

**Industry:**

Freight logistics/transportation

Description:

One of the world's leading privately held freight logistics/transportation management firms

Business Challenge:

Coordinate information for shipping imports and exports across multiple business units throughout the world

Product/Solution:

Commence, an award-winning CRM solution, enables businesses to capture, manage and share information across the organization

Key Features:

- *Easily customizable by non-technical staff
- *Modifiable to meet industry-specific requirements
- *Integrates with MS Outlook e-mail software
- *Robust reporting capabilities

Results:

- *Easily capture, track, manage and share information across business units
- *Seamlessly coordinate global sales efforts
- *Better resource allocation resulting in more efficient sales activity
- *Real-time progress tracking

BDP International is one of the leading privately held freight logistics/transportation management firms based in the U.S. It operates freight logistics centers in more than 20 cities throughout North America and a network of subsidiaries, joint ventures and strategic partnerships in more than 120 countries. BDP provides a range of services, including ocean, air and ground transportation; lead logistics process analysis, design and management; export freight forwarding; import customs brokerage and regulatory compliance; project and energy logistics; warehousing/consolidation/distribution; and Internet shipping transaction/tracking management systems. The company serves more than 4,000 customers and employs approximately 2,600 individuals around the world.

As a global business serving an international customer base, BDP relies on a dispersed sales force to sell their import and export services. Rather than assign sales people to specific accounts, sales professionals handle particular geographic regions. Unlike other transportation logistics organizations that may handle one end of a transport transaction, BDP coordinates both the import and export, meaning each transaction is actually two transactions. This requires extensive coordination and data capture between sales people in different regions.

"We have a sales force spread across multiple business units throughout the world and need to coordinate the information that one business unit gathers with another," explained Michael Colucci, business analyst, BDP International. "Without that coordination of effort, it creates inefficiencies, leads to a lack of sales force effectiveness and hinders our success."

The Commence Solution

To improve use of their resources and create efficiencies in their sales processes, BDP implemented Commence Desktop Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. Commence Corporation's "best in class" CRM software offers a comprehensive suite of applications for business contact management, sales and sales force automation, marketing, campaign management, lead management, project management, customer support and analytics.

"We put together a team of people to evaluate different solutions and selected Commence based on the product's functionality and cost," added Colucci. "It fit our needs the best and with each passing month we find new ways to get value out of the solution."

Approximately 140 users - mainly sales professionals and select operational staff - are on the Commence system. BDP uses the system to gather information about sales contacts, sales activity, opportunities and forecasts. Because of the unique requirements of their business, BDP worked with Commence to modify the software to capture industry-specific information.

For example, BDP tailored the input screens to capture the direction of trades. The company can now gain real-time insight into information for shipments going to and from a particular destination, such as from Shanghai to New York.

"We are able to use the system to run reports and can gather information such as all the shipments that are on a particular trade lane," said Colucci. "It also helps

us identify opportunities we have for shipments coming from one part of the world to another. It's beneficial because the sales people in New York can work with the sales people in China, gather critical information, and then use it to cross-sell the import services."

By gathering information on a global basis and making that information available to sales team members located all over the world, BDP is able to increase the sales team's effectiveness and direct their time and resources on prospects where they have a higher probability of successfully closing the deal. Since the sales team works on a regional versus account basis, this is also helpful to share information about specific accounts that have operations in more than one region.

"Through Commence, our sales people have full visibility into account activity regardless of where they are in the world," said Colucci. "Someone may call on an account for the first time in their region but can easily learn that we've been doing business with that company for years in another area. It empowers the sales person with information and enables us to transform a cold call into one that has a much higher chance for success."

Another benefit of the solution is the reporting capabilities and the ability to run region specific reports that include global data.

"We worked with Commence to modify the reports that come with the software to include fields of information that are related to our business," said Colucci. "Now, sales people can easily get to information that is specific to them instead of having to comb through reams and reams of data. It saves a lot time. The reporting functionality is also easy to use. We can have one of our administrators do it rather than require support from someone with specialized database expertise."

Colucci is responsible for creating sales reports for BDP's entire global operation and using Commence, he can generate those reports in less than a week. Prior to implementing the solution, the same process would require hours of phone calls to track down data, and a complicated process to compile it and identify the important elements. Now, it's completely streamlined, creating an efficient process for monitoring the activity of the sales force on a global basis.

Concluded Colucci, "Commence has been a responsive partner and has been very helpful in allowing us to gather and share information on a global basis among our sales forces in different regions of the world."

About Commence Corporation

Founded in 1988, Commence Corporation is a leading provider of e-business and customer relationship management (CRM) software solutions. The company's products are designed to provide small- to medium-sized businesses with flexible solutions that leverage the Web to offer an integrated platform for e-business. Commence supports thousands of users through a worldwide distribution network, with outlets in North and South America, Europe, and Asia/Pacific. For more information, contact Commence Corporation at 732-660-0990, or visit the company's Web site at www.commence.com.