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American Tank & Fabricating

M2M CRM Boosts Productivity and Profitability at American Tank & Fabricating

If Superman, America's favorite "man of steel," had a corporate counterpart, the superhero company of the steel industry would surely be American Tank & Fabricating, Cleveland, Ohio. Since 1940, the company has excelled at the largest, most difficult, make-to-order steel fabrication projects, crafting components and parts for pressure vessels, magnesium melting crucibles and nuclear material handling containers. Using some of the largest and most powerful machinery in the industry, American Tank's craftspeople also create the precision, steel-fabricated components that American workers use every day in mining, material handling, heavy construction, and the building of towers and bridges.



Managing and serving its diverse customer base—including the U.S. government, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) around the world and other fabricating companies of all sizes—was a formidable task. Surging demand for specialized, steel-fabricated components increased the volume of quotes and orders that American Tank's sales representatives had to track and archive. When the company wanted to implement an automated customer relationship management (CRM) solution that would integrate easily with its core business processes, they turned to the company they recognized as a leader in enterprise business systems for small and midsize manufacturers—Indianapolis-based Made2Manage Systems Inc.

According to Christopher Smith, manager of information at American Tank, Made2Manage[®] Customer Relationship Management (M2M[™] CRM) has been in place for a little over one year, and the return on investment in terms of productivity, efficiency and increased business has exceeded expectations. Everything sales representatives need to know about their customers is at their fingertips in M2M CRM, which provides the robust tools and knowledge base to track and archive customer interactions, quickly resolve customer inquiries, and manage support cases and other customer service transactions, such as service contract renewals and return material authorizations (RMAs).



Providing greater visibility into the entire sales cycle, M2M CRM empowers American Tank to more efficiently manage selling opportunities and customer information, resulting in streamlined sales management processes and improved customer satisfaction. The value of customer relationships has increased thanks to M2M CRM's automated processes that enable sales representatives to quickly access and archive customer

information in a comprehensive system that tracks the entire history of customer relationships.

"Most CRM implementations have a 70 percent failure rate, but the enterprise-wide integration capabilities of M2M CRM practically ensure its success," Smith says. "In addition, our managers have championed this project. M2M CRM provides one central system to manage all customer relationship interactions, and that helps our people be more productive and provide better customer service."

Streamlined Management of Customer Relationships

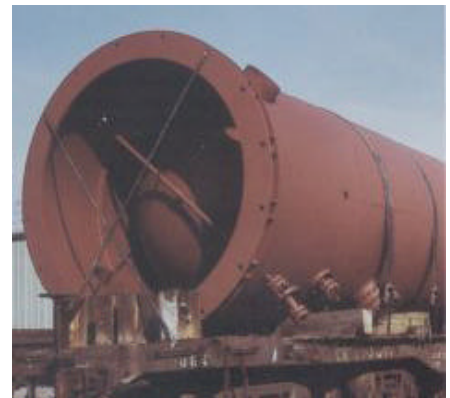
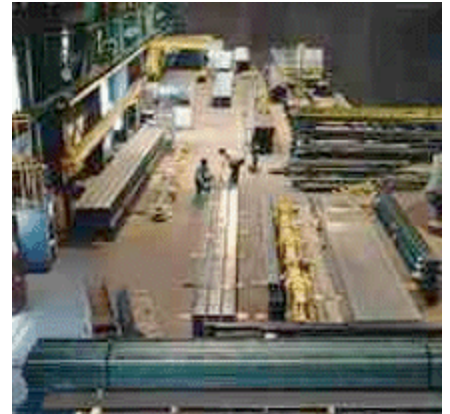
Smith says that by using M2M CRM, American Tank's sales representatives can view a real-time, historical record of each time they interact with customers. This significant benefit greatly reduces the amount of time spent on the phone or composing e-mails to track down customer information from other people in the company or the customers themselves. "Over the past year, we've seen a dramatic reduction in the duplication of effort," Smith says.

"Although only a small number of users have been on the system in the past year, we're already seeing a return on investment of 10 to 15 percent in time saved among our sales force because less time is spent communicating about order status and the like."

Smith adds that the improved customer communications due to the visibility and speed provided by M2M CRM have also contributed to increasing the dollar amounts of accepted sales quotes drafted by the sales representatives using the Made2Manage system. "I'd estimate that there has been approximately a 10 percent increase in quote acceptance," Smith says.

The information archiving capabilities of M2M CRM have been especially valuable for ensuring the quick availability of customer information. E-mail messages to customers are automatically archived in M2M CRM so sales representatives can refer to them later, if necessary. In the past, these messages were often deleted, and with them records of customer contact and potentially important details, such as specification changes, relating to the customer's project. Other electronic documentation, such as spec sheets, letters and spreadsheets can also be archived in the Made2Manage system and accessed with a click of the mouse.

"The real-time visibility and historical archiving of information in M2M CRM is particularly beneficial in dealing with our nuclear material handling projects, which can go on for several years," Smith says. "If the sales representative happens to leave the company during the course of a long-term project, the new rep can simply go into M2M CRM and see the entire history of the project. No time is lost getting the new person up to speed with the customer, and the customer experiences a smooth transition."



Improved Internal Communications

Internal communications have also become more efficient at American Tank thanks to the integrated reporting tools in M2M CRM. "Our managers find the integrated Crystal Reports functionality to be a very beneficial tool for tracking both sales activity and customer activity by individual or by groups within various regions," Smith says. "The Made2Manage reporting tools also facilitate sales forecasting and give

our sales representatives a heads-up on emerging opportunities so they can be more productive."

American Tank and Made2Manage Systems are continuing their commitment to excellence in CRM with soon-to-be implemented multi-dimensional modifications that will enable American Tank's internal and outside independent sales representatives to access M2M CRM through the Made2Manage Enterprise Portal, M2M VIP. "We expect even greater improvements in productivity, customer service and profitability with the Web accessibility of M2M CRM," Smith says. "Made2Manage has the only CRM solution we know of that can make this happen successfully for American Tank."



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