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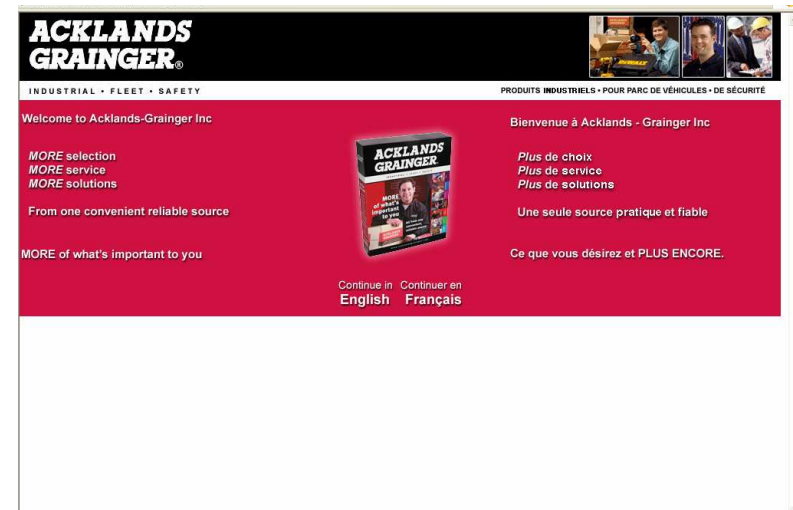
Customer Profile: Acklands Grainger, Inc.

Improved Service from the IT Department

Acklands was founded in Winnipeg, Ontario, in 1889 by Dudley Ackland to manufacture and supply wooden goods for vehicles. Legally incorporated in 1905, the company manufactured and sold carriages, wagons, farm machinery and a vast number of goods and equipment. With the advent of the automobile in 1919, the company added replacement parts and accessories to its product offering. Through growth and numerous acquisitions, Acklands grew to be Canada's leading distributor of industrial products, serving a diverse customer base. In 1996, Acklands was purchased by W.W. Grainger, a publicly traded company and the largest industrial distributor in the United States with annual sales of \$5 billion. Today, with headquarters in Richmond Hill, Ontario and over 160 branches from coast to coast, Acklands-Grainger (AGI) is Canada's largest distributor of MRO (Maintenance, Repair, Operating) products with annual sales of over \$600 million.

As a 2,000-employee company distributing more than 60,000 in-stock items annually through five regional warehouses to over 70,000 customers, AGI had outgrown its e-mail driven IT request form system that was housed in public folders on its server. It needed a more manageable, traceable method of processing and fulfilling equipment requests, account set-ups, and service requests.

www.acklandsgrainger.com



The Challenge

- Replace its email-driven request management and change management systems in the IT department with an automated system that provided electronic approvals and a real-time tracking system with built-in workflow.
- Find a way to track and archive data necessary for compliance under the Sarbanes-Oxley regulations.

Activation Summary

- Acklands Grainger went live with Integrify 3.5 for the change management system in its IT department in early 2006.
- AGI developed the request management form with Integrify 4.13 and launched that process in November 2006.

The Integrify Solution

The most significant challenge faced by the AGI IT department was assigning the work and then tracking its progress.

“We weren’t meeting SLAs and things were falling through the cracks,” said John Tzanopoulos, Manager of IT Operations, AGI. “I came from an organization that had a home-grown, written application on its database, so I knew what I thought we needed here. I was looking for something off-the-shelf to automate this system.”

After evaluating a number of systems, the IT team determined that Integrify came closest to offering exactly what AGI needed.

Integrify is a flexible Enterprise Request Management (ERM) system that allows companies to automate requests and streamline processes. The solution provides form creation, routing definition and tracking tools to those responsible for processing requests, minimizing data entry and simplifying requests for approval and fulfillment. Integrify is web-based, allowing for easy user accessibility and management of business processes. The solution eliminates problems typically related to labor-intensive processes such as manual paper handling and email requests, and can reduce costs per transaction 60 to 90 percent as opposed to paper-based processes.

By allowing a company’s employees the most efficient means to access, submit and obtain fulfillment for requests, an organization can offer the best possible level of service to its customers. With Integrify, efficiency gains are immediate and most companies can expect a return on investment (ROI) in three months or less.

The Integrify system also allows companies to implement, monitor and control processes and policies that require authorizations as part of the internal control compliance requirements in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. By allowing users to design, describe and publish corporate policy; automate the enforcement of internal controls, create a complete audit trail of control activities and automate and document risk assessments, the software will help the company reduce the extra time and cost of auditing and attesting on the effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting.

“We’ve combined a lot of separate task forms into one big form, as opposed to having a form for a phone request and another form for a user account and a form for this and a form for that,” said Tzanopoulos.

More than 200 employees at the company’s 160 branches are designated users of the system. Eight different request types are currently handled with Integrify and up to 150 individual requests are processed each month.

The Benefits

While the number of requests has more or less remained the same post-Integrify as compared to before the implementation, AGI's IT team is finding it much easier to fulfill and track the progress of each request, and requests are being processed much faster because their progress is so visible to all users of the system.

"It allows the end users to go directly into the system and see where their requests are," said Tzanopoulos.

The original request management system was designed to be used only by managers within the organization. Now the AGI team has designed the form so anyone in the company can create one and route it to a manager for approval. Theoretically anyone with an account on the AGI domain has access to the form.

"It's changing culture and it's catching on," said Tzanopoulos. "If we show the customer the service level of improvement, they'll have no problem in the future filling out a request form."

A key criterion in choosing the request management system was finding a solution that directly addressed compliance issues. Integrify has a built-in capability that offers reporting and analytics that simplify SOX compliance.

"A lot of the audit stuff we have to do are random samples of approvals, random samples of proper access granted, and we've categorized certain requests in a way that we can easily pull them and validate individual managers' approval dates and times whereas in the past all we had to show was an email saying, 'Approved.'"

ROI

The greatest return AGI has recognized is the increased speed with which requests are processed, as well as increased efficiency and accuracy, which has allowed its employees (the IT department's end customers) to focus more time on serving the company's customer base rather than worrying about technical glitches.

"We expected to see improved service levels, which we have," said Tzanopoulos.

Conclusion

"You can pretty much use Integrify to automate any approval process. We've just chosen to focus on request management. Integrify has built in a lot of the features that we, along with other customers, have asked for along the way," said Tzanopoulos.

Although the current focus is in implementing Integrify for IT request management, AGI is exploring possible expansion into other business units that could benefit from automating their forms. The key to automation with or without Integrify is having a clearly defined process flow before you begin.



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