Increasing Customer Loyalty with Sales Order Automation

Kirby Risk Electrical Supply

Background

Kirby Risk Electrical Supply is a leading provider of electrical, automation, lighting, and power distribution solutions for electrical systems across the USA. Since its inception in 1926, they have grown to include 38 supply locations across Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. As a trusted business partner to small, local companies and nationwide businesses alike, they've built a reputation on reliability with a 95% fill-rate as they continue to offer the best quality products at the best possible cost.

Serving customers across industrial, OEM, construction, and commercial markets requires an impressive portfolio of over 800,000 products sourced from more than 500 manufacturers. Committed to continuous innovation, Kirby Risk Electrical Supply was keen to implement process improvements that would allow them to continue to serve their customers better while keeping operational costs balanced. One great solution to increase the efficiency of their supply chain operations was to streamline order processing.

Challenges

Need to Be More Efficient

As an extremely busy supplier, Kirby Risk Electrical Supply processes thousands of customer orders each day. Like most customer-centric businesses, each customer submits their unique purchase order in their preferred format including email, fax, and phone. Customer orders received in these methods need to be manually reproduced by their team of Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) before they can transition into a sales order. Re-keying each line item into their Epicor® Eclipse™ ERP system is very time consuming, making the task of processing purchase orders incredibly labor-intensive.

Need to Handle Order Volume Fluctuations

In the world of distribution, seasonality is a common occurrence and that is also the case at Kirby Risk Electrical Supply. Aligning staffing levels to consistently mirror changing order volumes is no easy task. Miscalculating demand can lead to longer processing times and higher overtime costs. Finding a solution that would

Key Results

- Processed more orders faster
- Eliminated manual order re-entry
- Reduced the cost of processing orders
- Boosted customer loyalty and engagement

allow them to handle varying order volumes would eliminate the stress of coordinating staff counts.

They needed a solution that would enable them to be more efficient in the way they processed orders, allowing them to effectively do more with less. By automating the order process, especially with high volume or high line-item customers, they could reduce the amount of time and hands dedicated to re-entering orders, which would in turn allow them to handle higher volumes without requiring additional staff. It would also free-up valuable time from the CSR team, which could be refocused on higher value business activities.

The Solution

After careful consideration, Kirby Risk Electrical Supply selected Conexiom® to automate their sales order process. "We learned about Conexiom at the annual Epicor Conference and we were immediately interested in exploring it further," exclaimed Jim Swisher, Shared Services Manager. "It actually seemed too good to be true. We were excited to test it out and prove it would work with some of our heavy hitters." They selected a small group of loyal customers based on volume to begin their initial phase of the rollout program.

Conexiom proved to be the ideal solution because of its ability to capture data directly from customer orders received via email and those printed and faxed. This data is then transformed into an electronic sales order automatically in their existing ERP system. Automation effectively eliminated the problem of dual entry and liberated the CSR team from repetitive, mundane tasks.

Conexiom

"At Kirby Risk Electrical Supply, we believe we're really in business to serve our customers," explained Swisher. This is why it was so important to ensure there was no impact to their customers. "Some of our customers are quite traditional and have been doing business a certain way for a very long time. We felt it was exclusively our responsibility to manage the automation process in a way that wouldn't require any changes from them. Thanks to Conexiom, our customers weren't even aware we changed the way we did business."

Benefits

Handle Higher Volumes Faster

Reducing the bottleneck of customer orders awaiting manual entry has decreased the order cycle time. Now instead of a typical purchase order taking 15 minutes to re-enter, it can be handled in seconds without being touched by the CSR team. Kirby Risk Electrical Supply is not only able to process orders faster, but confidently with total accuracy thanks to Conexiom's 100% data accuracy. "Now we can handle even higher volumes without hiring additional staff. Being more efficient means doing more with less," shared Grandon Westlund, E-Commerce Administrator. "By far, our favorite feature is no longer having to manually enter every order, which also reduces the chance of error."

Boost Customer Loyalty

Moving employees away from the transactional nature of order entry, has created an opportunity to focus on actual customer service activities. "Thanks to Conexiom we've become so much more efficient. We've moved beyond handling orders to actually helping our customers with their needs," shared Swisher. Now the CSRs easily find time to analyze customer accounts based on their history, evaluate performance, and identify trends. "We're also able to hold conversations with our customers about how we can better serve them. The ability to engage with our customers, listen, and learn has made a big impact on customer loyalty."

Future Growth

As Kirby Risk Electrical Supply approaches the end of their initial rollout phase , they continue to be impressed by the results. "After learning how the system works, we've confidently mastered the

onboarding process and know the right questions to ask, so it's going to be a breeze to enroll new customers," expressed Swisher. "Conexiom has delivered tremendous value to our business. Once we identified the ideal customers, it was a no-brainer to implement. We've saved money while at the same time increased our operational efficiencies, all without impacting our customers. It's a huge win," shared Westlund.

About Conexiom

Conexiom® allows manufacturers and distributors to focus on serving customers and managing supplier relationships instead of entering data. The patent-pending Conexiom solution was created by ecmarket, a cloud solutions developer. Conexiom revolutionizes critical sales and accounting business practices by automating manual entry with 100% accuracy. Conexiom effortlessly converts emailed and printed customer purchase orders and supplier invoices into automated sales orders and invoices, enabling companies to focus on driving growth. Conexiom helps organizations across the globe maintain a competitive edge. **For more information visit conexiom.com**