

Efficient collaboration between representatives, customers and back office

Alken-Maes implements CRMoblie from Euremis

The implementation of CRMoblie not only liberated the representatives of Alken-Maes from a mountain of boring paperwork. The application also fostered a new dynamic in the collaboration between the company's departments and in the provision of services to the customers.

The sales organization of Alken-Maes has two branches. The on trade department serves the hotel-restaurant-café sector, while the personnel of the off trade department are responsible for sales to the retail segment. "When I became the head of off trade, I heard the representatives talking about how much reduplication of effort was involved in the way they were doing things", says Geert Minnart, Sales Manager at Alken-Maes. During their customer visits, the representatives note down a great deal of information. "They record information about the customer himself, but obviously also about the products: which brands are present, how they are priced, how much shelf space they get ..." The representatives jotted down all this info with pen and paper. Then, at the end of their working day, they often had to spend one or two hours typing up their notes. After that, business managers and account managers went to work with the information, preparing reports on the stores, the regions and so on. But they too had to first transfer the data, this time into a spreadsheet. "It was clear that introducing an integrated system would increase the efficiency of our sales organization enormously", says Geert Minnart.

Strategic data centralised

Alken-Maes carefully mapped out the existing sales processes, and thought about how the process might be optimised. "That was an important exercise", finds Geert Minnart. "First we updated the existing working method." At the same time, Minnart created a broad support base for the project among the management. "We organised a 'manager's day out', where we sent the managers of the company out together with the representatives. That way, they saw for themselves how truly necessary an integrated system was." Then followed the procedure for selecting the right instrument, at the end of which Alken-Maes gave the preference to CRMoblie from Euremis. At precisely that moment it also became evident that the parent company, Scottish & Newcastle in Scotland, was searching for a solution for the same problem. To make a long story short: at the proposal of Alken-Maes, Scottish & Newcastle carefully studied the characteristics and functionality of CRMoblie and the group decided to implement the system in seven European countries. After a turnaround time of around four months - for analysis, trial run and finetuning - in Belgium thirty Alken-Maes employees went to work with Euremis.

Executive Summary

Alken-Maes equipped its off trade sales team with CRMoblie from Euremis. The productivity of the representatives increased by around fifteen percent.

At the same time the company now disposes of more and better data, which has boosted the speed and quality of the reporting.

"The most important result isn't the time savings which the representatives achieve in the retail store, but the time savings at the end of the day. They don't have to type up the information from the stores all over again. Everything is immediately centralised in the system."

Geert Minnart, Sales Manager at Alken-Maes

Company Profile



Not long ago Alken-Maes became part of the Dutch brewery group Heineken. They can therefore proudly count themselves part of the no. 1 group in Western Europe. The company has 530 employees, distributed across the establishments in Alken, Waarloos and Kobbegem. Each year Alken-Maes produces around two million hectolitres of beer of the Maes, Cristal, Grimbergen and Mort Subite brands, among others.

Business impact

Because the administrative processing of their customer visits has been eliminated, the representatives of Alken-Maes can visit one extra customer per day thanks to the use of CRMobile. On an annual basis Alken-Maes makes around four thousand extra visits: an increase of around fifteen percent. The optimisation is also clearly perceptible among the field managers. They gain one and a half days per week thanks to the automated reporting. Other departments as well – such as finance and marketing – have access to certain parts of the reporting. They now have available more and more accurate data, as a result of which they work together more efficiently.



Everything right at hand

“The great advantage of CRMobile is that all of the information on the customers is now contained within a single system”, explains Geert Minnart. “Moreover, the representatives can now work in a much more structured and efficient manner.” During a customer visit, the representative receives a proposed step-by-step plan on his PDA. When he has worked through that from A to Z, he knows that he hasn't forgotten anything and that he has all of the necessary information. “An important advantage is obviously that the representative also has all of the data about the customer immediately at hand. He knows which products have to be present, how much shelf space they must get, which promotional campaigns are currently running and so on.” The PDA also has a built-in camera, which allows the representative to take photos of the displays, the product layout in the store, any damage to products, and so on. Alken-Maes also chose to equip the devices with an e-mail function. During their customer visits the representatives can receive messages - so that they immediately have new information, which they can work with right away.

Efficient customer visits

Thanks to the use of CRMobile, the representatives can work more efficiently when they go to visit a customer. The great advantage is that at that moment they have available all the relevant information. They can quickly and accurately answer the customer's questions - for example, about previously placed orders or their sales history - without having to call the headquarters to get this data. “For us, however, the most important result isn't the time savings which the representatives achieve in the retail store, but the time savings at the end of the day. They don't have to type up the information from the stores all over again. Everything is immediately centralised in the system.” The success of the project has prompted Alken-Maes to also begin a preliminary analysis for their on trade department.

Business advantages

The use of Euremis has a positive impact on the image of Alken-Maes among the customers. The visits go more smoothly, and the representative can immediately answer the customer's questions, since he has all of the information right at hand. A further advantage is the sharp reduction in paper consumption within Alken-Maes.

Bits & bytes

At Alken-Maes, CRMobile from Euremis runs on 22 HTC TyTN 1 PDAs. In addition, there are six users on PC in the back office. The PDAs contain a SIM card with a Proximus subscription, by means of which the representatives can receive mobile e-mail and, at the end of the day, send the recorded customer data to the headquarters in Waarloos. At home the representatives also have a laptop with Belgacom ADSL.

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