

Enhanced customer relationships with IFS e-business solution

Tikkurila AB, Sweden, selected e-business solutions from IFS to enhance the efficiency of its operations, improve customer relationships, and ensure itself of a competitive edge in its area of business. Part of the Finnish-based Kemira Group, the company produces paints and coatings for private consumers, professional painters and industrial users, and is the leading supplier of advanced tinting systems globally. The Group has production facilities in 15 countries, and its products are sold on all continents. Like IFS, Tikkurila knows the value and importance of listening to its customers and offering them a leading technological edge. Adding an e-business solution from IFS to its enterprise is a typical example of this.



The problem

Tikkurila was confronted with the problems facing any enterprise. There is always a need to increase competitiveness, to improve efficiency. Moreover, in today's increasingly customer-driven market, companies that are sensitive to the signals they get from their

customers will be among the winners of the future. In Tikkurila's case, many of its customers wanted to be able to link their systems via EDI, and a number of its smaller customers wanted a system that was simpler to use.

The solution

As a user of IFS Applications™ since 1995, Tikkurila was familiar with the benefits of component-based business applications. And having progressed from the old character-based IFS solution to a more modern GUI environment, the company was also aware of IFS' ability to smoothly and efficiently handle transitions to state-of-the-art technology. Moreover, the component architecture of IFS Applications meant that the solution Tikkurila chose, IFS Web Store™, could easily be integrated into the business applications already being run by the company.

Implementation

Implementation commenced toward the end of September 1999 and was completed in mid-December the same year. Lena Häggström, IT manager at Tikkurila, was very satisfied: "The installation was relatively problem-free. We found that the IFS project team was very focused. They listened to our needs during the pilot installation and implemented our demands." The latter point was very important since Tikkurila was able to participate in the development of the product it installed. For instance, apart from selecting and categorizing the objects to be included, the company played a major role in the design of the solution. A test database was used to check the system before it went live.

Benefits

With the IFS Web Store solution, Tikkurila’s customers can access information 24 hours a day. They can check the availability of the products they want to order and can see when deliveries will be made.

Another benefit of the solution is that customers will be able to check the status of their orders throughout the entire process from the time the order is placed until delivery is made. And this applies even to orders that have not been made via the Internet. The result is that even if delays occur, the customers are immediately aware of the problem and can adapt accordingly. This minimizes the scourge of unforeseen delivery disruptions.

Lena Häggström sees more concrete customer relationship benefits: “As more customers use the web store functionality, time will be saved. Our employees, for example, will spend less time on the phone taking orders. Instead, they will be free to devote more time to enhancing the quality of the service we offer our customers.”

IFS Web Store has further features that will facilitate customer transactions. Favorite lists can be made, so that customers simply have to click on the list to select the category they want. And old “shopping baskets” can be used. Here, customers with repeat orders can simply click on their baskets to order their new shipments.

For Tikkurila itself, there are other advantages. Customer preferences and sales volumes can more

easily be monitored, allowing Tikkurila to streamline its inventory in a manner and to a degree that has not previously been possible. Furthermore, the solution can be expanded to include bar-code readers to check and restock inventory automatically. Keying in numbers will be a thing of the past. Finally, should Tikkurila eventually want to add other components to the system, such as a third-party product configurator, to further enhance customer service, they can easily be integrated thanks to the component architecture of the standard solutions included in IFS Applications.

Software

IFS Web Store, IFS Financials™, IFS Distribution™

