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Wilfert van Veldhoven, Project Manager, Sensus

AT A GLANCE

Summary

Sensus – headquartered in Roosendaal, the Netherlands – is a well-established player in the inulin market. Sensus chose the SAP® Sales express solution to improve sales and to standardize processes. As a ready-made customer relationship management (CRM) solution, the SAP Sales express solution ensured expandability while providing connectivity with the existing system.

Web Site

www.sensus.nl

Key Challenges

- Avoid delays and obstacles while implementing a ready-made solution that offers operational CRM functionality
- Fulfill tight implementation schedule in 2.5 months

Project Objectives

- Achieve better market transparency to predict developments and meet customer needs
- Facilitate real-time, enterprise-wide collaboration

Solutions and Services

- SAP Sales express solution
- SAP Ramp-Up program
- SAP Consulting services

Why SAP Solutions and Services

- Offer a fixed price and a fixed implementation period
- Supply portal-based access, integration with Microsoft Outlook, and user-friendly graphic interface
- Provide CRM implementation expertise

Implementation Highlights

- Completed implementation 2 weeks early
- Migrated client data and prospects from existing environment and Microsoft Outlook
- Supplied maximum functionality with minimum implementation time and risk

Key Benefits

- Provided ready-made CRM solution with fast and easy implementation
- Improved insight into customer relations and market developments
- Delivered scalability to achieve future growth targets

Implementation Partner

SAP Consulting organization

Existing Environment

- SAP R/3® software (functionality now found in the mySAP™ ERP application)
- SAP Business Information Warehouse component (part of the SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component)

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: Hewlett-Packard ProLiant servers
- Operating system: Microsoft Windows Server 2003

SENSUS

The SAP® Sales Express Solution Improves Sales Productivity, Pipeline Visibility, and Process Standardization

In the never-ending “battle of the bulge,” consumer appetite for ingredients that allow you to eat more food while ingesting fewer calories is insatiable. Beyond weight control, diet-related disease prevention also drives the foraging. One ingredient that delivers the desired results is inulin, a naturally occurring carbohydrate that is used as reduced-calorie (1 to 1.2 calories per gram) fat and sugar replacement with many positive nutritional and functional characteristics. As a soluble dietary fiber extracted from chicory root, inulin acts as a bulking agent and is believed to activate beneficial bacteria in the digestive tract.

Sensus is a well-established player in the inulin market, producing and marketing the food ingredients Frutafit and Fructalose. Sensus is a business unit of the Royal Cosun group, which is an international developer, manufacturer, and supplier of natural food ingredients, with 2005 annual sales of €1.3 billion and a workforce of about 4,200. Sensus’s head office and production facilities are located in Roosendaal, the Netherlands, with a regional sales and marketing office (Sensus America) in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey. A network of qualified marketing and distribution business partners covers 45 countries worldwide.

In the battle for market share, Sensus sought to improve the effectiveness of its sales and marketing team by implementing a customer relationship management (CRM) solution. But with budgetary and time constraints, the company did not want to undertake an extensive technology initiative. Sensus achieved

valuable CRM capabilities within its budget and time frame by implementing the SAP® Sales express solution, a packaged solution based on the mySAP™ Customer Relationship Management (mySAP CRM) application. The SAP Sales express solution provides basic sales force automation functionality and can be implemented by SAP Consulting rapidly.

Growing Business, Growing Needs

Sensus had previously implemented SAP R/3® software (functionality now found in the mySAP ERP application) and the SAP Business Information Warehouse (SAP BW) component (part of the SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component) to record orders, deliveries, and invoices. The company's sales and marketing staff was using standard office software to manage and control their activities. They needed a better way.

"Everyone was using his or her own lists and Microsoft Excel sheets so the information was fragmented throughout the organization. That became more and more difficult to work with," says the sales manager of Sensus. "Salespeople and support staff were in contact with customers on a day-to-day basis, but no one knew the latest developments from their colleagues: whether there were complaints pending or any outstanding orders, what questions the client had raised, that type of information. Given that Sensus was growing rapidly, this fragmentation was an increasingly difficult problem."

Immediate Goals, Long-Term Plans

Sensus made the decision to introduce better computerized marketing and sales support. A crucial factor in the selection of a solution was its ability to keep pace with market growth. Sensus also wanted to be able to identify and respond to trends more quickly.

"Inulin is a relatively new product, but it is booming. The market trends, such as controlling your weight and intestinal health, are decisive factors," the sales manager of Sensus adds. "It is a huge, international playing field, for which we needed a sound CRM solution to make the market more transparent and help us to better predict developments in the sector."

Sensus sought to adopt a more proactive attitude toward its clients and establish effective marketing initiatives. Thus the company wanted a CRM solution that would enable the sales and marketing team to file all information in a clear format, categorized for – and including the current status and activities of – individual clients.

"Sensus was looking for a ready-made system. We are only a small organization and we couldn't afford to free up staff for a year-long project," says Arjan Oostdijck, information analyst at

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Arjan Oostdijck, Information Analyst, Sensus

Sensus. "SAP then offered us the SAP Sales express solution and showed us a demo of the software. It was a new solution that had resulted from their years of experience with many CRM implementations and that had a surprisingly large number of predefined options."

Since the software includes default templates and ready-to-use functionality based on the full mySAP CRM application, Sensus was pleased with the growth possibilities the solution afforded. In addition, it offers portal-based access and integration with Microsoft Outlook, which was also attractive to Sensus.



Fast Implementation, Immediate Improvements

Sensus wrote its blueprint in 2005, and drew up a clear list of requirements. There was a good fit between the blueprint and the SAP Sales express solution. Then, Sensus and SAP Consulting launched the implementation in mid-November 2005. The team migrated all client data from the existing SAP software environment. Sensus added options such as business warehouse reports to streamline the integration of this data, since the company runs SAP BW. The team launched the new solution by the beginning of February 2006.

“SAP Consulting guaranteed us a fixed price and a fixed implementation period,” says Wilfert van Veldhoven, project manager at Sensus. “Officially, setting up the SAP Sales express solution is supposed to take three months. But we went live after only two and a half months.”

“The SAP Sales express solution has a user-friendly graphic interface and forms a clearly defined whole product, meaning you know in advance that a long implementation process will not be necessary. It was up and ready in no time, which was our main requirement,” Oostdijck adds.

Sensus’s sales and marketing team was able to enter transaction data and opportunities as soon as the SAP Sales express solution went live, simply by gathering the data during their day-to-day work. Now Sensus sales managers enter any relevant client contact information directly into the CRM environment.

“Sensus was one of the SAP Ramp-Up program clients for the SAP Sales express solution. We were therefore prepared for some teething troubles where the solution was concerned, but there proved to be very few in practice,” van Veldhoven adds. “We didn’t have enough manuals and the Microsoft Outlook integration was still not entirely foolproof. We have since given SAP Consulting feedback on these points, and our experience has been that they handle such matters very well. Whenever we ran into a problem we could even contact the developers in Walldorf, Germany, directly, via SAP Consulting, and someone would start working on it straightaway.”

Managing Change

One result of the rapid implementation was that the users suddenly found themselves confronted with a new system that took some getting used to. Sensus introduced them to the software by means of workshops and training sessions.

“Keep in mind that CRM is much more than just another solution. It is a way of working. Employees needed to learn how to think and work in a structured manner,” says the sales manager of Sensus. “In addition, the system will only survive

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thanks to their input. This is why management is now exercising some pressure on staff and has banned the use of Microsoft Excel sheets. But it is not all a strict and formal process. Sensus is a company that does a lot of work with a small number of people. That calls for a pragmatic approach, including in this project.”

One Solution, Multiple Benefits

Sensus is now able to serve its clients better and score on opportunities more efficiently, and has gained better insight on market trends. The SAP Sales express solution offers Sensus information that helps the company devise its business policy and offers full scalability to achieve supplementary CRM capabilities.

“SAP Consulting has positioned the SAP Sales express solution to offer valuable CRM facilities quickly, at low cost, and at low risk. This matches our own experience perfectly,” says the sales manager of Sensus. “Our objective is to achieve the growth targets for the next three years without expanding our workforce. I am certain that we will achieve this objective with the SAP Sales express solution.”

Forecasting and the Future

The unique expandability options the SAP Sales express solution delivers enable Sensus to realize its individual future growth path, thereby protecting its investment. One area Sensus plans to enhance is its forecasting capabilities. “At the moment we can only make forecasts in terms of volume per product. That is why we will add extra forecasting facilities soon. Also, we still have a lot of unstructured data that is linked to the solution but for which we need much more powerful search facilities. This is another planned extension,” says Oostdijck.

“In short, the SAP Sales express solution is a worthwhile new SAP solution that is rooted in years of experience with a host of SAP Consulting CRM implementations,” the sales manager of Sensus adds. “The SAP Sales express solution makes the market more transparent and more predictable – ensuring that we will achieve our growth targets.”