

## SAP Customer Success Story

“Thanks to SAP software, we’re able to do more for our customers than ever before. We’re able to add more value to their Web experience with CMHC, and that’s exactly what we’re here to do.”

Jacques Mayer, Manager of IT Applications,  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation



### AT A GLANCE

#### Company Name

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (Canada)  
www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

#### Industry

Public Sector

#### Key Challenges

- Enable customers to navigate Web site more easily
- Eliminate publishing bottleneck due to manual order-processing system

#### Implementation Partner

SAP® Consulting, a part of SAP Customer Services Network

#### Solution and Services

- SAP® Internet Sales
- SAP® Ramp-Up, a part of SAP Customer Services Network

#### Existing Environment

SAP® R/3® (now available as mySAP™ ERP)

#### Implementation Highlights

Six-month implementation by four-person team

#### Key Benefits

- Increased distribution by 400%
- Reduced average customer delivery time from 24 hours to several hours
- Generated greater satisfaction among employees (and users)



## CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION (CMHC)

### SAP® INTERNET SALES HELPS CMHC FULFILL ITS PUBLIC CHARTER BY EXPEDITING PUBLICATION ORDERING AND DISTRIBUTION

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada’s national housing agency. Among other duties – such as granting and insuring residential mortgages – the agency is responsible for helping Canada’s more than 30 million citizens obtain detailed and up-to-the-minute information about buying, maintaining, and selling houses.

To do this, the agency publishes a growing list of more than a thousand books and booklets, on everything from painting walls to choosing neighborhoods. Today, SAP® Internet Sales helps the agency deliver its goods to customers quickly and efficiently.

### RAPIDLY INCREASING DEMAND

In the past, CMHC was challenged to support rapidly increasing demand from its customers and, secondarily, to get the right publications into the right customers’ hands, according to Jacques Mayer, Manager of CMHC’s IT applications.

At the time, CMHC was using a stand-alone Web publishing application to build and maintain its online catalog of publications (while most publications are free, some carry a small cost). CMHC took orders through its Web site, and used a call center to take telephone, fax, and mail orders.



## **DOUBLE ENTRY**

Because the Web-site sales application was limited in scope, and because it wasn't integrated into CMHC's back-end SAP software solution, online sales were weak. Worse, the online catalog was not saving time over the call center's manual order-processing methods.

"These problems were really related," says Mayer. "The online catalog system was rudimentary, so it couldn't do any kind of back-end processing. All it did was take the order through a standard HTML form, and then send an e-mail to our call center."

**"We now have a much stronger presentation. The screens are simpler to navigate . . . so it helps users find all the documents they need – all at the same time."**

**Debbie Dabrowski, Senior Application Developer,  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

"At the call center, an attendant would take the e-mail order and enter it into the system. It was like double entry, or double the workload. Plus, it was very limited. It couldn't authenticate credit-card sales, and it couldn't return receipts for new orders."

Because it took so much effort to process the incoming orders, CMHC's IT department didn't have any extra time to spend working on the site itself – for example, adding new navigation paths, or putting up more of the available publications.

"We knew we had an order bottleneck, number one," says Mayer. "And we had to solve that first." That's when SAP entered the picture.

## **REBUILDING THE CATALOG**

When CMHC selected SAP Internet Sales, it also decided to participate in the SAP Ramp-Up program to expedite the implementation. SAP Ramp-Up is a part of SAP Customer Services Network, a single point of access for consulting, education, support, custom development, and hosting services from SAP.

As an SAP Ramp-Up customer, CMHC received special project coaching during the installation. Specially trained consultants helped the company fine-tune some aspects of the relatively new product. In addition, the consultants gave the customer's problem messages special priority.

The four-member team completed the implementation within six months. During that time, CMHC also used the Internet sales software to rebuild its Web site and strengthen its online catalog.

"We now have a much stronger presentation," says Debbie Dabrowski, Senior Application Developer for CMHC. "The screens are simpler to navigate, and we've created groupings of publications that are related to one another, so it helps users find all the documents they need – all at the same time."

In fact, CMHC's customers are responding by requesting more documents per order than before. Today, an order contains an average of six items; before, an order averaged fewer than two items. Perhaps most important, more people now visit the site every day, resulting in increases in distribution as high as 400%.

“This is important, not because we’re trying to make money, but because our main charter is to disseminate information that is helpful to Canadian citizens,” says Dabrowski. “So this shows we’re succeeding at our job.”

### **AUTOMATING THE PROCESS**

Even better, CMHC is now taking advantage of a fully integrated, automated order-processing system that can support the increased demand.

“Incoming orders now go directly into the SAP back-end software solution,” says Mayer. “The software automatically performs an availability check, calculates final price and tax, if any, authenticates the credit card, and issues the receipt. The SAP software also sends the order to the warehouse tracking system, prints the invoice, and updates the agency’s financials.”

“In many cases, the publications are picked and sent out within the hour,” continues Mayer. Before, CMHC typically took 24 hours to get the publications out. “Even that was fast,” he says, “but this is much quicker.”

“Another benefit is that our customers can now go and update their own records directly in the SAP back-end software,” Mayer says. “For instance, customers might have moved, and want to update their customer information – they can do this easily, and it goes right to our SAP database, so our people no longer have to be in the loop at all.”

### **SIMPLIFYING OPERATIONS**

According to Dabrowski, one valuable feature of SAP Internet Sales is the open-standards-based development environment. It allowed CMHC to modify the look and feel of the solution, using well-known development tools and existing skills sets, to suit its corporate standards.

CMHC’s developers used Java when they wrote a custom program to translate between the English and French sections of the Web site. By Canadian law, all documents must be written in both English and French, with half the final publication devoted to each language. Also, CMHC must offer a bilingual Web site – a job made easier by the Java-based environment.

Another valuable feature of the SAP application is its ease of use. “We don’t have to have a full-blown CRM server in order to run the online catalog, so we’re improving efficiency and performance,” Dabrowski notes.

Also, SAP Internet Sales employs sophisticated caching and indexing algorithms to maximize overall performance. The benefit to CMHC: there’s plenty performance capacity to support growth and enable the company to handle more publications and customers.

### **HELPING CANADIANS**

Along with making life much easier for its own employees, CMHC is now well positioned to serve the public.

“Thanks to SAP software, we’re able to do more for our customers than ever before,” says Jacques Mayer. “We’re able to add more value to their Web experience with CMHC, and that’s exactly what we’re here to do.”

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