

MagnaFlow Uses Leadership On-Demand for High Performance Sales Activity

Auto enthusiasts familiar with MagnaFlow recognize the company as the worldwide leader in performance exhausts and expect top of the line technology and durability standards from its product lines. Brand recognition of MagnaFlow is an advantage for its sales force, but its tenacious team does not take it for granted. Although the company's vice president of sales and marketing believed that the company's reputation for performance products gave them a competitive edge to sales opportunities, he'd been in the automotive aftermarket industry long enough to know that slow time-to-market and unresponsiveness to areas of sales concerns could open the door for competitors to steal market share. To get a better understanding of potential issues, opportunities and to increase customer service, the company purchased a new customer relationship management (CRM) solution. MagnaFlow's goal was to use technology to enhance its leadership position and to increase market share.

Sales Tracking Needing a Boost

Larry Norris, vice president, sales and marketing for MagnaFlow, admits that their internal sales tracking and forecasting processes needed a boost. The team of fifty internal sales representatives would write monthly status reports to detail their activity and forecasts using different Excel and Word documents. This resulted in mounds of paper for Norris. He found it difficult to retrieve important information that was requested and follow up on important issues was being left unattended.

Norris would compile the sales reports and attempt to extract the important information to present to the management team. This was a very tedious, time-consuming activity that would take up to a week or more to compile. The reports would contain old, stale information and could not be easily shared with the other departments who needed it such as Quality, Operations, Engineering, Technical Support or Customer Service. As a result, it would often take a long time to identify and address important issues that weren't necessarily urgent, yet important to MagnaFlow's reputation in the marketplace.

"It was evident to MagnaFlow that an efficient CRM solution was needed to boost sales productivity," stated Norris. "We wanted to deliver a first-in-class customer service experience, gain a better handle on critical business information and have more people throughout the organization have real-time access to the information they need to support our customers better. We chose to engage with Cerius Interim Executive Solutions to help us with our CRM implementation because of their reputation for experienced, hands-on executives."

Interim Executive Brings Sales Performance to Life

MagnaFlow was aware of the track record of failed implementations for CRM programs so it was critically important to bring in an expert to lead them through the process. Any downtime or errors in the implementation would be detrimental to sales leads and customer accounts. MagnaFlow engaged with Cerius Interim Executive Solutions for an interim CRM manager to implement the project.

The sales team was very receptive to automating the sales processes. The Cerius Interim CRM manager assessed the team up-front to better understand their needs and identify which requirements should be prioritized to ensure optimum success.

One of the challenges MagnaFlow faced was that they sold products to many different types of organizations in several different markets ranging from aftermarket, off-road and high performance vehicles such as race cars and monster trucks. Each product division had different definitions and procedures for accomplishing similar tasks. The Cerius Interim CRM manager led the sales organization to a common structure for the markets they target, which enabled the team to have a consistent, more streamlined reporting and tracking process.

"The Cerius Interim CRM manager worked relentlessly on understanding our current processes, procedures and terminology and was able to quickly recommend a consistent manner to classify all our accounts," stated Norris. "This has allowed us to create responsive reports that help us make better, quicker decisions."



During the month-long engagement, the Cerius Interim CRM manager focused on optimizing processes to drive productivity improvements. This resulted in less administrative time spent by sales representatives and an increase in customer and prospect selling time. Once documented, the information became the “blueprint” for the customization of the CRM solution.

The Cerius Interim CRM manager also identified a CRM Implementation Partner to install the solution company-wide. The “blueprint” served as a foundation for the Implementation Partner to understand MagnaFlow’s needs and ultimately customize the application by setting up various management dashboards and then training the staff to use the new CRM software.

Results

MagnaFlow credits the CRM implementation for improving sales processes up to four-times more efficient. The Cerius Interim CRM manager worked part time for one month until the Implementation Partner took over the roll out. During the two-month roll out phase, the Cerius Interim executive checked in on the status of the implementation to ensure continuity and communications were maintained within the sales team.

“We react to customer and prospect issues far faster than our competition,” said Norris. “We now have on-line access to important information and an ability to create real-time reports that use to take days to prepare. Cerius Interim’s leadership made our CRM implementation smooth and successful.”

MagnaFlow’s sales team can now easily update account information and be prepared for weekly sales meetings. The quality of the reporting is crisper and far superior than before. MagnaFlow also conducts a portion of their weekly sales meeting by viewing on-line reports regarding leads, opportunities, growth by region and growth by sales representatives using the CRM software.

As a result, the sales team can deliver reports to management that are accurate and only include specific, detailed information on an as need basis. In turn, corporate is more responsive to the field than ever. MagnaFlow has plans to roll out the application to independent sales representatives.

Many companies seek the expertise of Cerius Interim Executive Solutions to initiate new programs within their sales, operations, finance, human resources and marketing organizations. Its roster of more than 600 Interim Executives consists of C-level experts with experience in running large scale projects within companies of all sizes. More information about how you can use one or a team of Cerius Interim Executives to grow your business can be found at <http://www.ceriusinterim.com>.