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CUSTOMER SUCCESSES

CORT uses ACT! to get their sales force up and running faster on their calls and to spend less time filing paper-based reports.

CORT wanted to do what every company does...improve communications to its distributed nationwide sales force so that everyone received consistent information and identical forms, yet have access to customized databases created for their specific geographical sales areas. They also wanted to do it in such a way that someone with very limited computer experience could easily retrieve the information. Finally, they wanted each sales rep to be able to sync his weekly activity (and thus a call report) to their respective manager.

ACT! was the perfect solution for their needs!

To do this, CORT turned to Cornerstone Solutions, Inc. in Houston, Texas (www.corstonesolutions.com) to devise a means to make all this happen. Using ACT! as the foundation of the system, Cornerstone created a simple database design that not only was easy for their sales staff to use, but also allowed their local management to easily encourage as well as monitor the local sales rep activity. A series of over 50 sample templates were also created to help encourage interaction with specific vertical markets. Proposal templates with embedded spreadsheets were designed to speed up their quoting process. Finally reports were created to replace their previously hand-prepared (and thus time consuming) Call Reports and Strategic Account Plans.

The custom databases (and associated layouts, templates, and reports) were rolled out to hundreds of users nationwide in their Commercial, Residential, National Accounts, Retail and Trade Show divisions using the Internet. Cornerstone developed a system where end users simply went to a specified web site and requested a database. In a few days, the end-user could return to the site and click on their name. All customizations were immediately downloaded into their computer, their preferences were modified to corporate standards, ACT! opened on their PC with their new database and associated layout. In addition, each database had already been set up to sync with their local sales manager. Thus a new sales rep could immediately hit the ground running, while more established reps could quickly take advantage of the ready-made marketing materials for up selling.

Key Achievements

- Established a simple implementation due to a wide range of computer experience among end users
- Setup syncing between small cells of end users and their managers to facilitate report generation and improve personal productivity.
- Made system flexible so it can continually address new requirements and grow as individual reps change and size of sales force grows.
- Allowed entire nationwide sales force to download custom templates and personal databases via the Internet.

Customer Summary

- Largest national furniture rental company serving commercial, residential, retail, and trade show arenas..
- Approximately 300 ACT! users at CORT and growing every day.



ACT! Has Delivered!

Improved productivity and operating efficiencies have enabled the company to achieve positive growth during down economic times. More importantly, the experience has created a dramatic change in CORT's business culture, especially in the areas of improved call planning, contact tracking and reporting, and customer follow-up.

The advantages to CORT for implementing this creative solution included:

- accelerated distribution of materials to support sales and enterprise-wide communications;
- more unified delivery of information that achieved a reduction of "lost" mail;
- increased productivity as sales reps received useful information sooner and could act more quickly to make sales calls;
- faster implementation of training and less downtime on new personnel;
- reduced time in preparing sales call reports that are sent upstream to management.
- improved communication within the company nationwide;
- enhanced lease tracking;
- a more focused sales effort that leverages 'best opportunities' and reduces wasted time.

CORT's system has been in place since September 2000. The company continues to provide updated information and new templates to the field. In addition, the company is always using the collected data by region to evaluate ways to use this approach to design and implement highly targeted marketing campaigns to support its sales efforts.