



THE COMPUTERWORLD HONORS PROGRAM

CASE STUDY

ORGANIZATION:

Allbröd AB

PROJECT NAME:

Mobile CRM

Summary

The Allbrod Group was enhancing its automated mobile sales featuring its delivery drivers with a new handheld system replacing an outmoded, DOS-based solution. Allbrod needed improved data transmission security between its sales force and back office, and a modern base for its new system. The objective of its project with Sybase was to create a more rational and efficient multi-faceted tool to support its business and have it look the same throughout the company. This allowed drivers to be more efficient and visit more customers. Important facets of the project included support of car orders, pre-orders, logistics and storage control.

Introductory Overview

Allbrod is one of the fastest growing distributors of bread in Sweden. If there is one fact that lies at the foundation of its growth, it is that there is nothing quite as stale and unmarketable as day-old bread, both literally and metaphorically. Allbrod has approximately 280 trucks covering Sweden. Its theory is that no one knows the customer better than the driver on the route. Therefore, Allbrod is moving forward with the concept of having its truck drivers serve as direct distribution salespeople.

The drivers are responsible for ordering product, delivering it, and helping the customer arrange his or her store display. Using historical data as a guide, along with pre-orders from the stores, Allbrod can stay ahead of the ordering curve by having on hand the products that are most in demand. Its goals are to guarantee that the agreements made with its customers are kept, to have the right quantities of the right products on hand to meet customer needs, and to avoid spoilage by not stocking products not in demand and avoid disappointment by meeting immediate and changing needs.

IT's contribution to this program was to provide each driver with a handheld device that would allow two-way communications regarding orders, delivery confirmation, stocking, promotions and more. Bread deliveries are far-flung, and delivery times are very important. When the project began, Allbrod discovered that no suitable handheld device existed. It needed security, reliability, the ability to synchronize and two-way communications. It needed Sybase.

LOCATION:
Lindome, Sweden

YEAR:
2006

STATUS:
Laureate

CATEGORY:
Business and Related Services

NOMINATING COMPANY:
Sybase



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The Sybase products Allbrod settled on where SQL Anywhere Studio and PowerDesigner for modeling data bases. SQL Anywhere studio is a market-leading data management and enterprise data synchronization solution. It enables the rapid development and deployment of database-powered applications for mobile, remote, and a variety of business environments. The PowerDesigner product family offers a modeling solution that analysts, DBAs, designers, and developers can tailor. Its modular structure offers affordability and expandability, so the tools can be applied according to the size and scope of the project.

Users are pleased with the solution because it is fast, efficient, uses just a few screens, is easy to learn and secure. Synchronization can take place in on small daily step between the field and headquarters via radio LAN.

As a result of this new system Allbrod and its customers can have their bread and eat it, too.

Benefits

Since deployment of the new system, Allbrod has experienced improved customer satisfaction, the ability to process invoices more quickly and more accurately with complete security, automated sales processes, greater employee satisfaction as delivery drivers feel they are making more of a contribution to Allbrod's success, and an improved reputation throughout Sweden as the company has become known as an effective, innovative leader by customers and competitors. Internally, the new system is easily maintained, updated, and allows for easy daily backups. Invoicing is faster and daily operations run more smoothly. Allbrod now has greater sales with fewer back office employees.

The big advantage for Allbrod has been the company's ability to cover all of Sweden (174,000 square miles and nearly nine million people) with its network of 280 truck delivery salespeople. The company can redirect supplies and react nimbly to promotions because of its new system's versatility and capability. The system was also easy to implement in the field. All that was required as a two-hour briefing before drivers were back on their routs.

As of February 1, 2006, the system has processed more than 50 million order rows without losing a single order. Allbrod's processes have raised its profile amongst its competitors and it has become the most prominent baked goods distributor in the country.

The Importance of Technology

Quite simply, execution of Allbrod's concept of making its delivery drivers is primary customer-facing sales people would not have been possible without information technology. It needed the speed, scope and accuracy of the Sybase SQL Anywhere Studio and the database management capabilities of PowerDesigner. All the suppliers' inventory and customers' preferences are held, literally, in the palm of Allbrod's drivers' hands.

Originality

At the time this project began, there were no handheld applications that were suitable for Allbrod's needs. Therefore, Allbrod's IT team had to sit down with its Sybase counterparts to design a system from scratch that would perform as needed, and be intuitive enough for someone whose basic job was delivering bread and cookies. Together, Allbrod and Sybase developed



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a system that was fast, intuitive, secure, and kept the number of screens in play to a minimum. As a result its customers, its competitors and its own internal team see Allbrod as innovative and effective.

Success

Allbrod decided to move forward with this program in January of 2002, opened its first production site that October, implemented all twenty sites between November 2002 and April 2003, and at the same time implemented a new version of its business system for support of its new handheld application; and centralized maintenance. The project's scope and acceptance exceeded expectations, and the company realized a complete ROI within one year. Customers now have total confidence that their orders will be delivered as requested. Suppliers are also confident that prices will remain stable and that Allbrod's inventory management system is one hundred percent reliable, allowing for accurate business forecasts. The system is effective, easy to learn, simple to use, interacts perfectly with Allbrod's existing systems, is reliable, has enhanced Allbrod's reputation within its industry and has resulted in improved customer service and satisfaction.

"A prerequisite for the future is that our suppliers with their own delivery to stores can govern their assortment on each store chain (open and close article numbers). The right product to the right chain, the right price to the right store chain etc. That the right market discounts and invoice price is there (in the IT system) is a prerequisite. Allbröd can manage this already today." Rickard Gustafsson, Customer, Axfood

"The new system meant a lot of changes for me. I was not used to the equipment. Now that I have done it for a while I noticed that I am much happier in my job and that my customers are much happier with the service they receive from us. I would not want to go back to the way things were before." Fredrik Reby, driver/salesperson, Allbröd

Difficulty

Allbrod has a very complex IT environment, and its territory is the entire country of Sweden. Except for some screens on the handheld device, the new system had very little in common with the incumbent system, requiring a considerable overhaul in the back office. Often, if an IT problem were solved on one end in the old system, another would crop up as a result of that fix. Another difficulty was preparing the drivers for training on the new equipment. Ultimately, a program was developed that required just two-hours of the drivers' time before they were back in the field. The fact that all these problems were overcome and Allbrod earned a total return on its investment in less than one year is testimony to the quality of the IT solution and the training and can-do attitude that supported it.