

Yuasa Battery save £500,000 a year through improved customer service with CRM

Yuasa Battery Europe, a subsidiary of GS Yuasa, was formed in 2003 to bring continuity across the sales and manufacturing organizations that supply industrial and automotive batteries to a network of customers throughout Europe. eBECs implemented Microsoft Dynamics AX across the organisation in 2007.

The continued success of the organisation has come about for many reasons, one being high levels of customer service. One area of customer service that required addressing was how Yuasa handled customer complaints. This service took calls regarding incomplete shipments, wrong products shipped, damaged goods, and so on, managing them to resolution. Resolution generally meant just automatically shipping additional batteries to replace those that were missing, wrongly shipped, or damaged. No analysis was done on whether the short shipments were due to picking errors, quality issues, problems with the courier, or inaccurate claims by the end customer.

Ian Dale, Automotive Operations Manager at Yuasa, quickly realised that he could address this issue via a new computer system. *“A lot of money was being wasted. My background is in quality management and I had also worked on the other side for various dealers, so I understood the issues they and we were facing”.*

The first step was to introduce a new stage in the shipping process. Each layer of every pallet is now photographed prior to loading on the trucks, so that the quantity and type of battery can easily be identified. The photos are tagged and indexed so they can be recalled if needed.

The second step was to design and build the Complaints functionality. David Strong, Senior Business Analyst in IT at Yuasa explained *“We worked very closely with the business to specify the requirement. We decided to build it within Dynamics – this was the obvious platform to extend. We wanted all relevant information in one place that was centrally managed, and visible to all users that need it so decisions could be taken quickly and decisively. We didn’t want a range of different technologies sitting around the organisation.”*

In just two weeks, the team built a system that used the CRM Module within Dynamics AX to process, investigate and resolve 20 different types of complaint, routing the case around to different departments of Yuasa depending upon the nature of the complaint. Strong relates: *“It was very fast to implement as Dynamics forms are so easy to build – we just added new fields and all the other attributes were pulled through. The same goes for reports – the wizards are very fast”.* The photos of the pallets are attached to the case / CRM activity, and typically it is routed to the warehouse for cross checking and to credit control to approve any reimbursement/replacement. Dynamics also lets the relevant account manager know that there is an ongoing case in one of their accounts. As the new system was built in Dynamics, training was very straightforward. Ian Dale again: *“Everyone had already had training in the existing Dynamics system. All we had to do to was on-the-job training in Complaints as the keystrokes and look and feel for that module is just what they were already used to. It meant the team could hit the ground running which improved morale and performance, and*

cost-savings could be realised almost immediately". Complaints are handled by the same customer services team that handle the incoming orders.

Another immediate payback was that the Complaints system dramatically reduced call volumes and case numbers - when a complaint case is registered, the system automatically emails or faxes the customer with a unique case identifier, so they know it is being dealt with. Previously, the customer may have rung a number of times to check progress, and spoken to a different call handler each time, resulting in multiple cases being created for each complaint. Now it is one call, one complaint, and the customer knows it will be resolved in a short timescale (typically within 48 hours).

The system went live in Autumn 2009. It has been able to provide Yuasa management with powerful reports which show the types of complaints, the outcomes, and crucially, helped to identify serial complainers. This allowed some focussed investigation which identified that not all claims were valid. *"Now we could prove to our customers that the shipment was correct, the missing batteries were searched for and often found quickly" said Dale. "Once our customers knew we could prove it, they checked more before they called, and the number of complaints dropped significantly"*. The system also highlighted the batteries that were frequently being picked incorrectly, information that the warehouse manager could use to improve the processes in his department.

In addition to fewer complaints, the fact that many are resolved without replacement has already saved a fortune. *"In January 2010 there were around 250 complaints" says Dale. "About 40% were rejected. Prior to the Dynamics Complaints System, 100% would have been accepted and paid out. This has got to be saving over £500,000 a year to us. What fantastic ROI for a two week project!"*

Line No	Activity nu...	Body	Time	Employee
2	A00003857	i have looked at photos (please see atatched file) and all batteries are present and accounted for. CLAIM REJECTED. Darren notified at bra...	15/08/2008 10:43:12	CASE
1	A00003857	cust has reported 2 x 100 uni std, short on their delivery	15/08/2008 09:45:28	CASE

Screen shot showing amended CRM screen



Sample Pallet Photograph – customer services department can identify what is on each pallet by top label or size of battery.