

Philmac

Manufacturing Sales and Customer Service Success with Sage SalesLogix.



Philmac is committed to being a world leader in the design, manufacture, marketing and distribution of innovative, high-quality valves and fittings for pipeline systems and irrigation products. Originally founded in South Australia in 1929 to manufacture products for the plumbing industry, they have since expanded where their products are now used in a wide variety of applications, from municipal systems through to live stock water control, horticultural and parkland irrigation, industry and mining.

In 1968, Philmac became the first company in the world to manufacture an entirely plastic compression fitting. By patenting a special pipe fitting design, the company paved the way for today's precision-made, award winning plastic compression fittings range.

In 1983, Philmac established a distribution centre in the United Kingdom and its innovative products achieved significant success. The exceptional quality of Philmac's products has led to strong expansion overseas. Almost half of Philmac's production is exported worldwide, with markets in the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East, South East Asia, North Asia and North America.

Philmac is now a subsidiary of the Aliaxis Group, the world's largest integrated supplier of plastic performance pipe systems. Innovation in manufacturing and continuous improvement is at the core of Philmac's activities. This approach has seen Philmac products win numerous awards, including three prestigious Australian Design Awards.

Philmac recognised the need to centralise their customer service centres into one office...

The business challenge

Growth in the business has led to a growth in customers, where the number and complexity of calls being handled by the various customer service operators in different regions was escalating. This distributed customer service centre model, utilising very basic technology, was inefficient in terms of staffing resources and prevented Philmac from delivering the level of service they wanted to offer their customers.

Philmac recognised an opportunity to centralise their customer service centres into one office, and by doing so improve levels of service to their customers through uniform service delivery, and more effective management resources. At risk, if they didn't get it right, was Philmac's relationship with its customers. Philmac also recognised that their existing technology and infrastructure wouldn't allow them to achieve the business results they wanted.

The solution

Philmac's management undertook a two step process to address the twin challenge of delivering service excellence to their customers while improving cost efficiencies.

Firstly, the customer service centre was centralised to their head office in South Australia. This immediately saved costs and improved consistency in delivery of service excellence, through the more effective management of staff and work processes.

Secondly, Philmac decided to install new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) and CTI (Computer Telephony Integration) technology to support the customer service and sales teams. To ensure the implementation of the new technology went smoothly, they chose a business partner whose expertise and professionalism they could trust. The services and skills of CSI (Customer Service International) were brought in to manage the project.

Sage SalesLogix (as the CRM component) and CSI's EzDial (CRM CTI support software) along with CPS' Televantage (contact centre/telephony platform), were selected to support both the front line staff in their Customer Service Centre and the field sales team across Australia. These fully integrated solutions enable the customer service staff to immediately deliver all sales enquiries to sales staff

whether they are out in the field or based in the office. With EzDial acting as the bridge between SalesLogix (CRM) and Televantage, customer service staff work efficiently, where they can automatically update the CRM database at the time of the call via generated pop up screens. Tricia Matthews, Customer Service Centre Manager, comments, "We now have access to much more data about our customers – which is accurate, timely and meaningful, helping us to understand what our customers need and enables us to plan for our resource requirements. Our response times are almost instantaneous, an incredible improvement on previous efforts. Operating our Customer Service Centre division as a centralised function ensures that no matter whether one or even a few of our Customer Service Centre staff are away we are still able to deliver prompt consistent service to all customers".

As part of Philmac's commitment to service excellence, they wanted to relate to customers at an individual level, thereby building one to one relationships with each and every customer. Each call that comes in is delivered into a cue where calls are distributed to particular staff members depending on the state of origin for the incoming call. Customer Service staff are allocated numbers relating to the state of origin, ensuring callers have a high likelihood of speaking to the same staff member each time they call. "This is a real benefit to our customers", says Matthews, "our customers now know to expect a prompt response to their phone enquiries, they have a relationship with individual customer service staff members", and all information our customers give us is retained with integrity in the CRM system".

Benefits to the business

All customer data now resides in a central repository, SalesLogix CRM, providing up to date and accurate information available to all staff 24/7, both online and networked

across all offices in Australia. The customer Service team work closely together, are all fully trained and, being centralised to head office are now able to deliver consistent high levels of service and have access to spare resources if and when required, ensuring the Customer Service Centre is never left short staffed.

Paul Waterman, DBA, declares, "As a greenfields project, we had a heavy reliance on the ability and expertise of our service partners to make this whole project work - from both the technology and business process perspectives. The guys at CSI were really helpful and delivered on time, to budget, a system that is performing beyond expectations. Our internal customer service and widely distributed sales team are now all operating from the single integrated platform, delivering a level of service that is reflected in our improving sales results. I have a lot of trust in their ability to do what they say they will do when they say they will do it".

The next steps for Philmac involve better utilisation of the information now made available to them via the SalesLogix CRM solution. With the build up of customer data overtime, management will have access to more meaningful statistics, qualitative information and insights into how to better manage their business. Tricia Matthews concludes, "We are committed to providing our customers with service excellence, the new systems are our key competitive advantage in allowing us to do just that – deliver to our client's needs"

About Sage Group

The Sage Group plc, an established FTSE 100 company, is a leading supplier of accounting and business management software solutions and services to 5.2

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million small and medium sized clients worldwide. With over 13 000 employees, the Sage Group comprises market-leading businesses throughout Europe, United Kingdom, North America, South Africa and Australia.

About Customer Systems International

Customer Systems International is a CRM and business consultancy group that enables companies to run more efficiently and achieve superior results. Their solutions maximise productivity and increase profitability by focusing on the one thing that matters most in business - the customer. With more than 25 years of combined experience inside leading CRM companies and, a multitude of local and international projects, their people are skilled in recommending, implementing and supporting the best solutions to meet your needs.

Their consultants work with clients as partners to understand and meet the challenges their company faces everyday. With multiple offices around the globe, Customer Systems is an international organisation dedicated to a diverse work environment that encourages personal growth and forward thinking in its employees.

The value of this philosophy to their clients means direct access to:

- A highly skilled technical team delivering best of breed solutions tailored to match your individual needs.
- Business consultants managing the organisational change issues that new systems can create.

