

AUTOMATED ORDER MANAGEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM HELPS COUNTERTOP COMPANY BUILD MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SALES CHANNEL

Startup countertop company automates complex process

When this company's founders decided to build a countertop company from the ground up, they knew right from the start that they needed an automated system to distribute orders through their supply chain and manage them through completion. They already had negotiated to sell a line of countertops through a national retailer. They estimated that without an automated order distribution and management system, they would need to build up a customer service team to manage the transaction workflow. As it turned out, they were able to launch this business, taking in hundreds of orders each week with minimal staff.

Speed, efficiency, and quality are top priorities

The company leverages a network of manufacturers, which create the materials that are used to build their countertops. It also works with a dozen distributors and a network of hundreds of fabricators/ installers. The company required a technology solution that would allow it to collect orders from the retailer, distribute them to the various partners in this network, and manage the transaction workflow.

The solution needed to receive orders placed by consumers at the retail stores and route those sales orders to the proper fabricator/installer, who would order required material from the manufacturers to complete the sale and install the finished countertop. The solution had to control pricing and promotions of sales orders, costing of sales orders, and costing of required material; control the invoicing of the sale; and control invoicing and payment for the required material to the manufacturer and the fabricator/installer.

"For a simple countertop business, it's pretty complex," said the VP of Operations. "We have to manage the incoming orders, manage cancelations, refunds, rebills, and add-on orders across all the retailer's stores," he explained.

The client principals wanted a cost-effective solution that would allow them to launch their business quickly and operate it efficiently, while providing the high quality of service the retail partner and its customers expect. The system also had to provide the flexibility to grow as the countertop business grows.

Web-based solution delivers visibility and control

The company chose the web-based Cilio Partners Portal to manage its partner network and order distribution. This allowed the company to tap into a pre-existing framework that is geared toward the complex ordering process for installed home products, and customize it for specific business needs.

Testimonials

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*- Vice President,
Operations*

Cilio worked with the company to understand its business and modify the portal to support the concept of a single company representing multiple manufacturers of required material for the installation. Within the portal, the company was able to define the distribution network of each manufacturer so the fabricators/installers can place the proper material orders.

The portal allows the client to automatically capture orders from the retailer and distribute them throughout the partner network. At any point in the order lifecycle, any partner can log into the portal to see current status of the order.

Reporting capabilities help monitor orders, run the business

The company's employees use a combination of standard and custom reports from the portal to monitor orders and execute the business. They can download information from the portal to their accounting system and run detailed order reports and invoice reports for the retailer as well as fabricators and distributors.

"We get hundreds of orders each week," explained the VP of Operations. "We not only have to track each one, but also have to tie material to every job. At the end of each job, we have three transactions: an invoice to the retailer, a payable to the fabricator, and a payable to the distributor. By running these reports, we can bring up receivables and payables without going into every single order."

Reduced costs, faster time to market

By choosing the Cilio Partners Portal, the company avoided substantial costs and time involved in creating and maintaining a custom solution. Because the portal is deployed over the web using a "software-as-service" model, it required no up-front investment in hardware and software, and has nothing to maintain on its own. The company could quickly take advantage of functionality that already existed and that was tailored to the challenges of its industry.

By using the Cilio Partners Portal, this company rolled out its products to the market within six months, whereas a custom solution would have taken years. Additionally, the Cilio Partners Portal has automated the tasks that would otherwise require a whole team of employees.

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Conclusion

As a result of deploying the Cilio Partners Portal, the client built a new retail sales channel representing millions of dollars in sales. Additionally, the company has begun to offer additional products to its retail partner.

About Cilio

For retailers and manufacturers who want more insight into and control over their order distribution and trading network, Cilio Technologies provides a web-based portal for managing and distributing orders through the network of home center stores, manufacturers, distributors, and installers.

The Cilio Partners Portal streamlines the business process, improves communication and visibility, and creates revenue opportunities.

Learn more about the Partners Portal — fully automated, information-rich, rapidly deployed, cost-efficient, and customizable.

For more information, email sales@ciliotech.com or call 262-320-0480.