

## **Retail Solutions Releases Forecasting Solution with Unilever among First Customers to Roll-out**

**Unilever Reports Model will Improve Average Forecasting Accuracy by 9%**

**Sunnyvale, CA – April 7th, 2009** – Retail Solutions Inc., the leading solution provider helping consumer product goods (CPG) companies create value with retailer data, today announced the general release of its ground-breaking forecasting solution. The new solution operates from available order, shipment, and POS data to provide CPG companies with much more accurate baseline order forecasts for each of their retailer customers by item and week.

“Retail Solutions Forecasting fills a critical need in any manufacturer’s efforts to overcome the much-maligned Bullwhip Effect,” explained Jared Schrieber, Retail Solutions Vice President, Products and Services. “Our solution smoothes the effects of promotions and outliers by leveraging downstream data with an advanced class of robust statistical algorithms that better link orders to consumer demand. This approach reduces forecast variability and eliminates the inherent bias that exists in retail demand forecasting today.”

Unilever, one of the solution’s first customers and a research and development partner for Retail Solutions, tested the application on over 4,000 SKUs at four distinct retailers representative of different retail channels (mass, grocery, club and drugstore). Unilever simulated forecast performance over a 12-month period before starting to use it operationally.

“Based on this retrospective analysis, we found that with Retail Solutions, Unilever’s forecast accuracy will improve on average 9% compared to the models we were using previously,” stated Andy Patel, Manager Business Capabilities, Unilever. “In particular, Retail Solutions is particularly effective at forecasting baseline demand for the high-variability items that traditionally cause challenges for our supply chain. We are rolling out this solution in 2009 to support our North American business with nearly 200 retail customers.”

The new solution is integrated with Retail Solutions Demand Signal Management, the leading and most widely-used POS data sharing solution in the industry, serving more than 550 customer teams at 300 leading CPG companies across over 30 retailers. Both solutions operate in a pure software-as-a-service (SaaS) model, eliminating the need for any investment in hardware and software or any long-term commitment.

“The more accurate, stable and automated forecasts help our customers reduce inventory while maintaining customer service levels. Retail Solutions Forecasting delivers a tangible, immediate business case for internal demand signal repository initiatives,” said Schrieber. “It can also be implemented quickly and across all customers as it was designed to accommodate the most common demand data currently available throughout the industry.”

“Developing such a system in partnership with Retail Solutions was the right decision,” added Patel. “Their experience and expertise in dealing with vast amounts of retailer data combined with their extensive research and development capabilities made them the ideal partner to develop a forecasting solution that would bring immediate value to Unilever.”

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### **About Retail Solutions Inc.**

Retail Solutions applies science to retailer data. Retail Solutions develops and delivers a comprehensive suite of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions that turn retailer data, such as point-of-sale (POS), supply chain, merchandiser feedback and EPC data into actionable visibility into the store and onto the shelf.

More than 300 leading companies such as Bausch & Lomb, Bayer, Colgate-Palmolive, Clorox, HP, Kao Brands, Kraft, Novartis, Procter & Gamble, Reckitt-Benckiser, Schering-Plough Corp., Stemilt and Unilever trust Retail Solutions to grow their retail sales, maximize in-store operation productivity, plan and execute more effective promotions, reduce their costs and join efforts with retail partners to improve shelf availability and consumer satisfaction. Please visit <http://www.retailsolutions.com> for more information.

### **About Unilever**

Unilever’s mission is to add vitality to life. We meet everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life. Each day, around the world, consumers make 160 million decisions to purchase Unilever products.

In the United States, the portfolio includes major brand icons such as: Axe, Ben & Jerry's, Bertolli, Breyers, Caress, Country Crock, Degree, Dove personal care products, Hellmann's, Klondike, Knorr, Lipton, Popsicle, Promise, Q-Tips, Skippy, Slim-Fast, Suave, Sunsilk and Vaseline. All of the preceding brand names are registered trademarks of the Unilever Group of Companies. Dedicated to serving consumers and the communities where we live, work and play, Unilever employs nearly 12,000 people in both the United States and Puerto Rico – generating nearly \$10 billion in sales in 2008. For more information, visit [www.unileverusa.com](http://www.unileverusa.com).

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