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Adrian Parker Commercial Director discusses Sales Intelligence



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The Company

EFPS is the UK’s largest warehouse distributor of parts to the independent automotive aftermarket. The company has an annual turnover of £63 million and sells through a branch network and a sales force. At any point in time FPS holds in excess of 70,000 stock lines at 19 distribution points across the UK.

The automotive aftermarket is a very competitive industry. “Customers require high levels of service and availability at competitive prices,” explains Adrian Parker, commercial director at FPS. It is also a very high return industry for a variety of reasons from genuine error to abuse. To help identify reasons for the returns and to stay ahead of the competition FPS turned to VECTA.

VECTA is a sales intelligence solution designed to analyse customers’ buying patterns, identify potential problems with lost or drifting customers and generate detailed information on sales opportunities, prompting sales professionals to sell more proactively. The software highlights alternative and additional related products to increase the value of a sale.

Branching Out

Initially the software was made available to the product managers and operations directors at FPS, however recently the company has expanded its use of VECTA, rolling out the solution across its 19 branches.

“What we’ve got now is a situation where good information is available to all branches,” comments Parker. “However we are cautious that our people remain at the forefront of the business and do not become backroom analysts, so what we’re now doing is looking at a process of making the data available but in a very targeted format so that they don’t get bogged down with analysis. Answers and opportunities not questions and problems.”

One of the key drivers behind FPS’s decision to expand its use of VECTA was the need to give the operations directors a clear and detailed view of performance in FPS’s regional branches. “We are using VECTA to monitor the profitability of the 19 branches so it’s not just about managing customers, it’s about managing our own infrastructure,” says Parker. “We also need to know what brands people are buying, as there are considerable differences on the profit margins. VECTA gives us very detailed and up-to-date information about the brand mix and the blend of business by each customer at each branch.”

Another primary objective behind FPS’s decision to implement VECTA across its branch network was the need to make sure it was selling in the full range of products to the customer. “There are a lot of opportunities to cross- and link-sell in our market,” explains Parker. “We are using VECTA for gap analysis. The software tells us when we’re not selling products to certain people and helps us to understand why. For example, they might buy clutches but not brakes. VECTA highlights additional related products and in doing so increases the value of a sale.”

VECTA transforms existing customer information into valuable sales intelligence, which can be used by branch managers and operations directors to direct or modify strategy.

“Our operations directors are using the data that we’re getting out of VECTA as the basis for the regular meetings they have with each branch,” says Parker. “Previously these meetings were driven by the reports that came out of our mainframe system, which were often out of date and in a format that was clouded with irrelevant data. Now they have a far more focused approach. We had all this data and information before VECTA but it was cumbersome to manage and it was dated by the time we got it. Also we would produce it for every customer and every product so by the time you got to see the last customer you’d be looking at information that was well out of date. VECTA has made us more up-to-date and it has greatly enhanced our efficiency. We’re now working with live data that’s got far more credibility.”

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VECTA Benefits:

- Improved sales performance
- A clear and detailed view of performance across regional branch network
- Improved communication and collaboration across the business
- Greater access to meaningful sales data that is being used to achieve higher profitability per order.
- Improved communication with FPS customers.

VECTA information is also made available to the marketing team at FPS, which is using the intelligence collected on each account to improve communication with FPS customers. The software has become an integral part of the company's business processes and has made a significant impact on the company's sales practices. Parker is confident that VECTA will help the company maintain its position in the market: “We fully expect VECTA to impact positively on our sales performance and are already experiencing improved communication and collaboration across the business. As far as I’m concerned it’s common sense to use VECTA.”



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About Vecta Sales Solutions Ltd

Established in 1998, Vecta Sales Solutions Ltd provides world-class sales intelligence solutions that are used by thousands of people on a daily basis to dramatically improve their sales performance. Vecta operates from its headquarters in Sheffield and offices in Milton Keynes.

VECTA significantly improves sales effectiveness and boosts the sales performance and efficiencies of manufacturing, distribution and wholesale companies. Equipped with VECTA Sales Intelligence & CRM, companies gain optimum insight into their customers' buying patterns, contact history, product sales, territory results and much more.

VECTA provides instant visibility of relevant actionable information and automatically analyses buying patterns to identify opportunities for future sales or areas requiring attention - it then highlights these to the sales team. Using VECTA, sales led organisations can eliminate wasted effort and ensure they concentrate on the opportunities and actions that benefit their company most.

VECTA quickly becomes invaluable throughout the business:

Managers have immediate and complete visibility of sales and activity to aid decision making and direction to the team.

Sales people benefit from instant access to vital information about their customer buying patterns and account status - wherever they are and whenever they need it. It prompts them of where the best opportunities exist to ensure effective territory management and ensures that call preparation is efficient, relevant and fast resulting in a more successful and productive team.

The **Marketing team** can quickly pin-point and target the customers most suitable for specific marketing effort and which products they should be buying - results are simple to measure and monitor.

VECTA is a truly integrated solution, much more than just reporting. It's easier to use than traditional BI and more informative than stand-alone CRM, ensuring businesses increase average order size, improve customer retention and increase share of market, resulting in optimum revenue, margin and efficiencies.



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