



CRESCENT PARTS & EQUIPMENT

IMPROVING COLLECTIONS EFFICIENCY & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE WITH CLOUD-BASED AUTOMATION

BACKGROUND

Crescent Parts & Equipment (CPE) understands success. As a wholesale distributor of Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) parts and equipment, the company has been an industry leader in the St. Louis and surrounding area for three generations and counting. This is thanks to CPE's dedicated efforts to provide its customers with the best products and services and continuously improve its internal business processes.

Collections management is one of those processes. Until recently, CPE's one-person credit department was managing the collections activity for 3,000 customer accounts without the aid of a true automated software system to assist in optimising post-sale communications. This created a number of challenges, including:

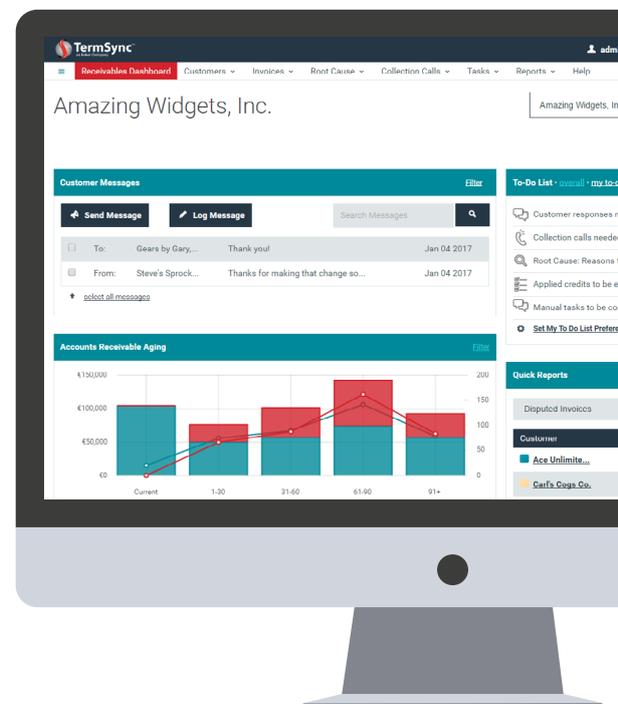
- Lack of time and resources to communicate with all past-due accounts
- Reliance on part-time hires to assist in collections when necessary
- No centralised location to store and access customer notes
- Time wasted due to fielding invoice-related customer inquiries

"We run very lean as far as employees are concerned, so it's important that we maximise our time" said Staci Cima, CCE—Credit Manager at Crescent Parts & Equipment. "We needed a more sustainable and streamlined way of managing accounts with balances. The key was finding a solution that fit our budget and vision as a business."

SOLUTION

CPE explored six different software companies before finally settling on their choice — Esker's Collections Management automation solution. What differentiated Esker from the other vendors and solutions was the low upfront costs and IT time, as well as end-to-end cloud capabilities of the solution itself.

"We really did our research," said Cima. "What drew us to Esker's TermSync product was its ease of use and installation. Going through software updates every few years was not something we wanted to deal with. It sounded too good not to try — and it's been everything we'd hoped it would be."



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BENEFITS

Once CPE got Esker's cloud-based automation platform up and running (an installation period of just 4-5 hours), the company was on its way to running a more efficient and effective collections process. Below are some of the most significant benefits CPE has achieved as a result of using Esker



Improved communication

- Auto-payment reminder emails make customers aware of important details (e.g., payment status, payer rating, etc.) while establishing CPE's expectations.
- Customer notes are tracked in the solution so that, if a question arises, anyone can find what they're looking for ASAP.
- A self-service portal makes it easy for customers to communicate at a time that's most convenient for their schedule.



Increased staff productivity

- Customers can get invoice copies in the portal, saving staff time by avoiding "Can I get a copy?" calls.
- Task list helps to organise daily work, track customer contacts, and set up filters for priorities.
- More free time has allowed for key accounts and new customers to receive more attention.
- Creation of a formal credit policy was established, avoiding internal ambiguity about the process.



End-to-end efficiency

- Automated tools helped CPE reduce the amount of accounts with overdue balances by nearly 38%.
- Dashboard provides the ability to track disputed invoices to see if recurring issues can be resolved.
- "Customer Credits to Apply" tool enables customers to apply credits to an open balance automatically.
- Customers have the ability to set up for automatic payments.



*"Using Esker, it was **amazing** how fast past-due balances, skipped invoices and disputed invoices started getting **cleaned up** just by sending automated email reminders. In fact, one chronically poor payer actually turned into one of our **best four-star customers**."*

Staci Cima | CCE-Credit Manager | Crescent Parts & Equipment

ABOUT CRESCENT PARTS & EQUIPMENT

Crescent Parts & Equipment (CPE) is a leading Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) wholesale distributor with eight locations in the greater St. Louis metropolitan area and another seven locations across the rest of Missouri and southern Illinois. Founded in 1944, CPE is a third-generation, family-owned company that is dedicated to delivering the best HVACR products and services to its customers in the industry.