"I can manage our entire maintenance renewal process using Softrax. As a result, I can generate eight to ten percent of our business directly from the finance department."

—Jay Fife, Controller

Actify

ACTIFY

Actify Incorporated selected Softrax to centralize and automate a complex accounting function involving resellers worldwide. Actify also employs Softrax to drive maintenance renewal revenue directly from the finance department, and to provide business analyses for improved product and channel performance.

THE COMPANY

Actify's software enables digital product design data to be shared easily between manufacturers and their suppliers, without requiring expensive computer-aided design (CAD) software on every desktop. Actify has eight thousand customers and serves some of the world's largest manufacturing companies, including Ford, Daimler-Chrysler, Bosch, Magna International, and Airbus. Actify operates globally, managing over 50 diverse reseller relationships in 45 countries.

THE CHALLENGE

Actify was rapidly outgrowing its accounting tools. It needed to consolidate customer data, automate accounting functions and manage the task of providing accurate invoices to resellers in many different countries. The company had price books in Euros, price books in dollars, and discount schedules specific to each reseller. This created a significant challenge for SOP 97-2 accounting, specifically with respect to vendor specified objective evidence (VSOE.) Actify also wanted to improve its ability to support partners with accurate installed base and billing information.

Once these processes were automated, the next challenge was to enable the finance department as a partner to sales, driving increased revenue through renewals and providing business intelligence to improve channel and product effectiveness.

THE REQUIREMENTS

Managing maintenance renewals was a primary requirement. According to Jay Fife, Actify's Controller, "One of the keys for growth in software companies is renewal maintenance. Even as sales volume increases, the real revenue driver of the business is renewals." Another reason for making maintenance renewals a priority was that Actify needed to increase efficiency in the sales department by eliminating their involvement in the renewals process. The company also wanted to help resellers close more of this business on their own, more quickly and efficiently.

The second key requirement was a business analysis process that would provide snapshots of product and reseller effectiveness. Says Fife, "We needed insight into which partners were being effective. We also need to be able to determine what products were selling in what areas. If the finance team can provide that type of information, it can really help drive revenue growth."

SOFTRAX ®

THE SOLUTION

Softrax now automates order entry, billing, and revenue accounting. The Softrax installation database captures product and reseller data for analytics and the pro forma invoicing process drives maintenance renewals. "Having a single repository of what's installed and what's been sold allows us to maintain more control over renewals, and provides a basis for business analysis not possible before Softrax," stated Fife.

"Actify now has a system that establishes VSOE pricing from published price lists, applies the right reseller discount, and handles the currency conversions," explained Fife. "Softrax provides a clear audit trail and straightforward bill presentation so our resellers can see all the way through the order process to the invoice."

THE BENEFITS

Finance now prepares pro forma invoices well in advance of the renewal period and sends them to partners, who in turn contact end users. As a result, the Actify sales force has more capacity for selling new business. "I can manage our entire maintenance renewals process using Softrax. As a result, I can generate eight to ten percent of our business directly from the finance department, and up to thirty-three percent of monthly order volume through our reseller channel renewals," says Fife.

Finance is also using the pro forma invoicing process to study and enhance the performance of the reseller channel. Tracking the business that comes in on the pro formas provides a quick picture of which resellers are following up to close the business and which are not. According to Fife, "Softrax simplifies our billing process and enables our resellers to close more business and do it more efficiently. In a world of intense competition for the sales attention of resellers, anything we can do to help our channel make money faster is a distinct competitive advantage."

"I now have the ability to know which resellers are proactively contacting the end users of my product for maintenance renewals and which are not."

—Jay Fife, Controller
Actify

"The strength of Softrax for our business lies in the VSOE pricing, the installation database and managing the renewal process. It's helping drive our business significantly."

—Jay Fife, Controller
Actify

SOFTRAX®