

Sofonnews

Jeroen Manders Goudsmit Magnetics

Guy Mutsaerts Goudsmit Magnetics

Because of Sofon,
the relationship between
engineering and sales
has improved
tremendously

Business Case: After two weeks, a new sales rep can make his first quotation for a customized machine; something that once took six months.

Longtime Sofon Customer: Montis doesn't sell standard furniture. Instead it requires a complex order process. Sofon was able to streamline this process.

In the Spotlight: Following a thorough test by SAP, the connector between Sofon and SAP has been granted the SAP certificate 'SAP Certified Integration with SAP Applications'.

SAP® Certified
Integration with SAP Applications

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Today, every company is a 'marginal' company. But what does that really mean? Under the current economic conditions, it's highly important for every company that margins be monitored. During significant growth, few loss-making orders are not so noticeable. At this point, every order must be profitable. How can this be achieved? How does a company monitor the margins on orders? Through good post-calculations? Certainly, that is necessary. But more importantly, companies need to ensure ahead of time that the sales rep does not make commitments that cannot be met. This is an area where things often go wrong. Our approach and our software is focused on monitoring margins, starting at the very first moment that your organization is in touch with the customer. Such focus starts right from the very first sales meeting. The first risk to margin is created when a sales rep asks the wrong questions or creates the wrong expectation during the initial prospect meeting. We help our customers' sales reps ask the right questions and offer the right products at the right price. How exactly do we accomplish this? Sofon customers, Goudsmit Magnetics and Montis, answer that question in this edition of Sofon News.

Enjoy reading!

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The SAP certification shows that the partnership between Sofon and Quinso functions perfectly

SAP® Certified
Integration with SAP Applications

Partnership Sofon and Quinso awarded SAP certification

Sofon and Quinso, service provider in the field of SAP, have entered into a partnership that focuses on building new integrations between Sofon and SAP. The SAP connector has now received the

Integration between Sofon and ERP

For companies that deliver customer-specific products and services, making quotations is an important part of the sales process. For generating quotations quickly, easily, and correctly for complex products and services, ERP's native configuration modules are usually not optimal. Sofon Guided Selling offers standard software for needs analysis, product configuration, sales configuration, calculation, and quotation generation. To enable the cooperation between sales, engineering, and production to run smoothly, integration between Sofon and an ERP system is almost always required.

SAP certificate

Many medium-sized and large companies that sell customer-specific products use SAP. To enable the integration between Sofon and SAP to run as easily as possible, Sofon and Quinso have developed a standard connector. Following thorough test-

SAP certificate 'SAP Certified Integration with SAP Applications'. Reason enough to spotlight this crowning of a successful partnership.

ing and guidelines by SAP, this connector has been recently awarded the SAP certificate 'SAP Certified Integration with SAP Applications'. Sofon is satisfied with the cooperation and sees this certification as a crown on the combined work. Marijn Schouten, Director Business Development of Sofon, explains, "Quinso is a knowledgeable SAP specialist with very direct lines of communication. Various projects carried out at Sofon customer locations have now demonstrated that we can work well together. The certification is further proof that this partnership functions perfectly." Quinso also sees the added value of a connector between Sofon and SAP. Hubert Wezenberg, Managing Partner of Quinso, says, "Sofon offers SAP users significant added value in a critical aspect of the business process. Using Sofon, SAP users can create better quotations more quickly." Thanks to its years of experience, Quinso can help Sofon and Sofon customers in realizing reliable and modifiable interfaces between Sofon and SAP.

After two weeks, a new sales rep can make his first quotation for a customized machine

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Guy Mutsaerts

Case

The relationship between engineering and sales has improved tremendously thanks to Sofon

Goudsmit Magnetics has 50 years' experience in designing and manufacturing magnets and magnet systems for a wide range of applications. Goudsmit Magnetics' products are exported to 80 countries all around the world. Goudsmit Magnetics has three divisions: separation, recycling, and handling & conveying. Goudsmit Magnetics utilizes the engineer-to-order principle, in which production is only carried out on assignment from the customer. Although Goudsmit performed well

using this philosophy, all of the changes had become unmanageable for production. The company therefore decided to increase standardization in its products. To support these efforts, the company went in search of a suitable sales support system, and ultimately decided on Sofon. Guy Mutsaerts, Commercial Director at Goudsmit, and Jeroen Manders, Product Manager, discuss what the arrival of Sofon has done for their company.

Business processes

Goudsmit was having trouble translating their customer wishes into the right solution and delivering the solution promptly. "At that time, we scrutinized all of the business processes and went in search of a sales support system", explains Jeroen Manders, Product Manager at Goudsmit. "When making a choice for a sales support system, Sofon stood out thanks to its quotation calculator. Sofon's working method

was ultimately the deciding factor." Guy Mutsaerts, Commercial Director at Goudsmit, adds, "The supplier is required to tell us how we must use a system, and Sofon made that clear to us." The eventual choice for Sofon was made definitively when Mutsaerts brought his Managing Director along to a Sofon seminar. "During the seminar, he understood immediately the potential for Goudsmit."

Standardization

Using Sofon, Goudsmit was able to deliver custom work within modular standards. As Mutsaerts explains, “Standardization often means that customers must accept what the supplier comes up with. That’s not the direction in which we wanted to go. With Sofon, the advantage is that we are now in fact very flexible in sales. We respond to our customers’ wishes with our modules. We continually discuss with engineering what options we want to offer in our sales. We then embed the feedback that we receive from engineering regarding these discussions as new modules in the Sofon model. In that way, we have created a link between sales and engineering. This new approach enables us to grow without allowing the number of options to get out of hand. We manage the standards much better now. This has also led to a better product forecast, with which production can manage its activities more effectively and procurement can modify its policy.”



Fast, smart implementation

Manders appreciates Sofon’s approach to the implementation, “Sofon gave us a clear recommendation on the implementation method. We understood the setup of Sofon completely, which enabled us to clearly express how we wanted the information to be presented in Sofon. By building models together with a Sofon consultant, your model building proficiency increases. Thanks to the coaching and guidance of the Sofon consultant, after the implementation, you are able to continue independently. Working with Sofon is enjoyable, and the implementation method is extremely effective.” Goudsmit went live following a six-month implementation.

Complete quotations thanks to Sofon

Since the implementation of Sofon, all of Goudsmit’s quotations now run via the new system. As Mutsaerts explains, “We now make 100% of our quotations with Sofon. All of our product data was already saved in a product portal. The major advantage of that was that all of the information was available already pre-structured. The product portal is used almost as a type of hat rack on which we continually “hang” information. The link between the product portal and Sofon enables quotations of all machines to be created using Sofon. The ultimate goal is to make the quotations at the customer’s location.” According to Mutsaerts this would be a major step forward, because changes could then be made immediately, which in turn would lead to an increase in the quotation speed. New sales representatives also work faster with Sofon. “After two weeks, a new sales rep can make his first quotation for a customized machine, something that used to take six months. And all of this is thanks to Sofon.”

Selling products internationally

Goudsmit currently works mainly in the Netherlands, Germany and France. “However, we have had difficulty acquiring dealers abroad,” Manders says. “Our product arsenal is so large that dealers have difficulty offering the right product. They do not possess adequate product knowledge on-hand and find it difficult to answer questions from customers. Sofon can help us with this. When Sofon is set up and rolled out for dealers, they are easily guided through the available choices. The hope, therefore, is that it will become much easier for us to acquire dealers in various countries.”

RESULTS

- Uniform product information
- All quotations made using Sofon
- Quotations are made more quickly and are complete
- Training times for new sales representatives have been shortened dramatically
- Better relationship between engineering and sales
- Better manufacturing process as a result of standardization
- Time savings in the procurement department as a result of an improved quotation process
- In the future: easier sales of products abroad via dealers

longtime sofon customer



Alice Jacobs-den Ouden

We can now expand our product range with very little effort

Wim Faro



Montis streamlines complex order process with Sofon

Montis designs and manufactures high-quality designer furniture – generally seating furniture. Leading designers and innovative production methods guarantee an “honest and efficient industrial product.” To be able to handle the extensive range of designer furniture, Montis utilizes an international sales network to both companies and consumers. For years now, Montis has focused on the upper segment of the design market as the targeted purchasers do not buy standard furniture. They put together their ‘own’ design furniture in

a customer-specific manner. They do not choose a standard chair, but rather a chair by that designer, with those legs and seat, and upholstered in that color leather/fabric. The number of options is extensive, which in turn makes order processing very complex. To streamline that process, Montis implemented Sofon’s advanced sales configurator. Alice Jacobs–den Ouden and Wim Faro, both working in the business office, discuss what Sofon has meant to and done for their company over the past ten years.

History

Montis already used to work with a product configurator. “While it’s true that the application was also integrated with the ERP system MFG/Pro, in practice, we were continuously confronted with limitations, particularly in the area of management. The configurator was opaque, not user-friendly – particularly if people had to change products or had to input new products – and was ultimately no longer supported. Those were the main reasons for us to look for a more

powerful configurator,” says Jacobs. What requirements did the new configurator have to meet? “The main requirement was that integration with MFG/Pro had to be possible. Sofon was working on precisely this integration, so the decision was made that Sofon would streamline our product configuration,” Faro explains. “Sofon also satisfied the other requirements. Technical support was provided and the flexibility of the configurator was considerable. We required that flexibility to be able to modify existing products quickly and to enter

new products in a much shorter time – often half the time as with the former solution. Moreover, the Sofon Sales Configurator was transparent and user-friendly, which would enable time savings and hence greater return,” Jacobs adds.

Product range

“During the implementation of Sofon, we built about 250 models within three weeks, which is improbably fast in the configuration world. Considering that our collection changes each year, we now have already built 700 models in Sofon. We went live with the Sofon Sales Configurator and Sofon Studio modules,” Jacobs explains. Using these modules, Montis is not focusing on the handling of quotations, in contrast to many other Sofon users. That is because the company does not use quotations, but rather uses price lists. As Jacobs explains, “The Sofon modules are utilized during the entry of sales orders to immediately configure the products, and thus to lay the foundation for the management. That is why the interface of the configurator, as well as the speed of the entry, is so important to us. In the past, we had to go through all 700 models when new types of fabrics or leather were added. This often took us several days to get through. We have now modified the models in such a way that all fabric and leather color are listed in tables. Now entering a fabric or leather color is a half-hour job.”

Questionnaire

Montis uses Sofon Sales Configurator as follows: when a dealer wants to order furniture, a representative from the inside sales team enters the corresponding data. Faro explains, “By using a questionnaire format in Sofon, the dealer configures the ordered furniture: the selected fabric/leather color, the color, and the types of legs and seat. During configuration, working in the background, Sofon compiles a BOM and the corresponding routing. Both of these are sent to MFG/Pro. They form the basis for the further order handling.” Jacobs adds, “Each type of product has its own questionnaire. The operations office produces all of the questionnaires in Sofon Studio, with the corresponding options, such as color and material. This working method promotes the flexibility and speed, but also the transparency and customer friendliness: the customer is shown the options and properties.”

Dynamic product range

Just over six months after the implementation of Sofon, Montis brought a number of new products to the market, including tables. This was not anticipated prior to the implementation. After a few minor modifications to the Sofon interface that were required because the new products were manufactured externally, Montis could enter these new products quickly. As a result, the product range was considerably expanded. As Jacobs says, “We can now, with very little effort, enter completely new products in the logistics system by means of our internal sales department. If there proved to be a demand for these products, the products are then added permanently to the product range. An experiment like this would normally have demanded a major investment. Thanks to Sofon, we are able to define advantageous new product/market combinations.”

Training period

According to Montis there are even more advantages. “The Sofon configurator is – in contrast to what people were used to – stable, and with its considerable user-friendliness, a shorter



training period is required with Sofon for new employees. Moreover, the number of errors in the order processing and handling are lower than previously. In the 10 years that Sofon has been in use, we have used it to configure approximately 200,000 products, without any noteworthy issues,” explains Faro. In response to the question of whether Sofon satisfies Montis’ expectations, he responds with “Yes, absolutely.”

RESULTS

- Entry of new products more flexible and faster
- Order processing more transparent and more customer friendly
- Shorter training time
- Greater user friendliness
- Order processing more accurate
- Order handling more accurate

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 clients:



Stork Technical Services is a global player in Asset Integrity Management. With a staff of 14,300 people, Stork helps companies in the Oil & Gas, Chemical and Energy sectors to maintain and optimize their critical production processes and systems.

The Process Equipment Business Line provides in-depth expertise and turnkey solutions as both OEM and EPC contractor in the following areas:

- Boiler Services
- Energy Efficiency Solutions
- Burners and Retrofits
- Deaerators and SwirlFlash®
- Process EPC Projects (Engineering, Procurement and Construction)
- High Pressure Equipment
- Prefab Piping & Skids

Sofon has been selected as sales configuration solution to be able to move up from a complete ETO (Engineering-To-Order) process for sales, engineering and manufacturing to a CTO (Configure-To-Order) process, to be able to stay competitive in their international market.

www.storktechnicalservices.com



The Nijburg Industry Group guarantees the design, engineering, supply, installation/assembly of top-quality turnkey projects in the field of air technology. Complete solutions, from external air grilles, air-conditioning units and air transport systems right up to the last grille or cooling convector. The Nijburg Industry Group is an international company that has divided its activities into trade (Solid Air Worldwide, Velu en Fair), installation (Nijburg Luchttechniek) and production clusters (Nijburg Products).

The Nijburg Industry Group has chosen Sofon to optimize the sales and quotation process. Sofon partner Pulse is responsible for the implementation of Sofon in combination with Microsoft Dynamics AX.

www.nijburg.com



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.

activities

Events

VDMA Fachtagung: Variantenmanagement 2013
February 20, 2013
Neue Stadthalle, Langen (Hessen), Germany

VDI Seminar: Angebots- und Kostenkalkulation im Maschinen- und Anlagenbau
March 12-13, 2013
VDI-Haus, Stuttgart, Germany

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 client-specific products and services.

You can share in this knowledge by visiting www.sofon.com/blog.

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