

Amphenol RF Case Study

Information does not equal knowledge. This statement rings all the more true for information that is locked up in ERP and legacy systems. The companies that compete effectively in modern business are the ones who have figured out how to convert their gigabytes of information into knowledge upon which they can act.

Amphenol RF, a division of Amphenol Corporation, manufactures and distributes coaxial connectors for a variety of applications including automotive, broadband, wireless telecommunications and wireless LAN. The division is headquartered in Danbury CT, with manufacturing locations ranging from Illinois to California, Mexico and Asia.

The key to Amphenol RF's continued success is an ambitious and motivated sales force, creating a huge opportunity to leverage the information contained in their ERP systems. A well known missive in the business world is "that which gets measured gets done." In this case, daily measurement of sales and inventory performance enables management and the sales force to respond to trends, squash problems before they grow and hit targets. For Amphenol RF, the measurements take the form of daily reports that are distributed throughout the organization.

The IT department, under Marty Boardman, is tasked with the responsibility for creating and distributing the reports. With only limited full time staff, the department is hard pressed to produce the reports in a timely manner. In the past, green bar reports were printed and distributed internally. Besides the time and resources required by this process, only people physically located in the office were able to receive the reports in time. The field sales force received their reports via a manual process in which the green bar reports were copied, reduced and faxed.

The Amphenol RF IT team knew this report distribution process could be streamlined and automated, but were not quite sure how to approach it. So, when they heard about a product from Kisco Information Systems, they took advantage of the opportunity to test it and ultimately purchased and rolled it out. The product is WebReport/400, an iSeries solution for handling output queues and distributing them as email attachments or internet/intranet content.

Matt Spies is the lead iSeries programmer and analyst. Matt and Amphenol RF were already familiar with Kisco Information Systems. The strength of the Kisco brand and the very attractive

price point was enough for them to select WebReport/400. “We looked at several products, but they were too expensive; then we found the Kisco product which had the same functionality at a much lower price.” Matt also liked the fact that WebReport/400 was easy to set up and install and came with comprehensive documentation. He also reports that the upgrades they receive in the quarterly maintenance cycle always run smoothly. After working with Kisco to resolve a couple of issues with SMTP configuration, Amphenol RF was ready to start distributing reports.

The first report targeted for the new software was the Revenue Projection report, updated daily for management. Another important report to benefit from the software tool was the Orders and Sales Summary, showing monthly and quarterly stats on a daily basis. Using WebReport/400, this daily report is available earlier, has had a 30% increase in “subscribers” and is being sent to a broader base of recipients including, most importantly, the field sales force.

Besides tracking sales targets, Amphenol RF is taking advantage of WebReport/400’s simple administrative functionality to ramp up other report distribution projects. In particular, the company is running and distributing daily inventory reports to stamp out problems proactively. The company is open to other possible applications, including the potential roll out of an intranet reports portal using the product’s HTML conversion utility.

Amphenol RF is able to stay ahead of the curve by using WebReport/400 to help convert information into actionable knowledge and competitive advantage.