

Lapp Group**FuM CRM Suite Integrates External Team across Europe**

When Oskar Lapp developed the first industrially produced control line in the world more than 40 years ago, the time of laborious collection of single conductors and flexible equipment wire was finally over – and the foundation stone for an internationally successful company had been laid. More than 50 companies, around 60 agencies and 2,600 employees belong to the Lapp Group today with its headquarters in Stuttgart. Lapp was one of the leading suppliers worldwide of cables, wires, cable accessories, connectors and communication technology with his range. One of the factors of Lapp's long-term success was and is the customer-orientation evident from the start in all corporate areas. Thus, proximity to the market and detailed knowledge on the customers' fields of application always formed the base for the development of increasingly innovative and above all need-oriented products.

By 1999, Lapp had installed a customer information system to keep the external sales team always up-to-date with all customer information. As only the internal team had access to SAP at that time, Lotus Notes presented itself as an approved mail system that was already used across the whole area. After four years of use, the at that time individually programmed solution was having difficulties with the current Notes version 6. Fast action was needed. The decision to introduce a CRM module of SAP or, alternatively, to choose a Lotus Notes platform, was made relatively quickly: The lacking offline function of the SAP module meant the former of these options.

The people in charge at Lapp tasked the software and systems company Fritz & Macziol with the realisation of the CRM solution with Lotus Notes. The Ulm company convinced with their concept FuM CRM Suite after a test of the technological feasibility in the complex environment; high quantities of data with regard to customer contacts and associated turnover, offer and billing histories. The solution is based on Lotus Notes and the Domino Server in the current Version 6. By using a company-wide, familiar, offline-capable front end system, the employees can best be provided with all essential information. All employees – including the external teams, internal sales teams and employees in bookkeeping and logistics – had quick and simple access to the necessary data thanks to the performance characteristics of replication and right infrastructure. For the requirements of the Lapp Group, Fritz & Macziol installed the FuM CRM Suite, which comprises a central address database and further flanking databases for documents, activities and orders. The relevant external sales teams can access all relevant data from the address database and directly capture further information such as visit reports. Tasks, which fall within the remit of customer care, can be exchanged and followed up via the activities control between internal and external teams. There is a campaign module for marketing, which facilitates mass mails and automatic documentation of customer information using simple to select segments of customer data.

The relevant data from the ERP system (addresses, orders, offers, invoices and credit notes) are adjusted using Lotus Enterprise Integrator and Lotus Connector for SAP. Thanks to a special meeting with Fritz & Macziol and IBM in the IBM-SAP Competence Center in Walldorf, the people in charge at Lapp were convinced by the functions of the data pump and the Connector. Additionally, the sales managers have an analysis tool, which generates the appropriate multi-dimensional sales evaluations from the "soft" information of the Notes databases and the "hard" SAP data within the CRM application. Fritz & Macziol also took on the parallel training of the internal and external sales teams during the launch of the FuM CRM Suite, which was complete at the end of March. However, the achievement of this last project step is not the end of the story. Discussions are already underway on the timely launch of the Fritz & Macziol concept with further specifications and in different country versions at the Lapp sites in the Czech Republic and Great Britain.

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