

Crescent Parts & Equipment Restores Confidence in Their Data and Decisions with MITS Distributor Analytics



Background

Established in 1944, Crescent Parts & Equipment (CPE) is a leading HVACR (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration) wholesale distributor headquartered in St. Louis. With 15 locations in Southern and Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois, CPE strives to provide its customers with the best products and services available for an honest price.

Challenge

A long-time SX.enterprise (SX.e) user, Crescent Parts started looking for a new reporting and business intelligence solution in early 2012. There were two main challenges that led the search.

When asked if MITS helps target areas to discuss/negotiate with customers, a Crescent Parts & Equipment outside sales rep responded “YES. This is information our competition does not and likely cannot produce.”

The first had to do with the Company’s antiquated, hard to use performance dashboards. According to Acting CIO, Andy Weith, who spearheaded the search, “no one was familiar enough with the software to improve the dashboards. Plus our dashboard builder software was really outdated. Since we would have to scrap everything and rewrite the dashboards, it made sense to look at other options.”

Second, the management team and executives that build reports needed a tool that was easy to use and accurate. “Our executives aren’t trained in SQL reporting. They don’t know how to do joins and limits, or understand table structures and how databases work,” said Andy. “Often their reports included repetitive or missing data, and they would turn to IT for help. Their lack of confidence in the data made it difficult to use the reports to make business decisions.”

Solution

Andy reviewed six products and eliminated the ones that didn’t include powerful, easy-to-use dashboard functionality or an easy way to bring in new data sets.

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“We knew we would want to make changes to the dashboards and continuously add new data to the system,” said Andy. “How easy was this to do—either by us or the chosen vendor—and how easy and intuitive would the product be for executives and sales to use? Those were the key criteria for Crescent Parts & Equipment.”

The decision to purchase MITS Distributor Analytics was made in July 2012, just a few months after Andy started sitting through reporting and business intelligence software demos.

“Of all the products we looked at, MITS best met our primary criteria. In addition to the product itself, the other thing that set MITS apart was our interaction with their staff. From President Gary Owen to the sales and services teams, everyone has been responsive, friendly, and very easy to work with. ”

Product roll-out began with the outside sales staff. Modifications were made to the standard sales scorecard to include custom commission calculations and to focus on poor performing areas.

“We opted to have MITS make these changes for us; they were quick and painless,” said Andy.

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The product has also been rolled out to the executives and branch managers. The warehouse scorecard was modified for each of the company’s 14 branch managers so they can review their store performance at-a-glance.

Benefits

MITS Distributor Analytics has restored Crescent Parts & Equipment’s confidence in the data they are using to make business decisions—large and small daily ones. “We know without a doubt that the numbers we are using in MITS to run reports are the correct ones,” said Andy. “If something is wrong, it is because of a data entry or other mistake in our operational systems, not MITS.”

While the cost to purchase MITS was about the same as it would have been to rewrite the dashboards using their old software, the fact that MITS is web-based has resulted in costs savings. “We would have had to ask all of our outside sales force to come into the office to load the old software on their machine,” said Andy. “Some of these people live six hours away and rarely come into the office, so that just wasn’t a workable approach.”

During the TUG Connects 2013 conference, Andy attended a deep dive demo of MITS Report, and is very excited about the impact that could have on their business in the very near future. “We’ve started to run into some major issues with our ad hoc reporting tool,” said Andy. “We’ve started the process of running a few reports with MITS Report and can’t even imagine the time and cost savings we’ll get from moving all ad hoc reporting to MITS.”

About MITS

MITS helps hundreds of distributors and manufacturers leverage the data in their ERP and other business systems to make better decisions, every day and at every level of their organization. Established in 1996, MITS’ interactive reporting and business intelligence software combines industry best practices with the flexibility to meet the unique needs of every customer. From standard to custom reports, dashboards and scorecards, MITS drives sales growth, profitability, and operational efficiency for competitive advantage.

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