

"Customers are genuinely excited about having important information at their fingertips. eRoom is the edge we need. Salespeople in the field are realizing that, and are jumping in head first!"

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Introduction

Haworth, Inc. is the third-largest designer, manufacturer and marketer of contract office furnishings with sales of \$1.54 billion and 11,000 employees worldwide. Haworth's products include panel systems, desking systems, wood casegoods and files. A 50-year-old company, Haworth entered the global marketplace in the late 1980's through a series of acquisitions and green-field operations. The company now includes locations throughout the world and a client base of global corporations.

Business Environment

Each of these global accounts has a team of Haworth account managers dispersed to service individual locations. Haworth's sales process grew more complex, encompassing multiple languages, time zones, currencies, and distribution channels. There was need for a globally efficient means of sharing client information and executing procedures.

Challenges

During recent years of rapid international growth, Haworth recognized an increasing need to efficiently share information within the global sales team, to overcome delays of communicating through international time zones, and to instantly, proactively share new account information. Multinational corporations, Haworth's prime customers, expected Haworth to support local and regional furniture projects in a consistent way, no matter where they are located.

Solution

To replace its previous sales force automation software, Haworth developed the Global Account Information Network (G.A.I.N.), a sales support application using eRoom to link Haworth's sales force, dealers and customers around the globe. It provides a comprehensive source for up-to-the-minute customer information across marketing, sales and customer service functions. It instinctively integrates Haworth's email/scheduling application, and all common software programs. It also includes eRoom's capabilities for live chat, threaded discussions, polling and email paging.

Benefits

G.A.I.N. helps Haworth to provide a "single face" to the customer worldwide. This supports Haworth's continuous improvement initiative of being "easy to do business with."

G.A.I.N. has provided other benefits including:

A coordinated, seamless global sales process benefiting the customer and Haworth

G.A.I.N. allows Haworth to provide a coordinated approach to selling products and services to their clients' global operations. This was accomplished, to a large extent, by using eRoom to create a "virtual teaming" environment in which to interact. In this environment, Haworth account executives and managers can develop a common awareness of customers' product requirements, account history, current and past issues, and current contact information from every location.

Greater user adoption and cost avoidance

With the previous sales support system, about 25% of U.S. field members accessed it about once per month. With G.A.I.N. in place, 100% of global field members access it at least once per month, 75% access it weekly, and 50% access it daily. Selecting G.A.I.N. instead of a new sales force automation tool allowed Haworth to avoid almost an order of magnitude increase in costs.

Only one version of data eliminates confusion and non-value added time

Sales data from previous transactions is readily available, eliminating redundant data collection and increasing productivity. Reduced preparation time allows Haworth to enter the bidding processes earlier, when the focus is on product value and design, rather than price.

Corporate information becomes corporate capital

Account information is collected after each customer contact and remains Haworth "property," even if a member leaves the company. Information remains in a central location with controlled distribution (encrypted files on a laptop), thus

increasing information latency and security.

Next Steps

Demand for G.A.I.N. has exceeded expectations. An initial purchase of 500 user licenses was assigned within the first six months. Haworth executives with North American clients, product marketing, training departments, and external Architectural and Design firms are among the secondary users of G.A.I.N. To meet the new demand, 250 additional licenses are being purchased. At Haworth, even more departments outside of sales are investigating the use of eRoom for additional business applications.