PRIMARK®

Primark's Data-Driven Approach to Tackling Retail Fraud

About

Primark is a leading international fashion retailer known for offering trendy and affordable clothing, accessories, and home goods. Founded in 1969 in Dublin, Ireland, the company has expanded to over 400 stores across Europe and operate on a high-volume, low-margin business model, prioritizing budget-friendly prices without compromising on style. With a focus on ethical sourcing and sustainability initiatives, the brand continues to grow its global presence while adapting to evolving consumer demands.

Problem

Primark, a leading international retailer known for its value-driven fashion offerings, faced significant challenges related to shrinkage and loss prevention across its global operations. With a vast number of transactions processed daily, the company struggled to identify and address internal and external fraud efficiently.

Common issues included suspicious refund activity, under-ringing, misuse of voids, and gift card abuse, all of which contributed to financial losses and operational inefficiencies. The sheer volume of transactional data made it difficult for Primark's loss prevention team to pinpoint patterns of malpractice without dedicating significant time and resources.

Primark needed an innovative solution to streamline the identification of fraudulent activity, ensure procedural compliance, and ultimately reduce shrinkage while maintaining operational efficiency.

Solution

To address these challenges, Primark partnered with a loss prevention analytics provider to implement a robust data analysis and reporting solution. The solution was rapidly deployed, enabling the team to analyze transaction data in real time and uncover actionable insights.

The system included advanced reporting tools designed to tackle specific loss prevention concerns, such as:

- Refund anomalies: High-value cash refunds, repeat refunds on the same item or card, and same-item exchanges.
- Suspicious sales patterns: Under-ringing, low-value or zero-value transactions, and misuse of "No Sale" functions.
- Fraudulent activity with gift cards: Abuse of gift card transactions and consolidation of balances.
- Monitoring sensitive stock: Tracking new product ranges and high-value items subject to purchase restrictions.

The solution also enabled Primark's loss prevention team to visualize data trends and flag unusual activity across its operations, ensuring a more proactive approach to tackling fraud.

Results

With the new analytics solution in place, Primark achieved a rapid return on investment within months of deployment. The advanced reporting capabilities provided the loss prevention team with critical insights, allowing them to focus their efforts on high-priority issues and address them more effectively.

Key outcomes included:

- Substantial reductions in fraudulent activities, such as void abuse and gift card misuse.
- Improved detection of internal theft and procedural noncompliance.
- Streamlined investigations, reducing the time and resources needed to address incidents.

The solution has since become an integral part of Primark's strategy to combat shrinkage, providing visibility into critical areas of loss and helping drive down operational inefficiencies. As Primark continues to grow globally, the analytics system remains a cornerstone of their efforts to maintain profitability and protect assets.