

EXECUTIVE QUESTION AND ANSWER

Presented by InnoVeer Solutions and Nefit Buderus BV

AH: Why did Nefit choose to invest in CRM, and what did you look to accomplish with your CRM program?

AI: Five years ago, we began looking for a way to more efficiently track and access our customer data in order to increase our knowledge of our customers and better anticipate and service their requests. We wanted to find a system that would store all customer information in a centralized database, so that we could analyze and report on our installers' buying histories and patterns to understand their relationships with us. This system would enable us to improve customer service and increase productivity and cross-selling opportunities.

Learning more about our distributors and customers allows us to expand and grow around their needs, giving us an even greater competitive advantage in our market. To remain the market leader, achieving these milestones was critical.

AH: What was your implementation approach, and what advice can you give others in the midst of planning and implementing their CRM program?

FM: At Nefit, we put CRM into practice, with a heavy emphasis on *practice*. We built our overall CRM strategy, and then implemented functionality in phases, enabling our users to become familiar with basic functionality first. At the same time, our organization was able to witness incremental results from our investment. This was our approach — it is critical to take small steps and demonstrate results at each step, while moving toward your overall CRM goal. This avoids complicated implementation rollouts and long periods of waiting before the system is up and running.

Using this phased approach, we were able to implement our CRM program for our marketing team, followed by our customer service group, and lastly, our sales organization.

AI: It is imperative to have a clear vision for your CRM program that focuses on both your business and the people who will use the system. Complete support from the main internal project drivers and the end-users is also crucial because regardless of how great the CRM technology or your strategy, without support from the team, the project's success will be affected. At Nefit, we set clear goals around what we wanted to accomplish, and there was strong support from management, as well as from the heads of each business unit. We involved the users at every stage of the process to ensure buy-in and enable us to incorporate their insight and preference into our plan from the beginning. However, we also made sure that once our plan was set, we did not modify our goals, expectations, or scope during implementation and placed new requirements into future stages, so as not to impact the roll out timeframe or budget.



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Now serving over 1 million houses throughout The Netherlands, Nefit Buderus BV was the first company to manufacture condensing boilers in 1981. Nefit has since been recognized as a European market leader in gas condensing, exporting its heaters to over 20 countries.



AH: Why did you choose to implement marketing and service before sales, and was your decision affected by the culture of your organization?

AI: For any CRM program to be successful, you have to look at your internal culture and make the necessary cultural changes to ensure program success. At Nefit, our sales team thinks about success on a short-term, day-to-day basis, and because of that, we knew that we had to gain their approval by showing them the immediate benefits of the system prior to asking them to use it. On the other hand, our marketing and service divisions are constantly looking at what will help Nefit be the best in our industry five years into the future. Because of that, we chose to deploy marketing and service first. By providing sales with sample data from the service group, we were able to easily demonstrate the results of the system — how a central location for all customer data would increase their sales success and quicken and improve their selling cycle. To further encourage their support, adding their information to the centralized system is now part of their bonus program. It is important to offer the right incentives to gain user acceptance — those that will be the most meaningful to each group. If the users do not contribute to the system, there is no way that the system will achieve the anticipated results.

On the other hand, in order to be successful with our customer service team, we knew that the right training, along with ensuring their comfort with the system, was crucial. We worked with the team to answer all of their questions and made sure that we gave them enough time to learn how to use the system properly and with ease.

We knew our culture, and we worked with each department to achieve success.

AH: How did your planning affect your implementation success?

FM: Because of our planning, we were able to implement and roll out our CRM system in a very short timeframe and very smoothly, like clockwork.

We are now storing information about 1.5 million boilers, including their histories, communication exchanges, and service requests, among others, in our centralized database. The system is supporting our entire operation, including internal sales, external sales, customer service, and marketing. Information is now readily available when you want it and where you want it.

AI: The system is giving us the results we sought to achieve during our planning stage. The interface meets our users' requirements, and the system is flexible. As a result, we have complete user support, which is critical to our success. Our users are now able to do their work quicker and more efficiently, allowing our organization to handle greater volumes of calls and service requests, service our customers more effectively, and in general, support our overall business operations.

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AH: What is the next step in Nefit's CRM plans?

AI: When we look to our future CRM plans, we want to integrate all of the systems throughout the wholesaler chain, including our installers, our manufacturers, and our wholesalers' information. This would further enhance our business model, customer insight, and profitability.

FM: Branching out to a broader public, including the wholesalers and installers, would greatly impact our data quality. For example, if an employee of an installer had a history sheet of the boiler he is working on, then his holding times for problems would be shorter. This would be a huge competitive advantage for us, and we would be able to help our business partners, as well as add value to our products through the information we have.

There are people who think that you can hold onto your market share, and even improve your market share by making better and better boilers. We think it is even more important to show your customers how you can save them time, improve their service, and increase their earning capabilities, so that they will choose to work with you over and over again.

ABOUT INNOVEER SOLUTIONS

INNOVEER SOLUTIONS, an award-winning customer strategy and solutions consultancy, provides advanced customer management services to healthcare and high-technology companies, among others, in the areas of planning and strategy, technology implementation, and optimization. The company's deep industry knowledge, broad technical skills, and Multishore methodology enable organizations to address their critical customer-facing issues and achieve an integrated view of all customer information. With an exclusive focus on customer management since 1998, Innoveer has worked with more than 300 organizations to increase their overall business growth, improve internal efficiency, and enhance the customer experience.



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Now serving over 1 million houses throughout The Netherlands, Nefit Buderus BV was the first company to manufacture condensing boilers in 1981. Nefit has since been recognized as a European market leader in gas condensing, exporting its heaters to over 20 countries. Nefit aims to achieve the highest quality by maintaining a strong organization, while at the same time, delivering top-quality service. With increasing competition in a rapidly condensing market, Nefit is continually trying to expand its reach, by selling and marketing its services and products not only to its wholesales and distributors, but also to its consumers.

