

Act! helps manufacturer to grow through new sales channels

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Since switching to Act!, this Dutch manufacturer has not only been able to better manage its fast-growing customer database, but it has also improved its production forecasts.



FIB Industries is a leading manufacturer and supplier of customised stainless steel and alloy products, including cellar equipment for pubs and clubs. However, with some 70 percent of sales being generated through engineering firms, growth opportunities lay in moving away from these anonymous channels and selling directly to end users.

But this new marketing strategy meant suddenly having to manage relationships with a large and growing number of clients.

“I wouldn’t consider any CRM supplier other than Act!. In our case, this system has been fine-tuned to create a whole range of interfaces between databases that used to operate separately in the past.”

Ruurd Schut

International Sales Manager, FIB Industries

“Instead of just twenty clients, now we have to manage hundreds. That means not just recording their names, but also accurate details of the nature and history of our relationship with them. What we have supplied in the past, the agreements we have entered into with them, and who we need to talk to about an order. We can do that with Act! in a structured and professional manner.” says International Sales Manager Ruurd Schut.

For Ruurd, one of the many plus-points to using Act! is that it's so easy to customise.

“Perhaps on the face of it, you might think that Act! isn't the software for us,” says Ruurd, “because it's usually used by companies where the price lists and product codes are fixed, whereas our production method is the exact opposite because everything we do is on demand. But that's no problem. If we need to monitor particular materials and plant hours we just add in new fields. Even for something like Christmas hampers, we can just select the size of the present on the basis of an order or the customer relationship.”

To help them tailor the software just the way they want, the company uses an Act! Certified

Consultant. “And if something can't be done, they come up with an alternative,” says Ruurd.

Now Act! has been finely tuned to create a whole range of interfaces that bring together previously separate databases. “That's such an important advantage for us,” says Ruurd. “For instance, we can generate reports on projects we're bidding on to monitor closing dates, which previously was much more difficult to do.”



Reporting features within Act! have now become an exceptionally important feature to Ruurd and his team, providing invaluable insight, for example, why a particular contract has been won or lost.

“In the past, we didn’t have a coherent overview of whether we had lost a contract because we hadn’t offered the right welding specification or because of price. With Act!, we can see the bigger picture and we can adjust our operational management based on that information.”

Ruurd also likes how easy the reporting feature is to use. “The system is incredibly intuitive, so you don’t need to be highly trained to understand how everything works. That makes it easier for me and my colleagues to keep it up-to-date, something that we all appreciate.”

All this makes Act! not just a great CRM system, but it also provides FIB Industries with a highly effective forecasting tool.

Results



- FIB Industries can monitor what materials are being used or how many plant hours a particular project is consuming.
- With Act!, the company is now able to distribute important information throughout the entire organisation fast and effectively.
- The production schedule can be managed much more accurately, with expected orders tracked, material requirements calculated and engineering hours budgeted.
- As well as performing its standard CRM function, Act! is also serving as a powerful forecasting tool.

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