Six ways you can become a preferred seller of customized products

By not satisfying diverse customer needs you could be leaving money on the table. An Aberdeen Group report shows that companies leveraging configure-price-quote (CPQ) technologies are achieving a 3.9% improvement in customer retention, whereas non-users report a 0.6% decrease.[1]

Here are six ways you can be easier to do business with and sell more orders of configured products.

1

## Deliver quick access to detailed product info

Providing accurate, complete, and up-to-date product information is critical to making your customer's lives easier. Your customers expect to access reliable information whenever and wherever they need to. Every customer has unique needs, and what's "fast" and "easy" for one, may not be for another.

A prospect who is just being introduced to your products needs guidance on how certain configurations meet his or her needs, whereas a dealer just needs to place an order quickly. To accommodate different customers' needs, you can provide multiple ways to engage with your products. For example, offer a flexible product catalog for an existing customer, guided product selection for a novice, and a "my favorites" function for a frequent buyer. This increases order speed and efficiency, and helps your customers make good choices.

2

Allow visual confirmation of orders

A picture is worth a thousand words, especially when it helps your customers feel confident that they're selecting the right product options. Sometimes a static image is all it takes, but for more complex products, an engineering drawing helps seal the deal. 2D or 3D image functionality can generate high-level models and quote drawings to support customer collaboration during the configuration and sales process. By rotating and manipulating a product that looks just as it will when engineered, a customer becomes more engaged with the order and your company's ordering process. And, the more orders you and your channels sell, the more revenue you generate.
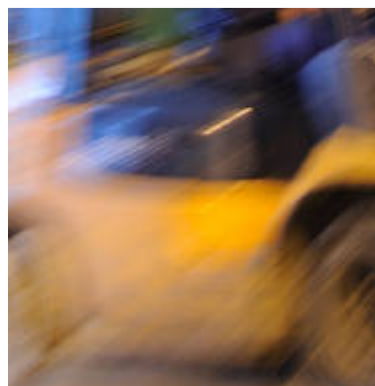
3

Generate accurate price quotes that don't change

An accurate price quote can make the difference between closing a sale or losing it. According to Aberdeen Group, top performers create 10% fewer iterations of the typical sales proposal or quote.[2] Providing the "correct price" often proves the greatest challenge, but if you can't give an exact, accurate figure during the quoting process, your customers cannot effectively manage their profit margins. By implementing a rules-based solution that captures detailed engineering specifications and the cost of each change to an order, you can quickly generate a detailed quote with a price that stands from decision to delivery. Providing accurate cost information can also help your customers deliver winning quotes to their own customers at a margin that works for them.

4

Create winning bid proposals

Dealers typically produce detailed proposals to win business. The same Aberdeen Group report notes that CPQ deployments inspire 45% more efficiency at responding to RFPs. By implementing an automated documentation solution that's integrated with your CRM, ERP, CAD, and other systems, you can deliver personalized, compelling quotes that get quick approvals. Combine this with the enduring accuracy of your quote, and you give customers a reason to choose your products over others.

5

Provide shorter order-to-delivery lead times

A make-to-order or engineer-to-order product that arrives quickly and on-schedule is a key component for satisfying customer needs. With increased brand commoditization, automation is key—speed, accuracy, and quality are the new differentiators. Automating the order-to-delivery process with a CPQ solution helps ensure fast production without mistakes. Not only does a manual process take longer, but it also allows more room for errors—and the delays and costs that come with them.

6

Stay relevant after-market

Keep happy customers coming back by providing overall product and service quality throughout the product's lifecycle. By proactively reminding your customers of service checks and maintaining a user-friendly portal to access past orders, you can take maintenance, repair, and replacement issues as seriously as you do product manufacturing. If you make reordering as convenient as ordering your configured products, you'll be rewarded with repeat business.

Learn more about Infor configure-price-quote solutions ›

1 Ostrow, P. (2014). Configure/Price/Quote: Better, Faster Sales Deals Enabled. Aberdeen Group, 5.

2 Ostrow, P. (2014). Configure/Price/Quote: Better, Faster Sales Deals Enabled. Aberdeen Group, 3.

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