CASE STUDY

Moeller Marine

Challenge
Manage special orders and order exceptions effectively and efficiently, extract useful customer information from MAPICS system, monitor and improve internal processes and controls

Solution
Implemented PRESENCE development platform, with alerts identifying special, incomplete or out-of-process orders, plus monitors on stock levels, customer interactions and internal process schedules

Benefits
Improved customer service with pro-active monitoring of order status and schedule, improved production and process integration with automatic monitoring of incomplete order entry, lower costs as staff are released for value-added business development tasks

Moeller Marine Use PRESENCE To Improve Customer Service

Moeller Marine found that within a week of implementing the PRESENCE Codeless Development Platform, an enterprise-wide system of email notifications was saving the company time and improving customer service.

Moeller Marine supplies custom plastic components and complete products, from fuel tanks to kayaks, for every kind of boat-builder. The company has manufacturing locations in Missouri and Tennessee, corporate offices in Rhode Island plus sales and research departments in Ohio.

To drive production efficiencies, Moeller Marine uses MAPICS ERP software on IBM eServer iSeries systems delivering data to another ERP application (SSA Global) which is running at the corporate HQ.

The MAPICS ERP is ideal for dealing with very large, highly systemized, production quantities. However, as Moeller Marine grew – at double-digit rates – it became ever more important to manage exceptions, such as special orders, customers on credit hold, or order variations. Where a non-production process was required prior to commencing an order, Moeller Marine had to rely on people rather than their ERP system to manage the business workflow. Quite simply, this was not working.

Leona Gabrielli, IT Manager at Moeller Marine, explains: "For example, we make kayaks for one particular customer, who will only order from stock and wants to know if we have any already produced. To serve the customer, someone would have to remember the request because the ERP system is simply not designed for this kind of process."

"We implemented PRESENCE and within a week had the first six automated tasks operational. Now, with PRESENCE we have a system that works 24 x 7 and sends an email to the customer on a regular basis, meeting their exact request."
"With PRESENCE, we catch things before they fall through the cracks and give better customer service."

Smoothing the business flow
Moeller Marine is using PRESENCE to monitor and integrate its business processes, in particular the processes that lie outside the ERP system. The aim is to "catch situations before they become issues," as Leona Gabrielli puts it.
For example, orders correctly entered into the MAPICS ERP normally spark a chain of processes designed to inform and automate production.

PRESENCE Overview

PRESENCE is a comprehensive business integration platform that enables an organization to better run, manage and optimize its business. A proven solution for organizations looking to integrate people, systems, data and business processes. PRESENCE allows companies to reduce complexity, improve efficiency and realize maximum value from existing IT assets, directly improving corporate responsiveness, efficiency, and competitiveness.

Our business integration platform is a single, unified, vendor-neutral application that employs a graphical environment to rapidly develop and deploy solutions with little or no programming.

Build composite applications, manage, integrate and automate business processes (BPM) and create Business Activity Monitoring (BAM) initiatives.

PRESENCE monitors a company's key business rules, integrating structured and unstructured data from diverse application databases – non-invasively. Then automatically notifies customers, vendors and employees by email or fax, automatically updates data between applications, updates websites, generates reports or documents, creates balanced scorecards, dashboards and more.

In MAPICS, if you do not complete or close a new order correctly, it will not move the order forward successfully. We now have a PRESENCE task that detects such non-status orders and emails an alert. We then open the order, make any changes, and move the process onwards so we can still hit the original delivery schedule. For a major manufacturer such as Moeller Marine, automated notifications offer a significant cost saving and customer service benefit. Staff are not tied up searching through data and we can take action before customer expectations are affected."

A watchful eye

Moeller Marine also uses PRESENCE to generate business process efficiencies in non-production areas by exploiting its ability to monitor anything, anywhere, and create a report that can be emailed.

As an example, Moeller Marine's core customer database did not include the ability to track changes. The last change overwrote all previous changes, leaving no audit trail. Says Leona Gabrielli, "With PRESENCE, we built a monitor that looks at data changes, stores the user, time, date and change, and automatically sends an email notification to the Customer Services Manager. With a simple automated task, we have a complete audit trail and instant notification of change; a real improvement in business control."

Setting sail for competitive advantage

With PRESENCE, Moeller Marine is enabling client-defined task creation. Non-technical managers are able to set up their own tasks to monitor specific business areas. Using a simple and intuitive client interface, users can set their own parameters, choose the reporting conditions and select the action they want taken – e.g. email, text, fax, file. The tasks are automatically submitted to a central IT department, which then reviews the criteria, and, if appropriate, enables the task.

"PRESENCE gives managers greater business control, examining their key performance indicators with 24 x 7 monitoring in a way humans simply couldn't manage. They are released from examining reports, and central IT personnel have time for more value-add tasks."

"PRESENCE is highly functional and flexible, and gives Moeller Marine a real competitive edge," concludes Leona Gabrielli.