

KNR FLAT ROCK IMPLEMENTS SALESFORCE AUTOMATION ON BLACKBERRY AND IMPROVES SALES AND TEAM EFFICIENCY



Based in Johannesburg with a sales office in Cape Town, KNR Flat Rock is a South African company that markets and distributes brand-name accessories for digital devices, including mobile phones, gaming consoles and computers. It has a large sales territory in South and Southern Africa, covering everything from large national retailers to independent dealers and the franchise networks of mobile network operators.

THE CHALLENGE

South Africa's sheer size poses a unique challenge. The company's 10-person salesforce must cover a country that is over twice the size of France, spending the vast majority of their time on the road visiting retailers in urban centres and remote areas. On average, each salesperson only spends a couple of hours a week in one of the company's offices.

As the company grew, the management team could see that it was increasingly difficult to communicate effectively with the salesforce. "There was a real disconnect," says Allan Wilson, marketing director at KNR Flat Rock. In addition, the manual fax-based order-taking system could not keep up with the company's needs. Leigh Ann Albert, the company's finance director responsible for operations, could see that the system was being stretched to its limits. The sales support staff was also having difficulty coping with the volume of orders, leading to unprocessed orders stacking up and a delay to customer deliveries. Added to this, they were making mistakes transcribing hand written faxed orders into the system.

THE SOLUTION

KNR Flat Rock's management team had been using BlackBerry® smartphones for several years. Albert had seen first hand how BlackBerry smartphones had helped the team, which had been formed following a merger, become more efficient and cohesive. It occurred to her that BlackBerry smartphones could be used as a handheld terminal for taking orders. In doing so, KNR Flat Rock could solve two problems at once: streamline order-taking and foster team spirit among the salesforce.

Working with Mobile At Work, a local provider of mobile solutions, KNR Flat Rock developed a bespoke order-taking BlackBerry application and deployed it with BlackBerry® Enterprise Server for Microsoft Exchange. Today the company's salespeople and management team are equipped with BlackBerry smartphones, which are used by everyone for mobile email and calendar access. The order-taking application is reserved for the sales force.

THE BENEFITS

"The application is like a portable version of our catalogue," explains Albert. Orders are entered on the BlackBerry smartphone and emailed immediately to the sales office, where they are transferred into the main sales system. "It has practically eliminated data entry errors and has freed up the support staff for more value-added, customer-oriented services," says Albert, who adds that it has also slashed fax costs.

BENEFITS

**IMPROVED COMPANY
CULTURE**

**REDUCED DATA
ENTRY ERRORS**

**MORE TIME FOR STAFF
TO CONCENTRATE ON
VALUE-ADDED SERVICES**

"Unlike its competitors, who impose building block systems, the BlackBerry solution offers a turnkey solution with built-in security."

"BlackBerry is an amazing tool for SMEs [Small and Medium Enterprises]. It enables them to improve business processes by taking non-disruptive baby steps."

Allan Wilson, marketing director,
KNR Flat Rock

Above and beyond the operational benefits, this BlackBerry solution has also helped KNR Flat Rock turn a group of independent salespeople into a unified team. "I'd say the true benefit is that BlackBerry has enabled us to develop team spirit and camaraderie," says Wilson. The salesforce and management team used to only meet once a week via a conference call sales meeting. "They still do. But now they are also in constant contact with each other. There's a real sense of community, which has had a positive effect on sales," says Wilson.

According to Albert, KNR Flat Rock continues to make improvements to the order-taking software with each new version. They are also examining the possibility of integrating the order-taking application directly into the main sales system. "BlackBerry is an amazing tool for SMEs [Small and Medium Enterprises]. It enables them to improve business processes by taking non-disruptive baby steps," concludes Wilson.

For further information: www.blackberry.com/go/success

BLACKBERRY CASE STUDY
KNR FLAT ROCK

