



Case Study

AE Smith Looks to New Solutions Provider to Help Meet Customer Demands

CUSTOMER PROFILE

AE Smith is the largest privately owned mechanical firm in Australia

BUSINESS SITUATION

AE Smith's customer base grew and it became increasingly difficult and more time consuming to meet the demands of their customers

SOLUTION

AE Smith adopted the WennSoft Job Cost and Service Management Series that were easy to drive and helped to keep administrative costs down

SOFTWARE

Microsoft GP
WennSoft Job Cost
WennSoft Service Management

"CDC Praxa is fantastic and they know the product inside and out. If we have any issues they always know how to help us. They have stuck with us through the whole process by monitoring things and directing us when we need it."

*Aldo Cevaal
National Service Manager
AE Smith*

AE Smith & Son Pty Ltd didn't become the largest privately owned mechanical service contractors in Australia without making a few promises to their customers.

"Our customers are looking for a high-level of quality and accountability from us," said National Service Manager for AE Smith, Aldo Cevaal. "They want to spend their time and efforts managing their business not worrying about managing the mechanics of their building. That is where we come in."

AE Smith is the largest privately owned mechanical firm in Australia. They have 135 total employees with 75 technicians. To help them meet the growing demands of their customers AE Smith collaborated with CDC Praxa to implement WennSoft Job Cost and Service Management Series and Microsoft Dynamics – GP (Great Plains).

According to Aldo, AE Smith spends a lot of time and money on training their technicians because they carry such high levels of accountability on the job. "What makes us stand out as a company is our personalized service, employee retention and the ability to keep our promise to the customer," said Aldo. "We always do what we say we are going to do. We are a very customer focused organization."

As AE Smith's customer base grew, it became increasingly difficult and more time consuming to meet the demands of their customers. They realized the UNIX based back office solution they were using was not going to work for them anymore.

"Our current software solution at the time had done a reasonable job but it was not interactive," explained Aldo. "It did not enable our customers to go and check out their information online. They want to know how their service orders are progressing and the system just did not have that kind of functionality."

In order to get information out to the customer as quickly as possible AE Smith employed a full-time person who would field the calls and manually go through records to find the information requested.

"Some of our customers have compliance requirements for their insurance and public safety laws and they need to get feedback at that very moment, said Aldo.

"To do that we would troll through all the service contracts manually and provide feedback in excel or word documents."



AE Smith was doing a lot of manual, time consuming work to get feedback to their customers. They reached a point where the solution was not growing along with the business.

"The system we were on did have some functionality that other products did not have at the time but it stopped growing with us," said Aldo.

"Most importantly it not only stopped growing with us but with our customers. They are becoming more demanding and they want more feedback than ever from us. We knew that in order to keep our promise to them we needed to make a change."

AE Smith began the search for a new solution that would offer more flexibility internally and give them the ability to meet their customers growing demands. They choose four companies to investigate in depth. After closer inspection two of those companies did not have the functionality needed.

To pick between the remaining two AE Smith involved many employees within the business to help make the decision.

"Administration staff, dispatchers and service managers all had a hand in making the decision," said Aldo. "They were the people who were going to be using the system day in and day out. It was all about getting the right system. We were looking for someone we could be in business with for many years, which is one of the reasons we choose WennSoft."

AE Smith knew that WennSoft would be a great fit for their business because of the detail in some of the functionality specific to a mechanical contractors business.

"I was able to tell that the WennSoft products had been developed specifically for mechanical contractors because of the way the product handled contract management, tasking and other little things that other products did not have. You can really tell that WennSoft knows what it takes for a mechanical contractor to run his business."

One of the selling points for AE Smith was that the job cost and service products from WennSoft seamlessly integrate with Microsoft Dynamics – GP (Great Plains). This integration makes the WennSoft products very easy to learn for anyone who is familiar with the Microsoft environment.

"We needed a system that would be easy to drive so we could

keep our administrative costs down," said Aldo. "Having the integration meant that the employees would be working with tools that look and feel similar. The menus and the way everything worked gives people a level of confidence right away."

"It was also important to know that we would be on board with Microsoft because they are progressive and are enhancing their products day in and day out," added Aldo. "As long as Microsoft is around means our company will be at the cutting edge of technology."

In order to successfully make the change from the old system to WennSoft AE Smith got in touch with CDC Praxa to implement and support a wide range of eEnterprise Business Solutions.

CDC Praxa specialises in vertical solutions that seamlessly integrate with Microsoft Dynamics – GP (Great Plains). CDC Praxa has successfully implemented business solutions for numerous organisations specialising in HVAC, construction, manufacturing and professional services.

"We have had a relationship with CDC Praxa for seven years. They know our business and have stayed with us through everything," said Aldo.

The staff at CDC Praxa was instrumental in helping AE Smith to implement the new WennSoft solution. With their knowledge of the WennSoft products and their ability to give advice and make suggestions is one of the main reasons the change to the new system has been so successful.

"CDC Praxa is fantastic and they know the product inside and out," said Aldo. "If we have any issues they always know how to help us. They have stuck with us through the whole process by monitoring things and directing us when we need it. They will play a key role in the future as we implement more WennSoft tools."

By working with CDC Praxa and WennSoft, AE Smith plans to implement seven other locations on the WennSoft solution and begin using tools such as the eCustomer Portal and MobilTEC in the near future.

"Overall we are confident that we will be able to elevate ourselves up to the next level in terms of delivery to our customers by having a system like WennSoft," said Aldo.

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