

Sofonnews

Are you going to achieve your sales targets?



SAVAL:
"TO US, SOFON IS A STRATEGIC TOOL TO ACHIEVE COMMERCIAL GOALS"



Never again offer a product priced incorrectly

LUBO:
"THANKS TO SOFON, PRE-CALCULATION AND COSTING CALCULATION ARE ALL WITHIN AN ACCEPTABLE VARIANCE"



Anyone can make quotations

BROEKEMA:
"WE GET FAR MORE WORK DONE WITH THE SAME NUMBER OF STAFF"

3 Experts speak out

An interview with Ben de Haan (Staff Executive & Marketer) and Jan Kerdijk (Production Planner) of **Broekema**: “We get far more work done with the same number of staff.”

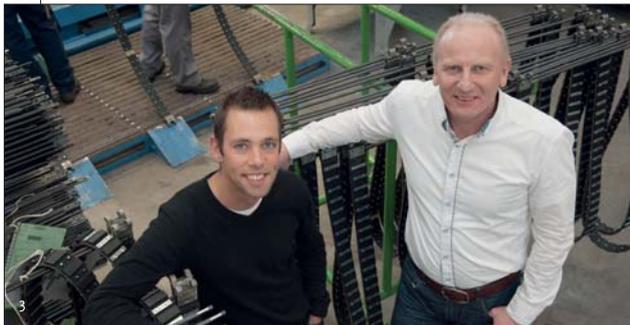
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5 An interview with Erwin de Vrind (Business Support Manager) and Ad Buijs (Sales Office Manager) of **Saval**: “Sofon has enabled a better distribution of the workload.”

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7 An interview with Franc van Wilgen (Managing Director **Lubo**), Tom Kesteloo (R&D Engineer **Lubo**), Harry Buter (Business Application Engineer **Bollegraaf**) and Klaas Jan Riezebos (Senior Consultant **Sofon**): “We now know what the real costs are and never miss hidden costs.”

8 New customers



The year of sales

2013 is going to be the year of sales. Internationally the trend is that businesses are more and more focused on making their sales process faster, cheaper and more successful.

While many companies have outsourced or moved to low income countries with support functions and even production, it is as important to get the sales processes in order. Delays in sales because of manual, error-prone processes have a negative influence on competitiveness and profitability.

At Sofon, we see a strong increase in the willingness of companies to improve sales processes with very specific investments. Companies are looking ahead once more and are increasingly investing in the future; how better than by investing in the quality of communications with prospects and customers? This is what we do – and we are pleased more and more companies are choosing Sofon to facilitate this.

In this newsletter, you will find out what Sofon has meant to Broekema, Saval and Lubo.

Enjoy!

Otto van der Tang
Managing Director



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PRODUCTION PLANNER

We get far more work done with the same number of staff

Broekema is *the* specialist in the area of quality, high-end crop conveyor belts and the associated motor components. Broekema has production facilities in the Netherlands and the USA (Minnesota and California), but also has agents and dealers worldwide. The company needed some support for their sales and production process. Sofon and Microsoft Dynamics AX were the solution, say Ben de Haan (Staff Executive & Marketer) and Jan Kerdijk (Production Planner).

How did you approach the implementation?

De Haan explains: "At the time, I was completely dedicated to the implementation of Sofon. I had no programming knowledge, but I found I didn't need it. If you have some affinity with IT and are capable of logical thought, Sofon does the rest."

Kerdijk adds: "A connector between Sofon and AX was also implemented. Although these are two different systems, users don't even notice; the systems connect seamlessly. We are now in the process of rolling-out Sofon internationally. In 2012 we implemented the Sofon AX solution in the US. Our German production companies will soon follow."

So you clearly see the added value of Sofon?

De Haan explains: "Yes, we see Sofon as much more than a configurator. Sofon is increasingly used as a kind of knowledge center; to make knowledge available."

Kerdijk adds: "Previously, generating quotations was done by a few people with a lot of experience. Thanks to Sofon, the knowledge these colleagues have is now accessible to everyone. The advantage is that experienced staff can concentrate on other matters while new staffers can quickly achieve sales productivity without making errors."

What do speedy, error-free operations mean for Broekema?

De Haan goes on: "Thanks to Sofon and AX we can get far more work done with the same staff (300 quotations per



month, 200 production orders per week). We can handle more requests and increase our revenue."

Kerdijk adds: "Not only has revenue increased; planning and production also profit from Sofon. Now bills of materials and routings are error-free, the stream of goods in our company is more under control. We also have insight into the coverage of the machines and the factory floor."

What has Sofon meant to Broekema?

De Haan explains: "The implementation of Sofon and AX was an important step for Broekema. We can now act more on the basis of insight, not only on our gut. We now know exactly in which markets we sell the most and which products this concerns. We also have more insight into our cost price and margins. For us, cost price does not increase out of the blue, but in response to current material and production costs."

RESULTS

- More work done with the same staff
- Correct bills of materials and routings in ERP (Microsoft Dynamics AX)
- Sofon acts as knowledge center
- New staff can quickly start productive work
- Experienced staff have time for more complex tasks
- Fewer errors within the organization
- More insight into cost prices
- More insight into coverage machines/factory floor

Erwin de Vrind

Ad Buijs

*Sofon has enabled
a better workload
distribution*

Strategic tool to achieve commercial goals

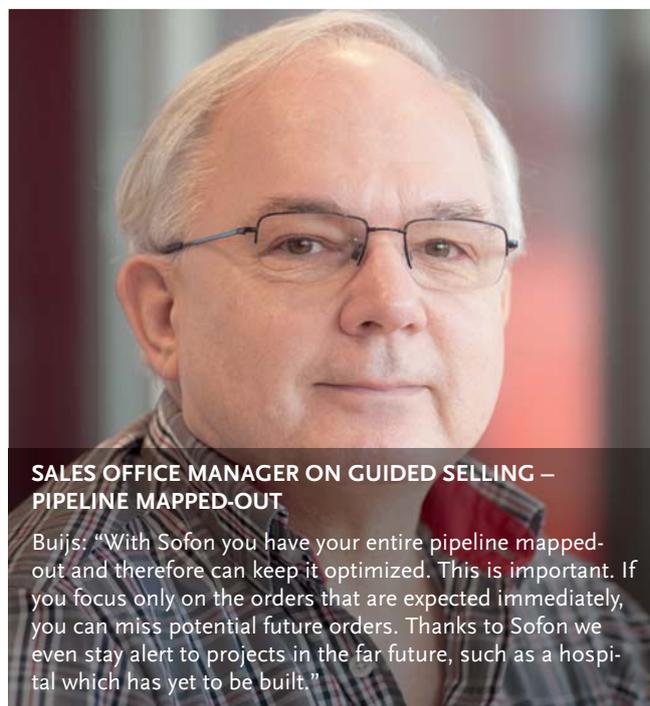
Almost all Sofon customers achieve comparable results with Sofon software; better quotations generated more quickly. That also applies to Saval's Business Unit Systems, part of the SK FireSaftey Group. But Saval achieved even more... We talked to Erwin de Vrind (Business Support Manager) and Ad Buijs (Sales Office Manager) of Saval.

Fire and evacuation security

Saval, driving force behind this project, has been active in the area of fire and evacuation safety since 1925; from fire hoses to full fire extinguishing systems. Buijs explains: "Last minute requests are more and more often a day-to-day occurrence for us. The time we have to generate a quotation is getting shorter, this also applies to project cycle time. So it was time for us to optimize the sales process. We made that happen thanks to Sofon; now all processes have been analyzed and improved."

Combination CRM-quotation generator

Saval leverages the Sofon Sales Organizer (CRM) and Sofon Proposal Organizer (quotation generator). De Vrind continues: "This combination takes a lot of work off our hands. Important data from CRM – such as address information – is automatically included in the quotation. On the other hand,



SALES OFFICE MANAGER ON GUIDED SELLING – PIPELINE MAPPED-OUT

Buijs: "With Sofon you have your entire pipeline mapped-out and therefore can keep it optimized. This is important. If you focus only on the orders that are expected immediately, you can miss potential future orders. Thanks to Sofon we even stay alert to projects in the far future, such as a hospital which has yet to be built."

TIPS FOR AN OPTIMAL USE OF GUIDED SELLING

- De Vrind: “Free-up someone for model building; in this way you become familiar with the software quickly and you can switch rapidly – with minimal consultancy. In our case only 10 days to go live! But if you do need help, Sofon then has excellent consultancy and support ready to assist.”
- Buijs: “Make sure everyone works with Sofon, this gives you more insight into activities and the sales processes are run more easily.”

important quotation values are immediately saved along with the customer information. We can follow-up quotations easily from CRM and see which request has priority. In this way, our complete pipeline is mapped out.”

Better workload distribution

Sofon has enabled a better workload distribution at Saval. De Vrind explains: “Everyone now creates Activities in Sofon. So it is immediately clear who is up to his neck in work.



MODEL BUILDER ON GUIDED SELLING – LEGO BOX

De Vrind: “Sofon is actually a Lego box; you can build anything with it. In order to build, you simply gather all the information necessary from within the organization. You are not only standardizing, you really are looking at all processes with a fresh eye to map them out again in an improved way.”

A colleague who is not as busy can now jump in to contribute. What a project manager used to do in his head – making decisions, calculating – now takes place systematically (yet unobtrusively) under the hood of the Sofon engine. You can more easily collaborate and so alleviate the backlog.”

More time for other business

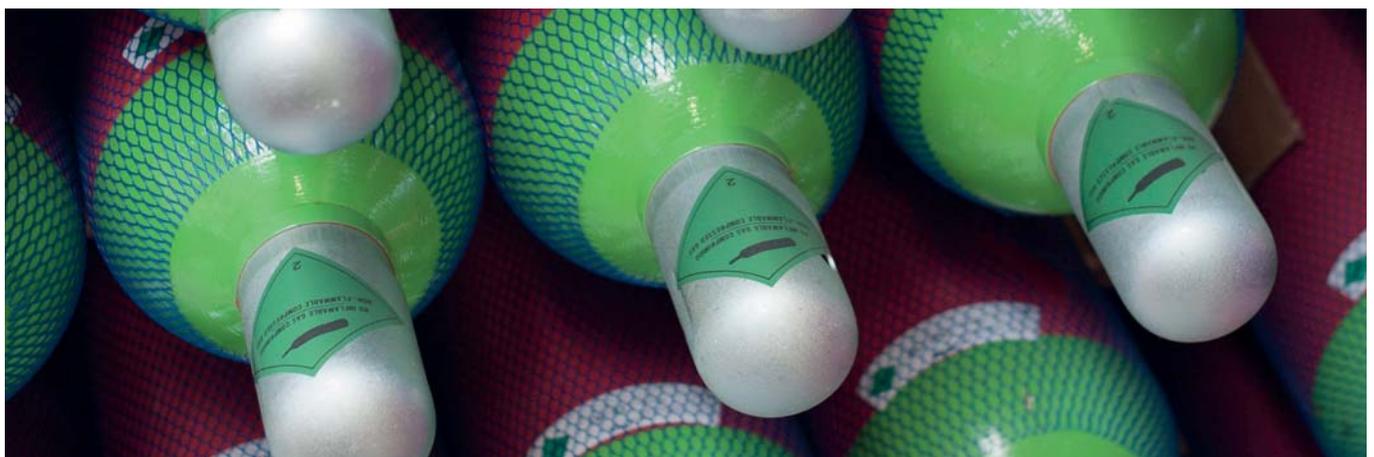
Thanks to Sofon, quotation cycle time has been shortened from 4 hours to just 2 to 3 minutes, but Saval expects even more improvement in the future! Buijs: “In the future, the Field Organization will enter information directly in Sofon and the quotation will be completed instantly. No more repeat work for the Back Office, but more time for other business activities like following-up on quotations or optimizing quotation content. This makes our sales processes even simpler and quicker to navigate.”

More and more application possibilities

Saval sees more and more application possibilities for Sofon. Buijs explains: “As soon as the SK FireSafety Group regional companies adopt Sofon, we know exactly who is quoting where. In this way, we prevent internal competition. Service is also planning to start using Sofon. We can then see exactly what we have offered, when follow-up phone calls need to be made and what the chance of success is. We now want to send along the service contract immediately with the quotation and not wait to do this for half a year. We expect that we might get that signature immediately and make more money from existing customers. So Sofon is a real strategic tool for us to achieve our commercial goals.”

RESULTS

- Sales processes standardized and improved
- Quotation cycle time shortened from 4 hours to 2 to 3 minutes
- Sales processes simpler and quicker to run through
- More time for other (sales) business
- Repeat work is in the past
- Complete pipeline mapped-out
- Following-up on quotations is easier
- Insight into workload per staff member
- Work is easily taken over if needed



Tom Kesteloo

*We now know
what the real costs
are and never
miss hidden costs*

Harry Buter

Never again offer a product priced incorrectly

Sorting and recycling materials is becoming more and more important and necessary. Something known first hand by Lubo Systems – part of Bollegraaf Holding. Lubo develops and produces customer-specific machines for the recycling industry. Lubo has grown impressively due to their orientation toward solutions, innovation and excellent price/quality ratio. The introduction of Sofon Guided Selling contributes to this. Franc van Wilgen (Managing Director Lubo), Tom Kesteloo (R&D Engineer Lubo), Harry Buter (Business Application Engineer Bollegraaf) and Klaas Jan Riezebos (Senior Consultant Sofon) discuss the results.

Act as two companies

The sorting units at Lubo are sold separately, but can also be part of the solution offered by Bollegraaf Recycling Solutions. Van Wilgen explains: “When Bollegraaf started working with Sofon, it was handy to define our machines in Sofon. Now Bollegraaf can quote our products, while we can also use Sofon for our own quotation generation. In a way, we act like two companies, when we are actually one. Thanks to Sofon, we can generate quotations quickly, in different languages, but we also know which sales and payment conditions we need to employ for each country.”



MANAGING DIRECTOR ON GUIDED SELLING

Van Wilgen: “We experience the advantages that Sofon promises every day.”

TIPS FOR AN OPTIMAL USE OF GUIDED SELLING

- Van Wilgen: “Make sure more than one member of staff can produce and maintain models. This is a good way to spread knowledge.”
- Van Wilgen: “Screen your staff if you’re looking for a model builder. You’ll be a step ahead if somebody already knows your company and products.”

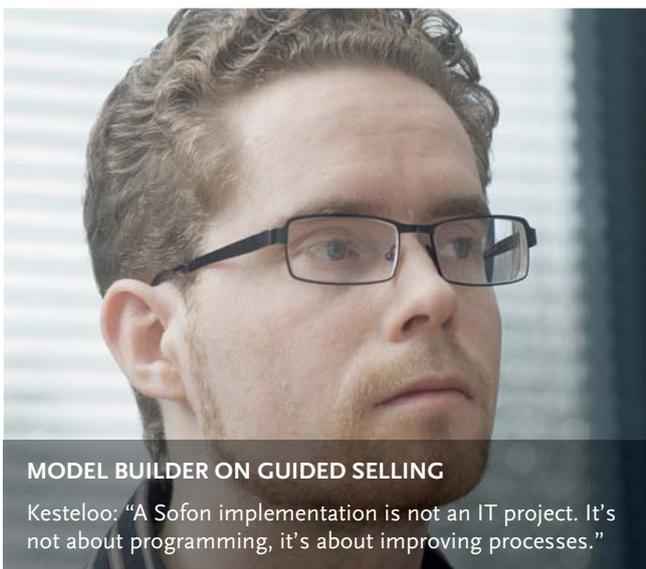


BUSINESS APPLICATION ENGINEER ON GUIDED SELLING

Buter: “Sofon actually made us think up standard solutions”

Not too expensive, not too cheap

Lubo discovered that Sofon also had a lot to offer in the area of calculation. Van Wilgen continues: “We juggle so many customer-specific matters that it was sometimes difficult to define the right sales price. You don’t want to offer a product too cheaply or too expensively. Now we have precisely mapped-out what the cost factors are, and moreover we no longer miss hidden costs. Thanks to Sofon, pre-calculation, costing and technical pre-calculation are all within an acceptable variance. Changes in prices are also quickly made and are automatically calculated for all products. This is how everyone always quotes the same and current prices. We can finally keep an eye on our margins and overspending.” But how did Lubo get this far?



MODEL BUILDER ON GUIDED SELLING

Kesteloo: “A Sofon implementation is not an IT project. It’s not about programming, it’s about improving processes.”



SENIOR CONSULTANT ON GUIDED SELLING

Riezebos: “It’s great that the implementation not only achieves results in the sales and quotation process, but throughout the entire company.”

‘Live’ in three months

A project team was set-up for the implementation of Sofon. Klaas Jan Riezebos supervised the implementation from the Sofon end, while Harry Buter used his experience of a Sofon implementation at Bollegraaf and Tom Kesteloo was roped in as model builder. Riezebos explains: “Lubo wanted to go ‘live’ in three months and we made it happen. Including a fulltime model builder was a success factor in this equation. Keeping him free of other responsibilities made sure there were no conflicting priorities.” Van Wilgen adds: “We quickly concluded that this person should be a colleague; someone who knew our company and our products well, a conceptual thinker.”

Improving processes

As an R&D Engineer, Tom Kesteloo was surprised to be asked for model building. Kesterloo comments: “I thought that implementing Sofon would be more of a job for a programmer. But you actually work more on improving the overall business processes than working on IT. You can organize Sofon in your own way and results are immediately visible. Colleagues also saw the advantages of Sofon. Sofon easily enabled their involvement into what I was doing and that’s a huge plus when you’re trying to define the knowledge of the organization.” Buter adds: “You quickly discover that some matters are not standardized and where key information is lacking. When that information surfaces and is saved, there are enormous advantages. This shortens sales cycle time and prevents future search expeditions.”

RESULTS

- Knowledge is saved and is accessible
- No repeated data entry
- Fast generation of quotations in various languages
- Automatic correct sales and payment conditions in various countries
- Pre-calculation, costing and technical pre-calculation are within an acceptable variance
- Price changes are calculated automatically
- Margins and overspending mapped-out in management reports
- Standardization
- Maintenance with no IT knowledge

New customers

Sofon Guided Selling is used in various industries by – at first glance – totally different customers. Our customers operate in the world of industry, warehousing, transport, insurance, telecom and services.

A short introduction to a few new customers:



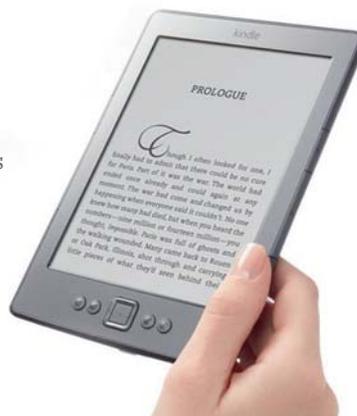
Tolsma-Grisnich offers total solutions and components for cleaning, sorting, and storing agricultural products, such as potatoes, onions, and carrots, for agricultural companies, packers, and the industrial processors. Along with aboveground and underground ventilation conduits for bulk storage, Tolsma-Grisnich is the specialist in crate storage with forced ventilation (blowing or sucking) and room aeration and cooling systems. All around the world, growers, brokers, and processors choose Tolsma-Grisnich products due to their innovative nature, ease of use, and operational reliability. Tolsma-Grisnich sets high demands for its products and services, but also for its calculations and quotations, which must be prepared and made available to the customer in a fast, complete, error-free, and professional manner. To further improve this process, Tolsma-Grisnich has selected Sofon to optimize and speed up its sales and quotation process.

itema Italy, Switzerland and China. The company has a tradition of more than 150 years with an installed base of over 200,000 weaving machines in operation. They are legendary for being the sole provider of the three most spread weft insertion systems. Besides the Rapier and Air jet, they are unique with the Projectile technology. Itema guarantees the right weaving machine for any type of woven fabric. From commodity to high-fashion or industrial fabrics, Itema has the right weaving machine for it. A global presence in more than 100 countries ensures a fast and reliable service. Sofon has been selected as quotation and sales configuration solution for their loom solutions for their external sales, international sales offices and dealer network. Sofon will be integrated with their global SAP system.

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Sofon is the supplier of sales support software under the name Sofon Guided Selling. With Sofon, quotations, contracts, orders and other sales documents are put together simply, quickly and error-free. Among other things, Sofon Guided Selling supports calculation, configuration, visualization and document generation in any language desired. This decreases sales costs, reduces delivery times, increases scoring rates and improves cooperation between customers, dealers, sales, engineering and production. Sofon integrates with standard CRM and ERP systems and is suitable for all companies who have a customer-specific way of operating – in every sector – anywhere in the world.

Guided Selling Blog

Sofon is happy to share knowledge with you! In Sofon's weekly blog posts, various experts from the Sofon organization speak out. These experts have a clear insight and experience into best practices within the sales and quotation processes of companies who supply customer-specific products and services. You can share in this knowledge by visiting www.sofon.com/blog.



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