



AppFinity s WebSalesForce System Pays Big Dividends for MIFAB

Web-based Solution Streamlines Ordering and Customer Account Management for Extensive Network of Rep Agents

MIFAB, a Chicago, Illinois-based manufacturer of commercial plumbing products, is widely acknowledged across the globe as an innovator in the design and production of custom solutions for virtually any size or type of business. Some of the company s impressive customer base includes well-known entities such as Skydome, Toronto, J. P. Getty Center, Los Angeles, Olympic Village, Sydney, Australia, and several military bases in Saudi Arabia.

Inefficiencies in Order Placement Lead to Search for Automated Solution

MIFAB relies heavily on a dedicated channel of rep agents to distribute its commercial plumbing products to wholesalers throughout North America. In the past, when a rep agent wanted to place an order, find out if parts were in stock, or to check any other account information, they had to call a MIFAB customer service representative. For MIFAB, this proved to be time-consuming and frustrating since the company s customer service reps had to assume the entire burden for processing orders or answering questions that pertained to the rep agents accounts. Thus, instead of providing more consultative sales and technical assistance to their customers, they had to focus almost exclusively on handling routine requests from the company s rep agents.

MIFAB Seeks to Automate Ordering Process with Online System

Management determined that a more efficient and mutually beneficial arrangement could be achieved if the rep agents could place their own orders and access all of their account information online. MIFAB first contacted Sharlene Pearl, executive vice president of Executive Concepts Inc., to help them locate a suitable solution.

Our role in this process was to ensure that we found the best possible product for our client, said Sharlene Pearl. We already knew about AppFinity Software s WebSalesForce Web Ordering System, and after discussing MIFAB s specific requests with AppFinity, we were totally confident that the new solution could deliver everything my client wanted. ”

Sharlene Pearl managed the entire implementation process, making sure that everything proceeded smoothly and on schedule. If any issues arose along the way, I saw to it that AppFinity knew exactly what was needed to make my client happy and they rose to the occasion each and every time, claimed Pearl.

According to Dwight O Brien, customer service manager for MIFAB, ECI served as the direct interface between MIFAB and AppFinity. Sharlene Pearl was invaluable to the implementation process, especially in translating our wish list into technical terms that AppFinity could use to design and customize an online ordering solution that has proved to be a perfect fit for our company. ”

AppFinity s Web Ordering System Provides Winning Solution for MIFAB and Rep Agents

With AppFinity s WebSalesForce Web Ordering System in place, MIFAB s network of rep agents can quote prices, place orders and check the status on their transactions over the Internet. Order status, inventory availability and customer's account information are automatically updated at all times. WebSalesForce also enables rep agents to check the status of outstanding sales orders and quotes, view outstanding balances and invoice status, access information relating to collections, and generate customer and item listings.

A great security feature of WebSalesForce appears during the login process. When a rep agent logs in to the MIFAB Web site, the system brings up only information pertaining to their customers; they have no access to customer information, such as sales orders or quotes for other rep agents. In addition, since each rep agent can select the inventory items they wish to carry, the system only authorizes those inventory items to be displayed on-screen. This streamlines the ordering process since rep agents don t have to waste time perusing the entire MIFAB catalog before placing an order.

At first, there was some resistance to the new online ordering system from rep agents who were reluctant to abandon a system to which they were accustomed. However, as their most pressing concerns were communicated to AppFinity founder Dennis Lo, he continued to modify and enhance the software with additional reports and features until all resistance vanished. Eventually, as all the rep agents converted to the new system, they grew increasingly satisfied with all the time-saving benefits of managing their own orders and customer accounts, plus the improved customer service they were able to provide.

One of the key benefits of the AppFinity WebSalesForce Web Ordering System is its unparalleled ease of use. According to Dwight O'Brien, "not one of our rep agents has ever needed more than 15 minutes of training to get comfortable with the system. Another major benefit is that the new system enables MIFAB s customer service reps to focus their energies on generating sales and serving more as consultants to their customers. They no longer have to spend so much time fielding phone calls from rep agents to process orders or provide customer account information.

MIFAB s management team is so delighted with the results of the AppFinity system they are planning additional enhancements to the system. The success of this implementation has been so strong that we are embarking on a new phase, which is to automate the procurement process with our suppliers in Asia," said O'Brien. "AppFinity has done an outstanding job in fulfilling the needs of our rep agents and our customer service representatives and now we can enhance the way we interact with our Asian suppliers. "

About AppFinity Software

AppFinity Software Corporation (located in San Francisco, California) is dedicated to the design, implementation and support of e-commerce solutions that leverage existing technology investments and minimize ongoing IT costs. AppFinity solutions are fully customizable and can integrate with most existing commercial Web sites and today s most popular accounting software systems to deliver complete business solutions that enable companies to focus on their goals without exhausting precious resources on unnecessary IT expenditures. AppFinity is driven by a relentless quest to provide an extraordinary level of customer service that is peerless in today's fast-paced, high-stress business environment. To learn more about AppFinity Software, visit www.appfinity.com.

About Executive Concepts Inc.

Established in 1988, Markham, Ontario-based Executive Concepts Inc. (ECI) provides small and mid-sized companies with complete solutions to their warehouse/inventory control needs. ECI specializes in providing custom solutions for their clients, ensuring that their information systems can be used to their fullest potential. ECI's core product offerings include its **Distribution Requirements Planning** (DRP) system, which provides distribution companies with all the reporting functionality they need to effectively manage their inventory, and **ACCU-DART**, a real-time warehouse, inventory management and radio-frequency bar code solution that integrates with a variety of accounting and inventory control systems. ECI's client base includes many industry segments: distribution, manufacturing, leasing, importing and service. To learn more about ECI, visit www.executiveconcepts.com or www.accu-dart.com.

About MIFAB

MIFAB, established in 1982 and headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, is recognized as a single source innovative manufacturer of commercial plumbing products. The company produces custom solutions to meet nearly any plumbing engineering design criteria. MIFAB's extensive product line includes backwater valves, cleanouts, fixture carriers, steel and plastic access doors, and much more. The company's products are produced in a factory certified to the ISO-9001-94 design and manufacturing standard. They are distributed to a network of over forty manufacturer's representatives throughout Canada, the United States, and around the globe. To learn more about MIFAB, visit www.MIFAB.com.