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Jamie Eyton-Jones, IT Analyst
STIHL GB

Overview

Industry

Manufacturer of chainsaws and other handheld power equipment.

Business Situation

STIHL GB sought a new partner to help them upgrade its Microsoft Dynamics CRM system and support their usage of the application.

Solution

Managed Service agreement for Microsoft Dynamics CRM.

The Brand

The STIHL name has stood for revolutionary technology and innovative ideas ever since the firm was founded more than 85 years ago. The brand is known globally in more than 160 countries and its products are helping people at work which has made STIHL the world's leading chainsaw brand and the preferred choice of many professionals and hobby gardeners worldwide.

In 1992, STIHL acquired garden equipment manufacturer, VIKING and today STIHL and VIKING products are sold in the UK through its network of over 650 specialist approved dealers. In addition to its chainsaws products their range includes hedge trimmers, pressure washers and lawn mowers.

The Requirement

STIHL GB implemented the on-premise edition of Microsoft Dynamics CRM in 2013 but the system had limited use within the organisation as IT Analyst, Jamie Eyton-Jones explains:

“Initially, Microsoft Dynamics was being run by one of our departments before the IT team became increasingly involved in the project but we struggled to make the advancements that we wanted.

While our aim is to be autonomous in the management of CRM we rely on external guidance and sought a partner who would help us shape our CRM strategy.

STIHL GB set about finding a new CRM partner to help them make better use of Microsoft Dynamics.

“We did a lot of research into prospective partners and identified Preact as an organisation that could be a good fit for us as they were flexible in their approach to our needs and not too corporate”

A couple of face to face meetings were arranged including one at Preact's premises. This enabled us to meet the main people who'd be involved in managing our account which gave us confidence in their agile approach and their ability to manage our immediate requirements.”

STIHL GB subscribed to Preact's managed service agreement which provided them with an allocation of CRM consultancy and training hours to schedule Dynamics related tasks. The service also included CRM phone support for STIHL's users.



STIHL[®]

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The Result

Assessing the progress that STIHL GB has made with Microsoft Dynamics, Jamie comments on the contribution made by Preact's team:

"As a customer we know we are demanding and we need our partner to step up to the mark. Preact has done just that. We sought a partner that would have readily available CRM resourcing. With Preact we can easily pick up the phone and ask any question about Microsoft Dynamics without there being any awkward issues.

Preact has really opened us up to the world of what is possible with Microsoft Dynamics for the needs of the business.

From the outset they've been willing to engage and explain what they do. With our desire to be fairly autonomous their managed service is working well for us. We can arrange triage calls to discuss new CRM requirements and use their phone support line to answer general user questions.

One of STIHL GB's immediate requirements was to complete the upgrade of its Microsoft Dynamics CRM software:

"We had a fairly narrow window to complete our Dynamics update. Preact committed to this deadline and got us to where we wanted, when we wanted.

In addition to the CRM server upgrade, they also created a bespoke sales report which our Sales team had wanted since the implementation of CRM and Preact completed this work in line with their promised time-frame.

This a good demonstration of how much more responsive we are now able to be in turning around CRM requests and jobs. In some instances we use the knowledge we've gained to deal with these in house, or we can use our managed service to delegate these tasks to Preact.

It's made a big difference to the engagement we have with the users of the system as they can now quickly see their requests being implemented.

We always knew that CRM had the potential to improve our processes but it's also been good to see how it is helping us to communicate more effectively across the business. One example of this is how we are using its case management capabilities.

As part of our preparation we'd mapped out the steps involved in service processes and in one of our sessions with Preact their consultant was able to evolve this in front of us. It was impressive to see just how much we covered in one day. Now that we have visibility of cases our sales team can access this detail during their site visits which is making them better informed and able to contribute more value to these discussions."

In closing, Jamie reflects on improved CRM support that STIHL GB is receiving from Preact:

I'd give Preact 10/10 for the way they are helping us manage Microsoft Dynamics. We have high standards and it is to the credit of their team that we are satisfied.

Preact work in professional manner but with flexibility and we don't find them to be corporate which is big attraction for us. They are always honest in their discussions with us and we've seen the value of their agile approach.

Their sole focus is CRM and as a result everyone we deal with is a dedicated CRM expert. We can always speak to someone who gives us answers to our questions.

Their understanding of the product is opening us up to more of the functions of CRM and it's giving us greater knowledge to do more with Microsoft Dynamics."