Mitsubishi Logisnext Americas, Inc.

Client Success Story

Industrial Forklift Leader Cuts Product Configuration Time by 75 Percent

Mitsubishi Logisnext Americas, Inc. (MLA) is the leading manufacturer of three distinct brands: Mitsubishi and CAT forklift trucks and Jungheinrich warehouse products, distributing through a vast dealer network throughout North and South America.

Challenge

Forklifts are one of the most highly customized products serving the manufacturing and distribution industries. MLA offers numerous product families across three brands: Mitsubishi forklift trucks, Cat® lift trucks, and Jungheinrich®. Within families – each with as many as 10 different models – there is always a need to specially configure orders to address unique client needs, typically involving hundreds of feature and function decisions.

MLA previously handled order entry using a product configurator embedded in its legacy ERP system. The legacy ERP configurator required numerous manual steps that took an inordinate amount of time – greatly escalating the period required to ensure a configuration was accurate.

"It took a lot of time to do things that shouldn't have been difficult," says Jose Clark, Manager of Business Analytics at MLA. "Adding part numbers, pricing, and setting–up product configurations on all products had to be done manually. There was no easy way to copy and modify

CLIENT
Mitsubishi Logisnext Amercias, Inc.

PARTNER
Experlogix

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM

BENEFITS
· Costly, time-consuming errors dramatically reduced
· Revenues increased due to ease of oꭏering additional options to clients
· User training simplified and accelerated through an extremely intuitive user interface
· Configurations easily copied and modified to create new products and orders
· Rules created once applied across multiple product families
· Ability to create workflows ensures proper review of special discount and engineering requests

an existing configuration. We were forced to start from scratch every time," he says. "Changing a part number or a rule took time. Even adding a single new option to a category took weeks."

"Day-to-day, all those things were very frustrating from a business perspective," continues Clark." Senior management could not understand why it took so long to configure an order."

The challenge became dramatically more complicated in 2010 when MLA signed an agreement with Jungheinrich AG, the European leader in electric-power warehouse material handling systems, to add its products to the company portfolio. That partnership nearly doubled the number of products MLA offered to its dealer network.

"It was clear at that point that we needed a solution to bring new products to market in a timelier, user-friendly fashion," Clark says.

MLA needed an easy-to-use, flexible product configurator that could streamline and accelerate order entry processes and respond rapidly as their business needs changed.

Solution

After a thorough review of several product configurators for Microsoft Dynamics CRM, MLA selected Experlogix. Experlogix clearly caught MLA's attention during its search for a solution. "The user-friendliness of Experlogix really stood out," Clark says. "Managers were impressed, commenting 'even I could do that.'" Other elements were equally noteworthy. "It's extremely fast and flexible," comments Clark. "We gave the Experlogix team some of our rules and data, and they came back within a day or two to demonstrate our logic within their solution. That was really impressive."

Result

Experlogix's power and flexibility provided a major gain in productivity. "MLA's partnership with Jungheinrich AG extended the number of MLA product families to more than 50," Clark explains. "Experlogix provides an easy way to copy and then modify an existing configuration. In addition, we're now able to create rules once and apply them across multiple families and products." As a result, the time it takes to build a complete family of products has been slashed from two months to two weeks.

Internal users use Microsoft Dynamics CRM to initiate the configuration process, while dealership sales personnel access it via a portal. Though some dealers have third-party configuration systems of their own, MLA worked with Experlogix to link those systems with Experlogix in a seamless fashion to ensure that everyone in the network has the most

current, accurate product information from a single database. Completed configurations are passed back to Dynamics CRM which in turn links with MLA's ERP system to provide accurate delivery dates. For the first time, MLA can now use orders to forecast production capacity.

"Experlogix also makes it easy to build workflows," Clark says. "If certain features or options are especially complex, Experlogix can launch a notice to product specialists to review the order. Top-dollar features and options can also be specially handled. Rules in Experlogix enable lock down on orders, permitting dealers to still review the configuration, but restricting them from making further changes. They can, however, still change and manage their own margins and other details."

A completely unanticipated benefit is that Experlogix has fostered strong growth in sales of product options. "We're able to offer options a la carte, making it easier for dealers to suggest additional features to their clients." This is facilitated in part with Experlogix being available on an iPad. A sales person visiting a client can pull up Experlogix and go over an order in real time. "They can configure or change it right there, and then email a copy of the changes to the client."

Another important benefit became clear during the Experlogix training. "Experlogix allows users to create rules in a visual or text-based format. The visual format really aids the learning process," says Clark.

Experlogix has brought big change to the way things are done at MLA. "Experlogix has made everyone's job easier," Clark says.

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Microsoft

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