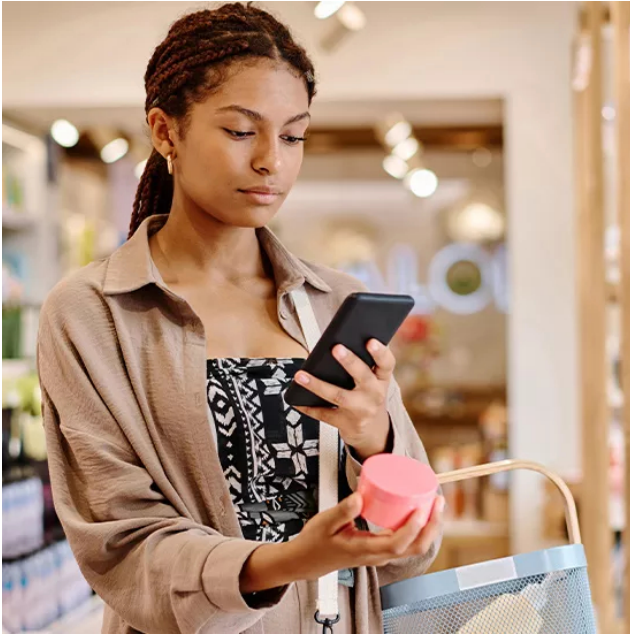
Products and services

SaaS, Merch Insight

Success highlights

- Improved inventory management and order fulfillment
- Reduced back orders
- Enhanced vendor relations and pricing through combined purchasing power

The challenge



Our client, CW Holdings, LLC—a global apparel sourcing company—wanted to unlock the benefits of shared technology by uniting two of its brands, Coldwater Creek and Soft Surroundings, in a single SaaS environment.

While both brands were using Merch Insight, they operated on different versions of the platform. Soft Surroundings was running a legacy, on-premise system that relied heavily on manual workflows. Meanwhile, Coldwater Creek was operating on our SaaS platform and had adopted a more modern version, though its existing server lacked the capacity to support a second brand. As a result, both entities needed to be integrated on the same server while maintaining their identities as separate companies within the database. This required Soft Surroundings migrate first to the Coldwater Creek host system.

Our approach

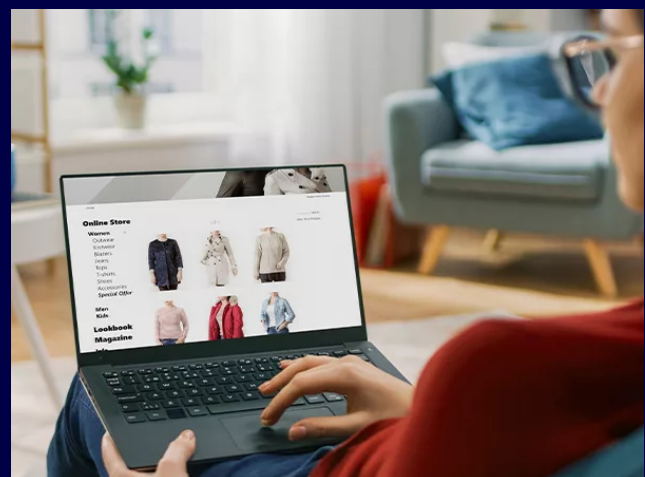
Building on a successful prior engagement with Coldwater Creek, Cognizant was selected as the digital transformation partner to lead both brands through this complex migration. The effort involved rewriting all data interfaces and reformatting product data, including SKU structures, offers and vendor details. For Soft Surroundings, the project also included a full transition to the new shared environment and integration with the D365 enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Because business operations could not be interrupted, our team, in conjunction with the client's super users, adopted a phased migration approach. Beginning with Coldwater Creek, we validated all data in a dedicated test environment before transitioning to production. During this phase, disruption was limited since Coldwater Creek was using a modern version of the software.

Once Coldwater Creek's transition was complete, our team moved on to Soft Surroundings. Working closely with the company's IT team, we supported the reconfiguration and integration of their data into D365, ensuring it could be seamlessly consumed by the new environment. In addition to reformatting data, this shift required the company to refine various business processes that were no longer operational within the new system.

Recognizing the need for close collaboration between Coldwater Creek and Soft Surroundings during this process, we created extensive joint user training opportunities to help both groups align on shared processes and workflows. Additionally, since Soft Surroundings was migrating from a much older version of the solution, the training also introduced the brand's users to new features and enhancements, including advanced automation capabilities and customized reporting functionalities.

- Created a test environment where both brands could rapidly validate data in a low-risk environment
- Conducted multiple controlled data uploads with client super users to test and validate all data
- Adopted a phased roll-out approach to optimize resources and reduce risk
- Organized in-depth user training sessions to introduce all new functionalities and automation opportunities to the Soft Surrounding team
- Executed a comprehensive change management program to ensure smooth rollout and adoption



Cognizant provided a seamless solution by migrating Soft Surroundings International, LLC to the same SaaS environment already in use by Coldwater International, LLC. This transition not only ensured both brands are now operating on the latest version of the system but also allows designated users to easily switch between brands using the Company/Division feature.

This strategic move enhances cross-brand visibility, enabling robust reporting and data analysis capabilities. As a result, both companies can now deliver integrated forecasting and key performance insights, supporting smarter decision-making and stronger business outcomes. "Aligning both brands on a unified SaaS platform is a significant step forward. It enables us to operate more efficiently, gain deeper insights across the business, and better support our long-term strategic goals — all while maintaining the distinct identity and operations of each brand."

Business outcomes

By unifying Coldwater Creek and Soft Surroundings under a single system with standardized processes, the teams gained immediate operational efficiencies, particularly in inventory management and order fulfillment. Further, by leveraging a shared supplier base, both brands have strengthened their purchasing power, unlocking opportunities to negotiate better vendor terms and access more competitive pricing. Finally, for Soft Surroundings, users were able to automate existing workflows and access customized reporting features that enhanced productivity and improved decision-making.

- **Auto offer publishing:** Automated offer publishing, providing a reliable source for reporting
- **Enhanced navigation:** Introduced new ribbons and shortcuts to significantly improve module navigation, making it faster and more efficient
- **Accelerated daily processes:** Improved daily processes to now run much quicker in the new environment, greatly enhancing overall efficiency
- **Streamlined purchase order processing:** Eliminated the need to switch systems for purchase order numbers to simplify the process
- **Shared system advantages:** Enabled the client to utilize pre-built reports and other data that was migrated during the go-live stage



Conclusion

With careful change management and user support, both brands successfully transitioned to the shared Merch Insight SaaS environment, which was equipped with modern tools for planning, scalability and operational efficiency. Through our solution, both brands were able to more effectively manage inventory and assortment planning, as well as unlock stronger joint purchasing power.

About our clients

Coldwater Creek is committed to bringing their customer unique and extraordinary styles that fit her lifestyle. They create meaningful relationships through quality products, a seamless shopping experience and trusted style advice.

Soft Surroundings is committed to being a trusted fashion and lifestyle brand for women 50+ years of age—delivering innovative products through a unique boutique approach that builds upon strong customer relationships.



Cognizant (Nasdaq-100: CTSI) engineers modern businesses. We help our clients modernize technology, reimagine processes and transform experiences so they can stay ahead in our fast-changing world. Together, we're improving everyday life. See how at www.cognizant.com or @cognizant.

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