

Micros South Africa underpins customer service excellence with Sage CRM



Customer

Micros

Industry

IT Services

Location

South Africa

Solution

Sage CRM

Micros South Africa is a leading provider of highly tailored IT solutions for the hospitality sector including specialty retail industries such as hotels, casinos and restaurants. The company's fully integrated solutions help its customers to improve operational efficiencies and drive profitability in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Central to Micros South Africa's success has been the company's dedication to customer service excellence and its use of Sage CRM to support company strategy in this area.

Background

Founded in 1997, Micros South Africa supplies, implements and supports turnkey information management systems for the hospitality sector.

The company's solutions encompass: electronic point-of-sale (ePOS), property management applications, hardware infrastructure, systems integration services, professional consulting services and support.

Micros employs over 220 people covering: installation technicians, trainers, hardware specialists, software specialists and account management personnel, and provides support services to over 2500 restaurants and 500 hotels in South Africa from its 24/7 call centre operation in Johannesburg.

Challenge

From its inception, Micros recognized the importance of being able to provide exceptional customer service on a consistent basis. The company's rapid growth and increasingly complex operations, however, soon meant that it had outgrown the business applications that it had relied upon to manage this important objective. With an average of over 1,200 calls a week, the company needed a highly scalable and flexible application that would grow with the business, and always ensure support cases were resolved on a timely basis and in accordance with service level agreements (SLAs).

Challenge

Micros decided in 2006 to implement a new CRM solution because the system it was using was no longer meeting its needs. It needed a highly scalable and flexible CRM system to help deal effectively with 1,200 weekly customer calls, and especially needed a solution that would be easy to customize to its specific requirements.

Solution

Sage CRM was customized and integrated with the back-end accounting system to help manage and track customer support calls and allow the Micros Support team to manage customer issues effectively and within agreed timeframes.

Results

Sage CRM has enabled Micros to use customer service reports to identify if there is a need for training or an opportunity to upsell to a different product/service. Sage CRM has provided Micros with a way to monitor KPIs for team members identifying how calls are logged/prioritised and resolved.

‘It was tricky to find the balance between prioritizing calls based on the highest priority without neglecting a low priority call and ensuring they were all resolved in a timely manner.’

Hylton Proctor-Parker,
Micros

Providing a service to an industry that ‘never sleeps’ means that delivering on SLAs is a critical part of the success. Its customers get huge comfort in the fact that Micros can ‘step up to the plate’ and guarantee a level of service when they need it the most. Micros needed to ensure that service delivery was consistent and that downtimes and time-to-response delays were at a minimum. These are crucial metrics when establishing service level agreements with clients and something which Micros realised it needed to be able to monitor and control if it was to succeed.

Preferred solution

In 2006, the company carried out an extensive examination of the market for customer service automation solutions. Micros quickly identified Sage CRM as the solution that would provide it with the necessary case management capabilities and scalability, along with ease-of-deployment and maintenance. Sage CRM would also enable Micros to provide its customers with critical reports to demonstrate delivery of SLAs thereby assisting with critical contract renewal negotiations.

Implementation

Micros carried out a generic installation of Sage CRM initially without any significant level of customization or configuration. The company soon recognized, however, that in order to get the very most out of its investment, it needed to undertake a root and branch review of its customer service operations, identify areas for strategic improvement and then use Sage CRM as the basis for implementing these improvements. The company, therefore, worked closely with its call centre agents and mapped out the business processes needed to deliver an optimal customer service experience.

Benefits

By working with its call center agents, Micros established that there were three core objectives that it needed to realize for its customer service operations: (1) the entire lifecycle for case management needed to be tracked continuously through all stages and all interaction types, (2) call centre resources needed to be optimized on an on-going basis and (3) performance measurement and management would be critical for on-going improvement and customer satisfaction.

Through this consultative process, Micros identified that the company needed to introduce a new case prioritization process which took multiple considerations into account. For example, the company decided that cases should be prioritized not only by the severity of the issue, but also by the amount of time since they were initially logged.

These two criteria were combined within Sage CRM. This enabled customer service agents to prioritize severe and time sensitive issues first, and then address the remainder of the cases accordingly. Sage CRM’s workflow capabilities also allowed Micros to automate workflows around the different levels of priorities that could be assigned to a case. The system also enabled the support team to reprioritize cases over the course of the day. This has greatly enhanced the handling and resolution of cases and ensured that less urgent calls are dealt with in an appropriate timeframe.

‘Now, our consultants can easily pick up with a glance at the screen whether a customer has a support contract with us or not... This [complete] view of the customer helps us to quickly resolve any incident so that we can meet our service level agreements (SLAs).’

Hylton Proctor-Parker,
Micros

Rich customer information

Today using Sage CRM, Micros is able to track support calls as well as email and SMS support requests from when they are logged to when they have been resolved.

It is also benefitting from the wealth of rich information it can access through Sage CRM's reporting tools. These reports – which are automatically generated – give management the information it needs to understand call centre performance, allocate resources, and identify opportunities to cross or up-sell to clients.

Service Manager Michael James says, “We needed a solution that we could customize to provide the information we need to help our customers quickly and effectively when there's a support call.”

“Now, our consultants can easily pick up with a glance at the screen whether a customer has a support contract with us or not. They can also see which hardware the client is using and whether it is under warranty, and browse the client's support history. This [complete] view of the customer helps us to quickly resolve any incident so that we can meet our service level agreements (SLAs).”

Knowledgebase and reporting

Micros has made use of Sage CRM's extensive knowledgebase capabilities which enable service agents to search for remedies related to specific issues which may have been encountered previously. The company's customer service agents can now submit a new solution for publication in the knowledgebase, and a full workflow approval process ensures that only solutions which have been reviewed and approved by the relevant manager are published in the knowledgebase.

The Sage CRM knowledgebase has helped to increase the productivity of Micros' customer service agents who can now leverage the experience and expertise of their colleagues. This, in turn, has decreased the average amount of time required to resolve a customer case.

Reporting is another key area where Micros has leveraged the capabilities of Sage CRM. The company is now able to produce customised reports for clients on a daily, weekly and monthly basis to demonstrate that the resolution criteria within their SLAs were being met.

In particular, these reports demonstrate the company's commitment to providing a meaningful and personalised customer experience. An ancillary benefit of these enhanced reporting capabilities is that Micros can identify further revenue generating opportunities with customers, particularly in relation to training and consulting services.

Sage CRM is fully integrated with the company's financials and Service Manager Application. Micros use the integrated solution to manage the entire process, from leads to opportunities, promoting them into customers that are then managed through Sage CRM.

Having the visibility on customer accounts allows the company to put customers support services on hold if there is an outstanding balance. This is in line with a pre-defined process that has been established by Micros. Service manager is then used to create jobs for all work that is done for the customer, from installation and training to equipment repairs and sales, costing the jobs, managing the PO process and then invoicing directly from Service Manager. All of this information is accessible through Sage CRM.

About Sage CRM

Over 14,000 small and medium sized companies across the globe use Sage CRM every day to accelerate sales, drive business productivity and make every customer interaction count. It is used by enterprising, growing companies seeking new ways to interact with customers, leverage the power of social media and take advantage of the latest mobile developments to further grow their business. When combined with Sage ERP, our customers enjoy better business insight, increased efficiencies and productivity, and gain a single, customer-centric view across their entire business. So whether you're just starting out or have already grown to several hundred employees, Sage CRM can help accelerate your business success.

Accelerate your business success with a free 30-day trial at www.sagecrm.com

