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Matt Geiger, IT Manager, Lister-Petter



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Lister-Petter

M2M VIP Powers Improvements at Lister-Petter

Chances are that many of the diesel generators seen at construction sites in town are powered by engines manufactured or distributed by Lister-Petter, Olathe, Kan. Industrial engines and power generating equipment from Lister-Petter and its strategic partners, Iveco aifo, Italy, and Volkswagen Industrial Engines, Germany, also provide the heavy-duty power needed for irrigation implementations and other farming equipment, as well as equipment for the military, marine, utility and general construction markets.



For nearly 50 years, Lister-Petter has provided innovative, world-class diesel power engines and parts to major markets in the Americas. Today, the company is the master importer for three major European engine companies, and owner and packager of the Hawkpower range of power generating equipment. Lister-Petter's manufacturing facility in Olathe handles the assembly of the entire Hawkpower line, plus products from two major U.S. equipment houses. In addition, all design, development, testing and application engineering are completed in-house.

The powerful, reliable Lister-Petter engines and parts are backed by an equally robust commitment to customer service. It is Lister-Petter's responsiveness to its customers' needs—and the desire to make processing of parts orders more efficient—that compelled the company to implement the Made2Manage[®] Enterprise Portal (M2M[™] VIP), the e-commerce component in its existing Made2Manage Enterprise Business System.

Fewer Calls, More Productivity



According to Matt Geiger, IT Manager at Lister-Petter, the company saw the need to reduce the number of customer calls received on a daily basis in regard to order and invoice status and related issues. These calls were being handled by a small staff in the order entry department, and the volume of calls often disrupted the department's workflow. Giving customers secure, 24/7 online access to their account information would remedy the situation. Fortunately, Lister-Petter has been using the Made2Manage Enterprise Business System since 1997, making it easy and cost effective to add M2M VIP, which they did in late 2001.

"We wanted to relieve our order entry department of the burden of answering our customers' common, day-to-day questions," Geiger says. "Now our customers and distributors can go to M2M VIP to place parts orders, check their invoices, check order status and get the answers they need without having to call us. Our order entry people have more time to do their jobs since the number of calls has gone down considerably. They're happier and more productive."



Geiger reports that 37 companies and 130 users are now actively using M2M VIP. "I can easily get a rough idea of how many people have been using M2M VIP by using the traffic report feature, and the number of users has been increasing at a steady rate," Geiger says. "I really like the traffic report because I can also see how customers are using the site, for example, how much order entry is being done on the site. This month we had 25 more orders placed on M2M VIP than the previous month, so usage is growing at a good pace."

Another benefit of M2M VIP is the way the component has enhanced the performance of the Made2Manage Enterprise Business System. "As far as accuracy goes, I'd say M2M VIP has enhanced our Made2Manage system 100 percent," Geiger says. "We have not had to deal with corrupt order information ever since we started using it. Before, when we had to manually enter part numbers, there was a percentage of key errors, but these have been virtually eliminated. If errors do occur, the system throws up red flags before the order gets too far down the road to fix. We've been able to eliminate a lot of extra transactions, like issuing credits for incorrect invoice totals, and the order process is much smoother and more accurate."

Efficient Communication and Increased Customer Satisfaction

Using M2M VIP, Lister-Petter customers can view order status, a record of the sales orders they have placed to date, invoices and other information related to their accounts. They can also view documents Lister-Petter posts to the site, such as lists of part numbers. "Some of our distributors got together and created a list of slow-moving stock in their warehouses so they can deal with each other if one needs a part for a 25-year-old engine or Marine unit, for example," Geiger says. "This communication can help them serve customers with older equipment much faster."

Better communication through M2M VIP has increased customer satisfaction by at least 70 percent, according to Geiger. "Our customers are very satisfied because the information they need is always at hand," Geiger says. "Communication with customers is much more efficient through M2M VIP. Our customers are much more informed and they get their orders faster, and that makes them happier."

Geiger himself is pleased with the ease of updating information for uploading to M2M VIP. "I really like the cataloging feature. When I need to update the catalog, I just go into the Made2Manage system and create new entries or make changes to existing parts, and then hit 'upload.' Customers will then be able to view the updates on M2M VIP. The system is very user-friendly and easy to learn."



Customers and distributors who have been using M2M VIP tell Geiger that they are very satisfied with the wealth of information they can access anytime, anywhere they have an Internet connection. Plus, they can save valuable time when ordering hard-to-find parts. "The general consensus among our customers is that they're very happy with it," Geiger says. "They love being able to look up inventory availability and quantities on hand before they place their order. If it's a part for an older piece of equipment or

otherwise hard-to-find part, that will be indicated in the online catalog and they can call us to make a special order."

Building on the Advantages of M2M VIP

According to Geiger, the only other time customers really need to call Lister-Petter is to place an order for engines, which is a complicated process. "Also, our discounting structure for engine sales is different than for parts sales, and M2M VIP is not currently set up to work with both rates," Geiger says. "But that's something we plan to change in the future."

Other enhancements include a customer request for an extended price field for parts on the availability search screen. "I've already spoken to our Made2Manage support rep and he says that won't be a problem," Geiger says. "The expandability of M2M VIP is great and there's practically no limit to what it can do for us and our customers in the future."

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