ROLAIR's Market Focus Gets a Boost with OSAS, Order PLUS!, SalesCTRL

In an age when most companies diversify in any way they can, ROLAIR has thrived by perfecting one kind of product: air compressors built for professional contractors. In the process, they've attained a following and longevity of which most companies only dream.

"We've been in business for over fifty years," said Gail Nampel, Executive Director of ROLAIR Compressors. Sticking with one market segment doesn't mean that they haven't varied their product line, however. Hundreds of companies rely upon ROLAIR Compressors for very specific needs. With less than forty employees in their factory near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, ROLAIR exerts a worldwide influence over the compressor market.

As their website humorously though bluntly states, "… if you're looking for a 'specialize-in-nothing' company concerned with nail guns, power tools and sales gimmicks, go to a box house, my friend." Discriminating contractors everywhere know that ROLAIR compressors are the professional choice to get the job done.

Time for a Back-End Upgrade

In 1985 ROLAIR invested in an OSAS business software solution from Open Systems that thrived alongside the company for years with only a handful of upgrades. In time, and in spite of the system's stability, however, Nampel and ROLAIR found themselves facing a dilemma; was their accounting system doing everything it could to support their growth?

"It worked great," said Nampel, "but as we grew, we needed to find a way to further automate procedures within the office, thereby increasing efficiency. For example, when our sales people took an order, they would enter it as an activity in the CRM software, print it and send it to the credit and order entry departments, only to be entered a second time into OSAS. It was an obvious and unnecessary duplication of effort."

How could an older system be updated in such a way that each employee—regardless of whether they were in sales, warehouse, or accounting—had quick but limited access to the functions they needed to get their work done, while instantly updating the system for everyone else who needed timely order and product information? The answer came from a Milwaukee-based software expert armed with an updated system and just the right add-on applications.

Enter Advanced Concepts and an OSAS update

"Workflow is the key here," said Jeff Wohlfahrt, President and CEO of Advanced Concepts, Inc. "We wanted to tie all the departments into the same business data, while still just giving them their own screens with their own look and feel. Each employee needs to be able to update the critical accounting information company wide in their daily activities without having to open an extra program." After a business analysis, Wohlfahrt suggested that ROLAIR upgrade to the latest version of OSAS software.

"We hadn't upgraded OSAS since 2000," said Nampel. "It was working just fine for us, but we were excited with the enhancements available in the new version. Plus, with a newly developed interface between our CRM software and Order Plus!, efficiency increased dramatically."

OrderPLUS! puts traditional sales order on steroids

The next step for workflow perfection was an upgrade of Advanced Concepts' Order PLUS!, their comprehensive order processing system, integrated directly into the OSAS software. Order PLUS! and a link with SalesCTRL™, their CRM software, helped to tie all of the order departments together seamlessly. "Now, a salesperson can enter an order directly into Order PLUS! without leaving the customer record in SalesCTRL™, send the order to the credit manager's office and print a picking slip," said Nampel. "All without a single extra step."

In 2010, ROLAIR implemented the current version of OSAS. This software upgrade also presented ROLAIR with an opportunity to upgrade their servers and server software. After the conversion, they were running Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 with remote desktop services. With "thin" clients for all users, employees can get their work done while the souped-up server handles the heavy lifting. Nightly offsite backup adds an extra dimension of security for disaster recovery.

Integrated CRM saves time and money

Nampel also has high praise for SalesCTRL, Advanced Concepts' customer relationship management solution with the HotLink interface to Order PLUS! and the OSAS backend system. "HotLink has been huge in that we can be on the phone with a customer and have access to all of their current information," Nampel says. From the SalesCTRL screen, a representative can not only pull the latest information about the customer's sales activity, but can initiate sales or inventory inquiries—instant access to whatever the customer needs for immediate satisfaction.

"Purchasing an integrated CRM solution can seem expensive when compared to traditional off-the-shelf products," noted Wohlfahrt, "But when you factor in the savings in effort and man-hours that an integrated solution provides you, the total cost-of-ownership is actually much lower."

Jeff Wohlfahrt

Reliable Support from the Partner and the Software Manufacturer

"Advanced Concepts have been great," said Nampel of their software provider. "The system is really reliable, but it's nice that they're only a phone call away if we have a question or a problem."

Nampel has also taken advantage of Open Systems' customer conferences to expand her knowledge of Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) available through OSAS. "The class I attended on ODBC opened the door to provide all kinds of useful reports. I use it constantly to extract and analyze data. I love it when someone asks me for specific information and I can extract exactly what they are looking for in no time flat!" said Nampel.

ROLAIR has stood the test of time with reliable products and intense market focus. With strategic updates to their back-end systems from Open Systems and Advanced Concepts, Inc., ROLAIR has been able to keep their focus where it belongs—on providing excellent products and support for professional contractors everywhere.

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