

“With Sofon Guided Selling the number of faulty project forms are down from 60% to 0%”



Digni van der Zande
MANAGER ORDERDESK / BACKOFFICE

GEA Goedhart has been manufacturing heat exchangers – such as air coolers and air-cooled condensers – since 1933 for (semi)industrial and commercial applications. Manufacturing takes place in both the Netherlands and in the Czech Republic. Since 2003 Sofon is utilized for product configuration and quotation generation at GEA Goedhart. The whole GEA division is using the Sofon model after Goedhart became part of the GEA Group in 2006. Digni van der Zande (Manager Order Desk/Back office) explains the impact of the introduction of Sofon.

Doing business internationally comes easier to GEA Goedhart thanks to Sofon

FEW SECRETS

Digni van der Zande has been with GEA Goedhart for almost forty years and has worked in almost every department. The company and its operating processes hold few secrets for him. “GEA Goedhart is a great company. We supply high quality products to – among others – cooling and freezing houses, and distribution centers for supermarkets. We supply the products to contractors who are responsible for further installation and implementation.”

RETYING ERRORS

For calculations concerning cooling techniques and configuring their products, GEA Goedhart made use of a software program they wrote themselves. The information that came out of this system, was then retyped in a word processing program and in this way a quotation was put together. “Retyping sometimes led to errors in quotations and therefore in orders. This was how we once supplied four enormous air coolers to a company in the US. After assembly it came to light that the cooling fins were not in the right position. You can imagine that the extra costs of transport – to the Netherlands and back again – extension and assembly, were enormous.”

NO LONGER DEPENDENT

GEA Goedhart wanted to prevent errors like this. They had also come up against the limits of the old system. “It could no longer process the huge volume of our calculation rules. And the person who wrote the program was retiring and taking a lot of knowledge with him. Sometimes we could not explain why a certain method of calculation had been chosen. We had made ourselves quite dependent on one program and one person. We needed to change that, and do it quickly.”

MORE THAN SATISFIED

GEA Goedhart needed software that could process enormous amounts of data. The software should also be easy to maintain themselves. “That was possible with Sofon’s product configurator. In a year’s time we filled Sofon with knowledge from all over the organization and we tested extensively. In this way, our staff was given the chance to get used to Sofon slowly.”

NO MORE ESTIMATES

For GEA Goedhart, Sofon’s product configurator calculates the measurements of the material needed, the prices and the number of hours needed for production. “That was an enormous step ahead. Where we previously had to estimate

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40% of a quotation ourselves, we now produce a complete, reliable and realistic quotation with one keystroke.”

CHANGE PROCESS

The implementation of Sofon was part of a large change process. “At the same time as Sofon, we also implemented the Baan ERP package. In Sofon, production bills-of-materials and routings are made that then go into Baan. After that, purchase orders are automatically generated.” Apart from the purchase of new software, internal operating procedures were also adjusted to a new work method. “It was a large-scale operation in which people were also moved to other departments. In fact, the whole organization was taken in hand and made more efficient.”

MAKING COMPANY KNOWLEDGE AVAILABLE

What GEA Goedhart especially wanted, was being able to guarantee continuity and making company knowledge available. “And that succeeded well. Knowledge no longer disappears from our organization as soon as a colleague leaves us. Also, new staff is quickly trained. They can produce their first quotations within a week. Previously, extensive training was necessary to bring sales reps up to speed. Now they are productive from the first moment.”

FROM 60% ERRORS TO 0%

GEA Goedhart also wanted to improve the quality and precision of quotations. “I used to be the first one to see all project forms.

That was a real source of irritation. Some orders were completely impossible to produce. There were errors in 60% of our project forms; that percentage has now been reduced to almost zero. So even if we can't express the improvement in hard data, I am convinced that we save money every day with Sofon. We can therefore say we are more than satisfied with the final results. For us, Sofon is an ideal tool.”

FORECAST

GEA Goedhart also uses Sofon to produce all sorts of mailings and reports. “We can see exactly how many quotations are outstanding and what the forecast is. Sofon calculates this using a number of data: total quotation sum, scoring rate, type of materials and the expiry date – the day on which we think that the quotation will become an order. This gives us certain expectations. So we know for example how much steel, copper and aluminum we need.”

GEA DIVISION

Since Goedhart has become part of GEA, the Sofon model is also available to the whole GEA division. “That's great, as an international GEA sales rep can offer our products – after a short training period – in combination with other GEA products. We produce quotations in Dutch, English, German and French. And with one command you can switch the quotation from e.g. German to Dutch. Doing business internationally becomes a lot easier thanks to Sofon”, states Van der Zande.

WHAT DID GEA GOEDHART ACHIEVE WITH SOFON?

- Specialist knowledge is now easily available to all sales staff
- The quality and precision of quotations has improved greatly
- The number of faulty project forms has been reduced from 60% to almost 0%
- The reliability and maintenance of software used is guaranteed
- Quotation and sales process under control
- Complete insight into forecast
- Whole GEA division can offer GEA Goedhart products
- Training time shortened

