

Implementing a global SAP Customer Engagement & Commerce solution revolutionises Kubota's sales strategy

ABOUT THE CLIENT

Kubota is a company with an unshakable will to support and solve problems related to food, water, and the environment. Through proactive management, user-friendly products, and stable support, Kubota is a leader in the global agriculture and water-related industries.

Kubota Corporation (Osaka, Japan) was established in 1890 and began manufacturing water pipes to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Today, Kubota Corporation has two principal business sectors: Farm and Industrial Machinery Sector, and Water and Environmental Systems Sector.

With a revenue amounting to more than 1.5 trillion JPY and selling products in more than 130 countries all over the world, Kubota is a global leader.



HIGHLIGHTS

- A highly industrialised and accurate sales tool for the dealers to use, keeping Kubota abreast of the competition.
- A fully mobile product configuration platform that integrates with Kubota's SAP ERP systems, including finance and production, to deliver complete end to end management.
- Visibility of the sales process, customer data and dealer performance achieved for the first time.
- Pricing has been streamlined and standardised, improving dealer relations and customer satisfaction.
- SAP Product Configurator provides a platform for further improvement and growth.
- Innovative implementation of SAP Cloud solution.

CHALLENGE

Kubota has a large network of around 1000 dealers who distribute Kubota products in France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Spain among other European countries. In 2013 Kubota launched its strategy to expand its European Agricultural market, with investment in a new factory, a new product range (including the M7001 tractor series) and a new marketing and sales strategy delivered through their network of dealers. The market landscape and Kubota's internal processes presented a number of potential business threats that needed resolution:

- All actors on the market were already investing in bespoke tools to help the network of non-exclusive dealers sell their products.
- Kubota needed to enhance the success of their sales and order execution, as the existing catalog and email ordering system was not tailored for the new product range.
- There was a need for additional visibility about the sales process, with Kubota mainly having sales information once a dealer submitted an order.
- The sheer complexity of the new pricing model required to make the quote creation process more fluid for the dealers.
- While a cloud solution seemed the best fit, any cloud solution had to be able to run independently at times, as many customers are in remote areas.

Kubota had already implemented SAP ERP and SAP ECC in their main subsidiaries, so this provided the opportunity to build on these reliable and robust business processes, with SAP Product Configurator and CRM underpinning the new sales strategy.

"The strategy was to implement a dynamic, agile and mobile front-end for Products Configuration and CRM, so that we could control and structure the sales quotes produced by the dealers for our customers. SAP Product Configurator can create contacts, quotes, leads and prospects, and gives us far greater visibility of our sales," explains Renaud Lissowski, Project Manager, Kubota.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

- SAP ECC
- SAP ERP Product configurator module
- SAP Cloud solution
- "Mobile Platform" Movilizer
- On & off line capabilities
- Fully responsive
- Multi Lingual Solution
- Over 1000 users

SOLUTION

Vision

Kubota wanted to achieve an end to end solution covering the whole spectrum from campaign lead management to quotation and pricing configuration. They wanted to capture, in one single system, all customer related information with the right level of data segregation depending on who was accessing it and for which level of granularity. Ultimately their aim was to boost sales through a clearer sales strategy with enhanced marketing features, and to be able to measure and report on their performance with accuracy.

Implementation

SOA People worked with Kubota to develop the detailed business proposition and then helped Kubota gain buy-in from their senior management team through a series of stakeholder meetings. The project was divided into stages with Wave 1 incorporating the development and piloting of SAP Product Configurator.

Wave 1:

- Platform
- Accounts and contacts management
- Activity management
- Product configuration management (real-time and offline)
- Integrated management of wholesalers accessories within the configuration process
- Customers quotations and orders management
- Analytics
- ERP Integration
- Pilot Deployment

"The mobile application enables our dealers to "self-service" the customer quotes, and the system works both on and off line, as our customers are often in remote locations. It retrieves the latest product information from our SAP database so it is always up to date. As well as creating quotes for customers, dealers can follow and manage all prospects through to completion. It is an invaluable tool for our Regional Sales Managers too as they see all the activity of their dealers," explains Lissowski.

Mobile application with Cloud solution

The Movilizer middleware is used to provide mobile software for iPad and tablets. It allows Kubota to customise the app for the users and there are network connectors back to Kubota's central SAP systems. In the back office SAP transforms the quotes into sales orders, and feeds into the whole SAP system for production, order fulfilment and invoicing.

BENEFITS

A highly innovative and accurate sales tool for the network of dealers to use. SAP Product Configurator gives the dealers all the latest specification information and pricing in an easy to use application. *"The dealers and sales teams are very happy as they wanted this product for months. There was a lot of anticipation for it, and now they are motivated to use it. The feedback is that it is very user friendly and intuitive,"* says Lissowski.

SAP Product Configurator integrates with Kubota's SAP ERP. The sales, order and fulfilment processes have been streamlined with Configurator integrating directly with Kubota's SAP systems, including finance and production, to deliver complete end to end management. This has achieved efficiencies, reduced errors and shortened the time to fulfil orders.

Visibility of the sales process and dealer performance. Providing detailed, accurate and timely management information through the SAP Product Configurator and CRM gives Kubota visibility and management control of the sales process for the first time. *"We aim to use the information provided by Configurator for marketing and sales purposes. It will give us more data about what machines they want. It also tells us about the dealer network, such as conversion rates from quotes to orders so we understand the effectiveness of the sales team,"* says Lissowski.

Pricing has been streamlined and standardised, improving dealer relations and customer satisfaction. Previous issues with dealers working off incorrect price lists have been eradicated, with price changes being automatically updated through Configurator.

SAP Configurator provides a platform for further improvement and growth. The project will continue to develop during the next Waves, delivering real business benefits for Kubota into the future.

SUMMARY

"We really appreciated the help of SOA on the project, from developing the vision through to implementation. They have met our high expectations and delivered what we wanted."

Renaud Lissowski, Project Manager, Kubota