



Asian Paints: Touching Up Customer Service Efforts with SAP® Mobile Platform

Asian Paints Ltd. is the leading decorative paint company in India. Aiming to transform from a manufacturing-centered firm to a customer-centric business, Asian Paints introduced SAP® Mobile Platform to its sales staff. Since then, **market engagement has greatly improved**, with less need for physical reports or reliance on support functions.

Executive overview

Company

Asian Paints Ltd.

Headquarters

Mumbai, India

Industry

Chemicals

Products and Services

Paints and decorative coatings for consumer, industrial, and automotive use

Employees

5,000

Revenue

INR 9,632 crore
(US\$1.8 billion)

Web Site

www.asianpaints.com

Partner

Advent Global
Solutions Inc.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

The company's top objectives

- Empower staff to efficiently service each customer
- Improve collaboration between the sales force and distributor network
- Reduce dependency on office-based and call center staff

The resolution

- Began using the Sybase® Unwired Platform rapid-deployment solution to manage multiple applications
- Created a portable mobile application for the sales force to leverage SAP® Mobile Platform
- Implemented the SAP Customer Relationship Management (SAP CRM) application to integrate sales, service, and marketing
- Completed rapid new tool rollout to staff in the field

The key benefits

- Faster closure of dealer complaints
- Increased productivity of sales force
- Improved quality of customer interaction

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TOP BENEFITS ACHIEVED

35%

Of sales staff connected in two months

8–10 weeks

Time taken to implement solution

700

Staff servicing 30,000 shops

See more metrics ►

“With SAP software supporting our increasing use of mobile devices, our employees, customers, partners, and suppliers are all connected. This has added value to all our business processes.”

Deepak Bhosale, Chief Manager – IT, Asian Paints Ltd.

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Future plans

A bright new look in sales force connectivity

Since 1967, Asian Paints Ltd. has been India's market leader in the manufacture and supply of decorative and industrial coatings. The company operates 23 plants in 17 countries, supplying paint and ancillary products to consumer and commercial markets. A team of 700 sales representatives connects with a 44,000-strong dealer/distributor network that markets well-known brands in over 65 countries.

Asian Paints aims to become one of the world's top five decorative coating companies. Underpinning its vision for the future is a company-wide transformation from manufacturer and supplier of consumer goods to an enterprise that puts its customers at the center of the business. "People will be at the heart of our next wave of growth," says Deepak Bhosale, chief manager of IT at Asian Paints.

In a competitive market where success depends on agility to respond quickly to customer needs, Asian Paints had to become more engaged with dealers and distributors. "Our focus is on collaboration to deliver what the customer wants. For that to happen, our geographically widespread sales force needed new tools," says Bhosale. "We had to empower staff to manage both the demand and the supply functions in ways that would deliver more effective results with greater efficiency."

Bhosale's team saw that the salespeople could deliver on the company objective with better mobile access to business intelligence. So management launched what they termed their "Enterprise Mobility Initiative."



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A customer focus that's clear

To significantly increase mobile device use, Asian Paints chose SAP to supply the software on which to build its future capabilities. "Asian Paints has used mobile technology for some time. Our people first used the sales force automation functionality in 2007 and are comfortable with the technology," says Bhosale. "When employees heard we had chosen SAP software to provide the platform to support enterprise mobility, they were delighted."

The company replaced its mobile solution with Sybase® Unwired Platform (now part of SAP® Mobile Platform). On this platform, supplied by Sybase, an SAP company, Asian Paints' IT team then implemented multiple applications to provide key information. Sales staff can access that information through their Android tablets, knowing that the security of data stored and transmitted is ensured

by the SAP Afaria® mobile device management solution.

Asian Paints also uses SAP Business Suite software with the SAP Customer Relationship Management (SAP CRM) application to manage partner relationships. "SAP CRM provides staff with a huge amount of knowledge for convenient real-time use," says Bhosale.

Advent Global Solutions Inc. helped Asian Paints undertake the Enterprise Mobility Initiative. During the project, the implementation team also applied SAP Best Practices packages to the process for a smooth uptake. Senior management buy-in and a commitment to training and support ensured that the project met all expectations.

"It's wonderful. Our mobile devices provide everything we need on a day-to-day basis. We can access sales and color data and all our dealer-related information, instantly."

Anoop C., Sales Officer, Asian Paints Ltd.



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Finding gold at the end of the sales cycle

Asian Paints now has a mobile workforce equipped to focus on the customer. With immediate access to key business information, employees collaborate with customers, focusing on particular needs and responding to requests faster. They are also more independent of the office, planning dealer visits, writing up outcomes, recording competitor information, and plotting the best ways to cover their territories – all while out in the field.

Sales people no longer have to carry office-generated reports and business forms, or rely on support staff to answer queries, give approvals, or convey decisions. With this increased agility, sales staff can connect at any time, from anywhere, and respond swiftly to customer needs. “Sales force mobility is having a direct impact on our performance in the market,” says Gopalakrishnan, the company’s regional sales manager. “We have a better feel of day-to-day issues and are able to respond more effectively.”

KEY BENEFITS

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Setting trends in the use of mobile devices

The range of mobile business tools is increasing all the time, and Asian Paints plans to further leverage its SAP software on SAP Mobile Platform. "Mobile devices are becoming increasingly affordable," says Bhosale, "and there's scope for much more use of enterprise applications on them in the future."

Asian Paints is optimistic about how the company's people will be part of the new wave of information sharing, and how the development of enterprise mobility will play out. Based on experience so far, mobile technology is certain to play an even bigger part in the company's future.

"Implementation of SAP software has contributed greatly to our success," says Sanjay Joshi, Senior Manager, Field Readiness. "Moving ahead, SAP will play an increasingly important role for us, ensuring we have the real-time data that is critical for the business and will enable us to help our customers so much more."



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