

Covering all aspects of the dairy trade and the expertise of Euremis

Lactalis Europe du Nord, the market leader in the dairy products sector, decided to equip its Belgian sales team with PDAs (Pocket PCs) and the CRMoblie solution from Euremis.

The aim of the project was to gather reliable and comprehensive information in the field, which could be updated with no need for time-consuming retranscription. The key issues were time savings and data reliability. "Gathering information by the corporate chain was no longer enough for us. We wanted to go further and work at the level of our 1,500 sales outlets in Belgium", says Mr Jannic Braem, Field Manager of Lactalis Europe du Nord S.A.

In the shoes of a sales representative...

The modular CRMoblie solution implemented by Euremis had already proved itself in the distribution sector (Schweppes, Danone). "Already familiar with the terminology and special features of our business, Euremis very quickly managed to identify our technical and operational needs. This business partner even went as far as to get involved in a real-life situation in order to obtain a complete picture of a typical sales call to a hypermarket", states Mr Braem.

CRMoblie follows the logical progression of the different phases of a sales visit to a store: the sales

representative consults his or her diary for the day and checks what sales promotions are currently being held in the sales outlets to be visited. During the visit he or she will note down the selling prices, the positioning of the products, their presence on the shelves in comparison with competing products, stock outs and current sales promotions (including competitors' promotions). The history feature enables the representative to obtain an immediate overview of stock outs, previous sales promotions, new product introductions and sales commitments.

A picture speaks a thousand words!

"The PDAs convey a very professional image. Our representatives can show department managers photos of new products, without having to carry a catalogue around. All too often the decision by a central purchasing department to introduce a new product is not enough to guarantee its presence on the shelves. "So we try

to make the department manager's job as easy as possible. They can see the product on the PDA and the Lactalis representative can even provide the correct product reference for their particular store!", adds Mr. Communal, IT Manager of Lactalis Europe du Nord.

No unpleasant surprises

Lactalis wanted to find a solution that would avoid having to make any major investment. The available information is stored in ASP mode on a server managed by Euremis and can be easily accessed over the Internet via a secure process. Lactalis can easily budget these fixed costs, which are posted as a monthly expense, the only parameter being the number of users of the solution.

The project was launched at the end of December 2003. "We were able to start out on the basis of our AS400 database. Euremis was responsive and reliable, never hesitating to carry out any customisation work required over the months".

The project, which was widely supported by the management, got off to a very smooth start. In the middle of May 2004, the representative with the greatest experience of working with computers went off to try it out in the field. He was delighted with the results. "Our representatives have been extremely enthusiastic about CRMoblie. Everyone has taken to it, it's so easy and intuitive to navigate", continues Mr Communal. Training took just one day.

"CRMoblie is helping us to develop. New functionalities, such as order taking, can be added on at a later date".



"Its user-friendliness, easy handling and feather lightness have made the PDA an indispensable tool. Our sales representatives would be very upset if we took away their PDAs and CRMoblie".

Jannic Braem

Field Manager of Lactalis Europe du Nord.

Choosing the solution

Around 5 years ago France equipped its 350 sales representatives with portable computers. The smaller scale structure in Belgium meant that the tool developed for France was not suitable.

"In addition to this, portable PCs were too bulky and risky. How many sales representatives have had a portable PC stolen from their car? A portable PC costs 2000 euros, compared with 500 euros for a PDA", points out Mr Braem.

Tablet PC solutions were also quickly rejected as being too expensive and not portable enough. "With a PDA our representatives always have their hands free and can help out in the stores! This is always appreciated", adds Mr. Braem.



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And in the evenings the representatives recharge their batteries!



The PDAs have a standby time of one to two days. "In any case, our sales representatives take advantage of the daily data synchronisation process to recharge the batteries", states Mr Braem. CRMobility therefore frees representatives from the chore of writing up reports in the evening. "We've all come across fax machines that don't work, not to mention the time taken to re-write

notes jotted down on the move". The data from the PDA and the central server are synchronised in both directions, i.e. from the representatives to the back-office and vice-versa. Everyone has reliable and comprehensive information and the database is updated every day. "We can react to situations immediately. We work with fresh products that need to be turned around quickly. If sales are slow, we can launch a sales promotion in the stores. The representatives are informed via their PDAs and can support the promotion effectively".

Some convincing results already

After just two months of operation, it's still too soon to talk about a return on investment. However, the managers at Lactalis are delighted to see a significant rise in sales volumes and a 10% increase in the number of sales calls made.

"The mobile application is providing so much strategic information and increased productivity

that the sales forces in the Netherlands and Scandinavia have asked us for a demonstration. Its user-friendliness, easy handling and feather lightness have made the PDA an indispensable tool. Our sales representatives would be very upset if we took away their PDAs and CRMobility", concludes Mr Braem.



About Lactalis :

Lactalis EUROPE DU NORD S.A. is part of the "LACTALIS INTERNATIONAL" group. It markets a range of dairy products including French cheeses (Camembert, Brie), butter, Emmenthal, processed cheeses, yoghurt, fromage frais, desserts and milk. The group's brands are Président, Roquefort Société, Salakis, Lactel and Bridel, to mention just the more well-known ones...

Lactalis EUROPE DU NORD is responsible for 7 countries and has a presence in Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Luxembourg. The subsidiary, which employs around 30 staff, has a turnover of over 80 million euros.

The Lactalis group - a winner!
- No. 1 milk collector
- No. 1 cheese maker in Europe
- No. 1 dairy exporter in France

www.lactalis.com

About Euremis

Euremis is a specialist in mobile applications for PDAs (Pocket PCs). Euremis sets out to provide its clients with high-performance solutions that are simple, effective and tailored to handle issues in the field. The success of Euremis' mobile solutions is due not only to its business expertise, which allows it to ensure that each solution perfectly lives up to the customer's expectations, but also due to their user-friendliness, flexibility and reliability.

Euremis' approach is aimed at:

- Improving the productivity of mobile staff
- Increasing the quality and relevancy of data from the field
- Providing greater visibility of the impact of sales promotions (trade marketing, reporting, etc).

CRMobility therefore guarantees a rapid return on investment (ROI) and a high user-adoption rate.



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