

Kerakoll wises up to a new smartphone solution

Enabling sales agents to access key data on the move with Web@CRM

Overview

Business challenge

Kerakoll wanted to increase the level of service that it could offer to its clients by providing sales agents and area managers with up-to-date, useful information, accessible from anywhere. The company also wanted to reduce the time it took to create a new sales order.

Solution

Kerakoll implemented Web@CRM package from Tecla, an IBM Premier Business Partner. The solution, built on IBM® Lotus® and IBM Tivoli® technologies, enables Kerakoll to give employees mobile access to central systems and data via their smartphones.

Kerakoll is a world leader in products and services for the Green Building industry, helping its clients create buildings with a low environmental impact and safeguarding health and wellbeing. The company has a catalogue of more than 1,700 eco-friendly products, and produces more than 950,000 tonnes of materials per year.

Founded in Italy in 1968, Kerakoll has grown to become a major international business, achieving a turnover of €335 million in 2010, 40% of which was made abroad. Kerakoll now employs more than 1,300 people, owns subsidiary companies in 12 countries, and has built up a network of more than 25,000 retail partners worldwide. In order to manage its global business interests effectively, the company relies on its central IT department, which provides a number of key systems that manage information and support business-critical processes.

One of the main responsibilities of the IT department is to support Kerakoll's large team of sales agents, who visit clients and partners periodically to win new orders. The company's IT systems collect a wide range of data on each client and partner relating to current and previous orders, accounting data, contracts and statistics.

The IT team realised that although this data was very useful for the sales agents and area managers, it was not easy for them to access when they were on the road supporting clients and partners. As a result, when they wanted to request information, sales agents were required to use a laptop or call headquarters- which were effective but time-consuming procedures. Similarly, if they wanted to enter a new order they had to use email because they lacked access to the relevant systems.



Business Benefits

- Gives sales agents access to the information they need, even when they are with clients.
 - Enables sales agents to create new sales orders immediately, reducing the risk of errors and improving delivery times.
 - Runs on all major smartphones (BlackBerry, iPhone, Android) so there is no need to purchase new devices specifically for this solution.
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Kerakoll decided to implement a new solution that would make it easier to access data and enter orders from any location, without needing a connection to the company's network or access to a PC. The principal requirement for the new solution was that it must be able to support several different languages to maintain the strong integration of IT systems required by Kerakoll; making the solutions which the company develops at its head office immediately available in all countries worldwide.

The IT team evaluated several solutions, and selected Web@CRM from Tecla, an IBM Premier Business Partner. Web@CRM is a highly flexible customer relationship management solution built on the IBM Lotus Notes and Domino platform. Kerakoll selected a number of Web@CRM modules, including Client Statistics, Product Statistics, Contract and List Management, Discount and Promotion Management and Order Entry Management.

The project began with an in-depth analysis of the needs of travelling sales agents and area managers. Tecla and Kerakoll's in-house team worked closely together to map out the requirements and create a plan for a phased implementation. The next step was to define the database structure, and integrate Web@CRM with Kerakoll's existing systems and data. This first phase enabled the new solution to provide access to all the company's most important data relating to clients, products, contracts and statistics.

The second phase involved the order management process, providing an automated, end-to-end process that cuts out paperwork and allows sales agents to place orders and confirm delivery dates within a few minutes. The solution automatically validates the order data, and if necessary forwards it to the relevant managers for approval.

If the order meets the prescribed standards of Kerakoll and doesn't require approval, it is immediately ready for the logistical process, cutting preparation and delivery times and further improving the high service levels delivered by Kerakoll. The new highly integrated process reduces the need for manual data-entry, helping to improve data quality and reduce the risk of errors.

Solution Components

Software

- IBM® Lotus® Notes and Domino®
- IBM Lotus Sametime®
- IBM Tivoli® Directory Integrator

IBM Business Partner

- Tecla
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“Web@CRM from Tecla gives us a powerful set of tools for customer relationship management which are proving indispensable to our sales forces.”

— Alessandro Lugli, IT Application Manager at Kerakoll

The Web@CRM platform has been a crucial factor in the achievement of company objectives. Through a simple web-based interface, Web@CRM has enabled the training and consequent go live of procedures in a very short period. This has produced immediate benefits for Kerakoll sales forces, who now have access on demand to all applicable business data and order entries.

Following a successful deployment in Italy, the third phase of the project involved rolling the solution out to other countries, using the international capabilities of Web@CRM to provide multi-language support.

“Web@CRM from Tecla gives us a powerful set of tools for customer relationship management which are proving indispensable to our sales forces,” concludes Alessandro Lugli, IT Application Manager at Kerakoll. “The solution is already popular with sales agents and area managers worldwide, who can use a pocket-sized smartphone to actively interact with the company’s information system.”

For more information

To learn more about IBM software, contact your IBM sales representative or visit: ibm.com

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