

SIEMENS

SIEMENS AUSTRALIA: DRIVING OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH BEST-OF-CLASS PROCESSING OF CUSTOMER ORDERS

Siemens selected the Esker Sales Order Processing solution to automate the processing of its “unclean” customer orders into SAP. The company recognised the expertise of Esker in the area of customer care solutions to drive greater efficiencies and operational excellence.

The challenge

Located in Melbourne, Australia, the Siemens Customer Care team for the Industry Products group processes more than 30,000 orders per annum across a range of highly technical products (including Industrial Automation and Drive Technologies). These orders are often a mix of stock to order or purchase to order items.

Siemens embarked on a journey to improve its customer order processing function by first concentrating its efforts on increasing the number of “clean” orders that could be processed more easily by the Customer Care team. Phase two focused on improving the processing of the remaining “unclean” orders that arrived and could not be processed immediately. “Exception” orders included orders with pricing mismatch, orders with incorrect part numbers or configurations, orders from customers on credit block, etc. Phase three involved improving communications between customers and all stakeholders.

After a series of projects to improve its “clean” order rate, Siemens decided that it should invest in a solution to decrease the order processing time for “unclean” orders.

- “Unclean” orders process project initiated by the Siemens Australia Executive Manager of Supply Chain
- Project sponsored and approved by the Siemens Australia CEO and CFO
- Operational excellence and customer care are two of the key values of Siemens Australia and this project reinforces these values



Esker was able to best configure its Sales Order Processing solution to meet our business needs, allowing us to create specific workflows for our various types of exceptions.

Tom Armour – Process Analyst & Project Manager
Siemens Australia

The solution: Esker Sales Order Processing for SAP

Having evaluated alternative scanning solutions, Siemens selected the Esker Sales Order Processing solution for SAP – the leading solution for processing inbound customer orders arriving via fax or email.

“We use Esker for all of our product orders. Esker processes all orders coming in via email or fax to either create the order in SAP without any typing or to reject it. Additionally, all orders images are now available as attachments in SAP”, said Tom Armour.

Siemens wanted to fast track the implementation in order to achieve the expected business benefits in as little as three months. Esker set

up a team of local consultants experienced in sales order processing solutions for SAP and accepted the challenge to deliver a fully working solution within the timeframe.

“Everyone at Siemens has been very impressed with the Esker solution and processes and especially with the Esker culture and people”, said Tom Armour.

The technical team at Siemens included experts located in Melbourne, Singapore and Thailand. Esker’s international experience with large and complex multinationals proved very useful to drive the project to completion on time and on budget.

“The Esker project team has been very responsive and we have found the communication throughout the project to be excellent (even with the project teams operating from different cities and countries)”, said Tom Armour.



The technical expertise of the Esker Australian team is impressive, as is its ability to easily understand the scope of our requirements, and then analyse and provide (and communicate/collaborate on) a technical solution.

Tom Armour – Process Analyst & Project Manager
Siemens Australia

Business benefits

Not only does Siemens Australia clearly measure the ROI of new solutions against the previous process, but also against the expectations set in the business case as approved by senior management.

- Decrease in order processing time by 65%
- Decrease in “unclean” order turnaround time by 80%
- Reduction in SLA processing time (waiting time for order to be processed) by 70%

“We review these metrics every three months and after six months of operation, we are achieving all tangible benefits and even exceeding intangible ones”, said Tom Armour.

Siemens Australia recognised that the Esker team made a big difference – through its implementation methodology and its commitment to deliver on time and on budget.

“The project could not have delivered on our requirements within the very tight budget and time deadlines without the hard work and dedication of the Esker team”, said Tom Armour.

Phase 3 – Closing the Order to Cash Loop – Improving Customer and Stakeholder Communications

Key project drivers

The third phase of the Siemens sales order processing journey was to improve communications with its customers. Feedback from Siemens's customer satisfaction surveys was that Siemens needed to communicate more proactively, effectively and in a timelier manner.

Communication between Siemens and its customers was generally reactive (answering customer queries) rather than proactive (sending information before the customer called).

A second driver was Siemens' desire to link all stakeholders in the customer end-to-end process (e.g., sales and technical sales support personnel at Siemens and procurement, warehouse and decision makers on the customer side) and deliver a centralised and uniformed solution for all customer communications. *"We are closing the communication loop by ensuring the customer contact to whom we provided the original quotation is kept informed of their order status, all the way through to invoicing,"* said Michael Stafford, Business Solutions Manager, Siemens Australia.

To ensure the best value from this change in process, Siemens reduced costs by eliminating paper communication where ever possible and automating the internal and external document flows.



Esker delivered a huge benefit to our company, the Esker solution and processes delivered as promised.

Steffen Raab – Supply Chain Manager – Siemens Australia

Business benefits

Post implementation, Siemens surveyed its key customers to understand their perception of the improvements made. The results have been a tangible increase in customer satisfaction, praising the new functionality and improvements.

With the Esker solution, all stakeholders (both internal and external) are kept informed during the customer order process. This includes multiple customer contacts as well as internal sales and technical sales staff.

Historically, Siemens sales reps have had to call the Siemens Customer Care Centre to enquire about the status of their customer's order. Now, order confirmations and dispatch dockets are delivered directly to their mobile devices so they are able to manage their accounts while on the road.

The Esker solution automatically alerts the customer's warehouse location that goods have been dispatched from Siemens' warehouse, allowing customers to prepare any equipment required on site (e.g., trucks, forklifts, etc.).

Finally, Siemens has reduced the number of printed documents and unnecessary internal communication by digitising and automating manual document flows.

Return on investment

Siemens has measured the return on investment in three key areas.

1. Survey results showed positive increase in customer and internal satisfaction.
2. Reduced number of manual documents processed.
3. Shortly after rolling out the solution and training its users, Siemens observed a steady increase in the document receipt preferences, indicating a positive uptake of the Esker solution by internal stakeholders.



Siemens and Esker were able to collaboratively develop a unique solution to one of our most pressing order management issues: proactive customer communications. Esker's Document Delivery solution has helped us to improve our customer satisfaction by enhancing the timeliness, accuracy and relevance of our customer communications. By leveraging this new functionality we have actively reduced our reliance on our customer's internal communications.

Michael Stafford – Business Solutions Manager
Siemens Australia

About Siemens

Siemens commenced operations in Australia in 1872 and is now one of the country's most reliable and trusted brands. With well-established businesses in Australia and New Zealand, Siemens is a diversified technology-based solutions provider specialising in the areas of water, energy, environment, healthcare, productivity, mobility, safety and security. Through these eight solution areas, Siemens is meeting the demands placed on businesses by the four global megatrends – climate change, demographic change, globalisation and urbanisation. Siemens operates in 190 countries throughout the world.

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