

## SAP Customer Success Story

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Dave Rolston, Director of Information Services, Medline Industries Inc.



### AT A GLANCE

#### Company Name

Medline Industries Inc.  
United States  
www.medline.com

#### Industry

Healthcare products  
(manufacturing and distribution)

#### Key Challenges

- Provide state-of-the-art mobile data access for 650+ sales reps
- Support more ambitious customer relationship management (CRM) activities

#### Implementation Partner

SAP® Consulting, part of SAP Customer Services Network

#### Solution and Services

- mySAP™ Customer Relationship Management (mySAP CRM)
- SAP Consulting (implementation and development services)
- SAP Ramp-Up

#### Existing Environment

SAP R/3® (now available as mySAP ERP)

#### Implementation Highlights

- Very successful project, thanks to close partnership with SAP Consulting
- Rapid rollout

#### Key Benefits

- Enhanced customer service
- Significant reduction in customer credits, thanks to enhanced visibility into complex pricing information
- Greater insight into status and location of inventory

#### Hardware

IBM laptops for the mobile client

#### Operating System

Sun Solaris/Oracle database



## MEDLINE INDUSTRIES INC.

### SAP® CONSULTING HELPS IMPLEMENT MOBILE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SOLUTION FOR SALES REPS

Founded in 1966, with roots dating back to 1910, Medline is America's largest privately owned manufacturer and distributor of healthcare products. The company markets more than 100,000 items, encompassing medical-surgical products and one of the largest textile lines in the industry, via its extensive network of distribution centers and sales professionals. Needless to say, Medline's field sales reps need rapid access to customer, product, and sales information via their laptops to ensure they seal the deal – which is why the company turned to the mySAP™ Customer Relationship Management (mySAP CRM) solution.

### KEEPING MOBILE SALES STAFF IN THE LOOP

Before it made the switchover, the company was running legacy-based applications that could no longer keep pace with Medline's business requirements. In particular, Medline's field sales force lacked visibility into contractually established pricing information. As a result, reps could inadvertently quote inaccurate prices – making it necessary to issue customer credits.

Medline needed a solution that would not only enable mobile access to accurate, up-to-date information, but also deliver the leading-edge functionality required for more ambitious CRM activities.



## **A ONE-STOP SOLUTION – SAP SOFTWARE AND SERVICES**

After evaluating a number of possibilities, Medline opted for mySAP CRM, in part because of its sophisticated features for managing pricing, orders, and customer details. “No one else came close to delivering the functionality we wanted,” states Dave Rolston, director of information services at Medline.

Medline also chose SAP® Consulting as its implementation partner. “We knew that getting complex pricing information from SAP R/3® onto our reps’ laptops would be challenging. And we knew that SAP Consulting could deliver the necessary expertise,” says Rolston.

SAP Consulting is an integral part of SAP Customer Services Network – a single point of access to the most comprehensive range of SAP services, including consulting, education, support, custom development, and hosting.

## **MINIMIZED RISK WITH SAP RAMP-UP**

Because Medline was introducing the latest mySAP CRM release, the project was executed within the scope of SAP Ramp-Up. This service gives selected SAP customers a head start with cutting-edge technology, while minimizing associated risk. “As the product was new to the marketplace,” Rolston adds, “no one could match SAP’s understanding of the software.”

## **EXPERT ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE**

From initial kickoff in January, a full-time CRM solution consultant from SAP assisted Medline on-site – with other SAP project specialists contributing expertise and spot-consulting services as required.

In May, following initial design and proof of concept, Medline began work on the mobile client. “It was critically important to have SAP Consulting’s support for this phase,” says Rolston. “The SAP project managers contributed invaluable advice during the configuration and development of the delivered functionality as well as custom pricing management and quota functionality.”

## **RAPID ROLLOUT/STRONG PARTNERSHIP**

Synchronization of Medline’s SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) software and the CRM system began in September, with an SAP middleware professional ensuring smooth data transfer. Following piloting in November, mobile sales functionality was rolled out to more than 650 reps the following month.

Close partnership between Medline and SAP was a vital element in the success of the project. “We collaborated as equal partners,” states Rolston. “And our relationship with SAP is now much stronger as a result.”

SAP Consulting also provided knowledge transfer, empowering Medline to take full control of its software after go-live. A number of enhancements were also made to the standard mySAP CRM functionality, suggested by Medline during the ramp-up phase.

## **LOOKING AHEAD WITH GREATER VISIBILITY AND ACCURACY**

Medline’s reps now have greater visibility into sales orders, products, and full pricing information. As a result, the number of pricing discrepancies has fallen dramatically – and pricing credits issued to customers for incorrect quotes are down significantly. Moreover, reps can more easily see the location and status of stock, enabling them to respond more effectively to customers’ needs.

Medline is now considering rolling out additional mySAP CRM capabilities to the field. These will probably include campaign management functionality, which will enable reps to provide corporate headquarters with a wealth of information on contacts that can be used for more targeted marketing activities.

All in all, the SAP solution has improved the way Medline’s sales staff does business – enhancing customer service by providing a sound basis for full-fledged CRM in the field.