

Act! - the cornerstone of a powerful sales strategy

act!

From its launch in 2006, European consulting firm Manessens' **meticulous approach** to sales has enabled it to **grow in the highly competitive** French IT market, something that wouldn't have been possible without Act! as an **integral component** of its strategy.



Like any ambitious company starting out, winning clients fast was always a key objective for Nantes-based consultancy firm Manessens. But with its core markets – the French IT and service sectors – so competitive, achieving this would require a highly effective sales and client management strategy.

“I knew we would have to be extremely organised when it came to targeting prospects, and that we would need an efficient tool in place to do that,” says Manessens’ Co-Manager and Sales Director Olivier Tardif.

So Olivier began the search for a CRM solution that would be capable not only of organising complex client information, but also converting prospects into sales and providing greater insights into the specific requirements of each contact.

An easy to configure solution

After researching potential options, Olivier and his team homed in on Act!, impressed by the software’s **flexibility, range of capabilities and ease of use**.

“Act! gives us the opportunity to personalise its features so we can tailor it to our exact needs,” says Olivier. “And for new team members, of course, it only takes three or four hours to learn how Act! works. So by the end of that same day they’re already using it independently and productively.”

“We chose Act! as our CRM solution not just because it’s **easy to use**, but also **the scope it offers us** in terms of configuration. We’re now opening around **ten new accounts each year**, a level of performance that’s all due to Act!”

Olivier Tardif

Co-Manager and Sales Director at Manessens

Optimise sales and marketing actions

However, in a highly competitive market, just demonstrating your expertise isn’t enough, which is why Manessens looks to stand out from the crowd by really getting to understand the nature of its clients’ operations. And for that, the 15-strong sales team relies on Act! to organise information in a way that gives each member a 360° view of every client, prospect and partner.

With today’s clients demanding real-time, relevant information that’s communicated in ways that meets their particular business needs, **by using Act! Manessens know when and how to best engage**, so that they’re ready to respond at exactly the right time in each client’s business cycle.

For a company on a strong growth curve like Manessens, sharing information about existing and potential accounts becomes ever more crucial. With Act! in place that’s not a problem, as new team members can quickly get up to speed on their clients’ business through up-to-the-minute reports that detail **every interaction, requirement and transaction**.

“Act! allows us to have a complete history of requests, appointments, quotations and due dates”, says Olivier, “so we can cross-reference all the information and plan our sales and marketing events to the needs of our clients.”

Not just a sales tool

However, in the French IT market, it's not just competition for clients that's a challenge – recruiting the best talent can be too. Fortunately, Act! has also given Manessens **an edge when it comes hiring the top experts** in their field, by recording the details and background of prospective employees who connect with the firm. That's a wealth of knowledge the company can draw on, not only when looking for new staff, but also in their later professional development.

"We see each of these contacts as a potential team member," says Olivier. "So with Act! we can recruit the right people at the right time for our business,"

A constantly evolving solution

Manessens also ensures it gets the **expert support and regular product updates** it needs to stay on top of things in a constantly evolving marketplace, by plugging into Swiftpage's Business Care plan.

"Act! is a very stable solution," says Olivier, "so we don't need to call Swiftpage often for assistance, but when we do, they're always very responsive. They also provide us with regular updates, so **the software is continually adapting to our changing market** through the inclusion of social networks and e-marketing packages."

A driving force for growth

Act! has helped Manessens' take its highly organised sales process to another level, enabling it to manage a contact list that now numbers over 50,000 and has become **an essential element in the company's success**. And with a 60-strong workforce, Manessens has recently opened a second office in the thriving Montparnasse business quarter of Paris.

Not surprisingly, Manessens approach has gained it the admiration of the industry and enabled it to acquire prestigious clients that include mail room equipment supplier Neopost, leading contract caterer Elior, dairy products corporation Lactalis and gardening centre Truffaut.

One of Manessens' original business objectives was to better the industry-wide statistic that reveals that 'two-thirds of clients change supplier due to a lack of contact' and by using Act! it's ensured that it has.

Results



By using Act! Manessens now have **15 sales people** working across two industries, but all connected through one powerful CRM application.

There are now **50,000 entries** in Manessens' Act! database.

10 new accounts are opened each year thanks to the efficiencies that Act! brings to the sales process.

Only ½ a day is required for new employees to become familiar with Act!

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