

Taking Wind Parks to the Market around the World with the Help of CRM by PiSA sales

case study

Sales activities in the plant-manufacturing business are particularly complex and challenging – not least for the comparatively new sector for wind-power stations such as those produced by REpower Systems AG, one of the world’s leading players in this industry. The company has now introduced “CRIS”, an application based on the CRM solution PiSA sales, to help it managing the complexity of its sales projects.



Foto: REpower Systems AG

Customer

REpower Systems AG

Sector

Manufacturer of wind parks

Area of application

Contact management
Technical sales
Project management
Controlling

Project data

In operation since 2006
PiSA sales 3.2
Data base MS SQL-Server 2005

Integration

Integration of MS Office-applications
MS Outlook groupware
Link to active directory (LDAP)

Customer & Sector

With its headquarters in Hamburg, Germany, REpower Systems AG is among the world’s leading manufacturers of onshore and off-shore wind parks. As a global enterprise, it designs, builds, and sells wind-power stations for practically any location. The company has a nominal output of 2 to 5 megawatts and rotors that measure 70 to 126 meters in diameter. The company also provides a comprehensive range of service and maintenance offerings. Its reliable, high-yield stations are all designed and manufactured in Germany. REpower Systems AG employs more than 1,000 people throughout the world and has gained a wealth of project experience through the manufacturing and installation of over 1,500 wind-power facilities around the globe.

Initial Situation & Challenge

The dynamism in this sector of the industry and the special nature of the tasks of sales and controlling tasks inherent in such projects led REpower to incorporate PiSA sales’ project-oriented CRM solution into its operations.

“Our sales activities,” explains Mr. Christian Stemcke, the head of the “CRIS” (Central

REpower Information System) CRM project, “involve much more than just ‘selling’. The process requires the participation not only of our sales department, but of project management, sales support, service, and the controlling department is extremely important. We wanted to create a central platform which would ensure the cross-departmental flow of all the latest information,” Stemcke is explaining the core demands on the CRM software.

The system needed to be able to incorporate project data such as site information relating to the wind parks and the required technical design as well as customer data and correspondence. Another key demand was integrated document management as the foundation for a cross-departmental knowledge base that would enable extensive information on invitations to bid or quotes, for example, to be made available for the relevant projects.

The idea was to replace the existing island solutions which had established themselves at REpower in the form of MS Excel lists with the CRM solution. The ERP system used is an SAP solution, so the CRM solution that was to be established as the second strategic IT application at REpower had to feature SAP interfaces.

Project Course & Solution

Launched in early 2006, the rapid progress of this project enabled the technical basis to be made available to REpower. The detailed setting out of project requirements in the definition phase and regular workshops made it possible to have the PiSA sales CRM system up and running and made successively available to all users before the end of that year.

“At REpower, sales activities involve much more than just ‘selling’. PiSA sales is the central platform for customer information and our second strategic business application alongside SAP.”

Mr. Christian Stemcke, head of CRM project

The standard version of the PiSA sales system already satisfies many of the requirements defined by REpower, making it possible for a work-ready environment to be quickly installed. Sector and customer-specific adaptations such as the mapping out of site information for wind parks were easy to accommodate. Given the multilingual concept of PiSA sales, the staff was able to work with the english-language interface of the CRM system right from the outset.

To enable the cross-checking of REpower’s central user-administration data against the user information in the CRM system, an interface to LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) was introduced.

And an integrated Microsoft Office interface allows documents to be prepared and processed directly in PiSA sales. All sales-related activities, quotes, and contract orders are automatically linked to the customer and stored in central sales-project folders.

REpower is planning to link PiSA sales to its SAP ERP system for the management of its records on prospective customers and its accounts receivable. Further steps will see the provision of a product data base, including parts lists, a calculation module, a multilingual tool for the preparation of quotes, and a product configurator. PiSA sales is also developing product-testing mechanisms for product-marketing operations.

Results Achieved

Project information can now be made centrally available at REpower without any redundancies, and the CRM system can effectively contribute to the execution of sales projects. REpower’s controlling department profits from information which enables analyses to be performed based on the respective project status,

while the sales department enjoys the benefits of a sales pipeline which makes it possible to maintain a constant overview of running projects using specially devised and graphically optimized reports and forecasts such as “Sales Planning”, “Sales Funnel”, and “Liquidity Planning”. Generated ad-hoc reports are automatically issued in Microsoft Excel. They can then be further processed as necessary or used to prepare follow-up calculations.

The comprehensive contact- and project-administration feature based on central data storage means that staff members in all areas of operation can now count on the cross-departmental flow of all the latest

information.

The effort required by users to procure information has been minimized, with as many as 100 users currently accessing more than 700 projects as well as the customer, employee, quote, and the contract data available in PiSA sales.

All document management in the company is likewise performed in a central database, with more than 6,000 documents made available in the system and with the structures for those documents also made transparent in PiSA sales. Each document can be classified, categorized, and filed in a clear order in document folders. It has therefore become much easier to find and use such documents, while an integrated document-duplication check prevents the redundant storage of documents in the data base.

Since the project to introduce the PiSA sales CRM software was expediently executed – not least because the standard version already accommodated sector-specific elements – the expenditures involved were kept at a minimum. And professional change management helped to ensure a high rate of acceptance for the CRM system on the part of the employees of REpower.

A planned upgrade to the new version, PiSA sales 4D, in early 2008 will see this successful cooperation between PiSA sales GmbH and REpower Systems AG continued.

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