



Medical Supplier Improves Customer Relationship Management, Streamlines Sales

Overview

Country or Region: United States
Industry: Wholesale and distribution

Customer Profile

Founded in 1980, Qosina supplies disposable components to the medical, pharmaceutical, and cosmetics industries for use in their products. Based in Edgewood, New York, the company employs 80 people.

Business Situation

The company's outdated contact management system led to wasted time and inefficiency due to a largely manual workflow, lack of integration with other IT systems, and multiple databases.

Solution

With Microsoft® CRM and SQL Server™ 2000, Qosina now has a more formal sales process, which will integrate with the company's existing Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains® software.

Benefits

- Reduced time to process samples
- Improved sales activities
- Reduced catalog mailing costs
- Improved reporting capabilities

“The ability to view reports and gain visibility into our customers’ activities is a huge benefit of Microsoft CRM.”

Gerry Quinn, Chief Operating Officer, Qosina

Medical component supplier Qosina used an outdated contact management system that could not meet the needs of its rapidly growing business. The company's customer service representatives had difficulty managing the sales process, which required switching between five stand-alone databases to access customer data. In addition, sending out free samples—a core element to the company's success—was a time-consuming process that relied on the manual reentry of large amounts of data. To improve workflow, Qosina deployed Microsoft® CRM and consolidated its databases into one Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 database. Microsoft CRM enhanced the company's customer relationship management capabilities, leading to improved sales activities, increased productivity, and close to a 20 percent reduction in time to process samples.



Situation

Qosina provides disposable medical components to the medical and cosmetics industries. These components include several thousand products that range from caps, masks, and rubber gloves to valves and clamps. Qosina also supplies custom parts manufactured to specific requirements. Founded in 1980, Qosina employs 80 people at its Edgewood, New York, facility.

The bulk of Qosina's business comes from medical device companies and cosmetic distributors that request samples to incorporate into products in development. Because these products must gain U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, the sales life cycle for parts can take a long time. After the FDA approves the products, however, Qosina expects to receive ongoing orders from customers because the parts form an intrinsic component of the final products.

Thus, sending out samples is core to the company's success. Says Gerry Quinn, Chief Operating Officer for Qosina, "We sell products to people who design medical devices, and they incorporate our parts into their products. Our samples become our potential business, so sending them out is a large part of our marketing effort."

To promote samples, the company creates two annual catalogs for medical and cosmetic products, and makes those catalogs available in print and online. Potential customers call or send e-mail messages to the Customer Service department to request samples, which are sent out the same day. This sales strategy has paid off: over the past 10 years, Qosina has steadily grown its business.

Unfortunately, the company's contact management system, TeleMagic, was not able to keep up with business growth. Because TeleMagic could not integrate with any of the company's other IT systems, the

sample-sending workflow was inefficient. When a customer service representative received a sample request, the representative entered it into TeleMagic and then printed the order. Another representative collected the samples, created a letter and mailing label in the Corel WordPerfect word-processing program, mailed the package, and then updated the data in TeleMagic. In addition, if an overseas customer called to request samples, the customer service representative would have to exit the North American database and log on to a database that stored international addresses. Customer data was often entered in more than one database, leading to duplicate entries—often with conflicting data.

In addition, TeleMagic did not offer the ability to schedule follow-up activities. Instead, customer service representatives jotted notes in WordPerfect to remind themselves to follow up with a customer. Without a formal workflow, Qosina found it hard to track its sales activities.

The system also required customer service representatives to rekey information if contact data changed. Because Qosina maintains relationships with multiple departments within a company—and multiple individuals within a department—customer service representatives often had to rekey large amounts of data for a simple change, such as an address modification. Accurate records were essential when it came to sending out the yearly catalog, an expensive piece that could cost as much as U.S.\$10 per unit to mail and more to have the post office return it due to an incorrect address.

For help, Qosina turned to Business Solution Partners (BSP), a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner that had implemented Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains® for Qosina three years earlier. "Qosina had two challenges," says David Smooha, Chief Executive

“Using Microsoft CRM helped us build a sales process around sampling. Qosina now is able to know how well Customer Service is doing and see whether the products are meeting customers’ needs.”

David Smooha, Chief Executive Officer,
Business Solution Partners

Officer of BSP. “First, they needed to streamline how they managed accounts and sent out samples. Second, they needed a sales process that would create sales activities after a customer requests a sample.”

Solution

Qosina had tested a number of customer relationship management (CRM) solutions, including SalesLogix from Best Software, GoldMine from FrontRange Solutions, and Siebel. However, no solution proved satisfactory—until the release of Microsoft CRM. “We tested a lot of solutions using 5-user or 10-user licenses,” says Quinn. “But we felt that only Microsoft CRM could provide the customer management we needed while integrating with Microsoft Great Plains.”

Business Solution Partners helped deploy Microsoft CRM to 47 users in the Customer Service, Quality Assurance, and Purchasing departments. At the same time, Qosina replaced its five existing databases with Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 and implemented Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003.

Microsoft CRM and its workflow feature help streamline the sample-sending process. When a potential customer calls to request a sample, the customer service representative fills out a Microsoft CRM form developed by BSP. The order then is funneled into a queue for another customer service representative to fulfill. BSP created a customized application that allows this second customer service representative to print a shipping label, packing slip, and letter directly from the Microsoft CRM screen. After the order has been filled, the CRM system automatically schedules a follow-up sales call, which appears on the original customer service representative’s screen on the day that the call is to be conducted.

Qosina uses Crystal Reports for report creation, and is in the process of implementing Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Reporting Services so that the company can create more detailed, hierarchical reports. Moving forward, Qosina will integrate Microsoft CRM and Microsoft Great Plains so that sample ordering information and customer data will be automatically transferred to the accounting system.

Benefits

By deploying its new CRM solution, Qosina reduced the amount of time to process samples, improved account management and the workflow of its sales operations, and provided visibility into sales trends and opportunities.

Reduced Time to Process Samples by 20 Percent

By automating the sample-ordering workflow, Qosina eliminated the need for customer service representatives to print order requests and then update data in TeleMagic after requests have been processed. As a result, customer service representatives have reduced the amount of time that they spend per order by 20 percent.

Improved Sales Activities

For Qosina, a reduction in the time that it takes to process samples also means that the Customer Service department now can focus on follow-up sales activities. And because Microsoft CRM automatically creates and schedules these activities, representatives no longer have to rely on notes to remind themselves to call a customer.

“Using Microsoft CRM helped us build a sales process around sampling,” says Smooha. “Qosina now is able to know how well Customer Service is doing and see whether the products are meeting customers’ needs.”

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Reduced Catalog Mailing Costs

In the past, Qosina mailed a catalog to everyone on the company’s account list, regardless of whether that person had duplicate entries or not. In many cases, the person had changed jobs, meaning that a catalog was sent to a contact who no longer was at a specific company. Or the person might receive more than one catalog if he or she was entered into more than one database.

By replacing five stand-alone databases with SQL Server 2000, Qosina centralized all its account information into a single source, thereby eliminating duplicate entries. Furthermore, Microsoft CRM helps customer service representatives easily modify customer information.

“In moving to Microsoft CRM and SQL Server 2000, we’ve eliminated up to 15 percent of our total contacts because they were duplicate entries,” says Quinn.

Improved Reporting Capabilities

With the TeleMagic system, Qosina did not have a way to analyze customers and samples. However, using Microsoft CRM in conjunction with SQL Server 2000 and Crystal Reports, the company can create detailed reports to see which customers are ordering samples. As a result, the company now has the opportunity to improve its marketing efforts with targeting mailings or promotions. “The ability to view reports and gain visibility into our customers’ activities is a huge benefit of Microsoft CRM,” says Quinn.

Poised for Growth

Qosina has been growing steadily since its inception in 1980. Microsoft CRM helps support that growth by automating the sample process and reducing the amount of manual work required of employees. Quinn is confident that Microsoft CRM will meet the company’s needs for years to come—regardless of

growth rate. “We’re using only a small percentage of the capabilities of Microsoft CRM right now,” he says.

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