

SMIT TEXTILE Uses Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution to Produce Accurate Quotations for Its Award-Winning Machines

Goal:

Improve the ease and speed of creating accurate quotations, while also ensuring that accurate, clear and complete configuration data is transferred to the manufacturing process.

Challenge:

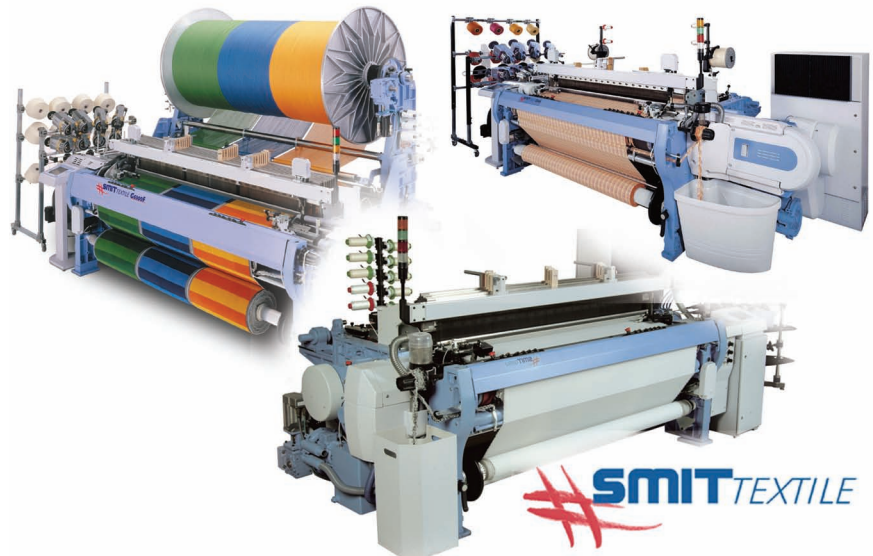
Overcome the problems that were being experienced using processes that were mainly manual, involving the use of common desktop spreadsheet tools, with no interfaces to other systems.

Solution:

Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution

Key Results:

- Can now configure and print accurate quotations in less than 30 minutes.
- Reduced the inquiry-to-order time from several weeks to a few days.
- Significantly improved the communications between sales support/technical office and sales rep at customer site.
- All parties involved now use the same tool to define the configuration.
- Reduced cost to generate quotes by 60%.
- Improved configurations to 100% accuracy.



Situation

SMIT TEXTILE manufactures high-tech, flexible rapier and air jet weaving machines for flat and terry fabric. More than a traditional Italian manufacturer of textile machinery, SMIT is a leader in weaving machine technology. They have established a worldwide presence for not only supplying leading-edge products, but also for providing prompt and effective post-sales support. SMIT's product portfolio consists of four loom models, the newest recognized with a 2004 Innovation Award, each of which is aimed at a specific type of textile production. With these models, SMIT offers total solutions for producing both high-tech textiles such as airbags for automobiles, electronic cards, material for tires, etc., as well as high-quality clothing fabrics such as wool, cotton and silk. With 18% of the rapier loom market, SMIT wanted to improve its competitiveness with faster and more accurate quotations and product configurations.

Too Many Systems Meant Too Many Opportunities for Inconsistencies

In order to configure an ordinary textile machine, SMIT TEXTILE must define hundreds of specifications and options resulting in a limitless number of configuration possibilities. SMIT currently produces more than 2,100 textile machines per year, each with approximately 3,000 parts on a first-level BOM, of which an average of 150 or more are selected for each machine configured. This flexibility is a key differentiator but it has its costs.

To produce quotations, SMIT was using an Excel spreadsheet developed in-house, which allowed it to manage fairly extensive machine specifications, but with only a few simple configuration rules. While the prices and discounts were managed in Excel, quotations were created manually in Microsoft® Word, then interfaced to SAP® and other systems, which often lead to pricing and configuration errors. Not to mention maintenance. SMIT realized that it needed to decrease these errors and improve its ability to accurately transfer “green-light” configurations/quotations to the manufacturing processes.

“More than impacting the reliability of the product, the Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution Configurator ensures that the configuration is consistent and thus avoids construction errors that might lead to problems with customer satisfaction, costs, installation time, etc.”

*Giampietro Rappanella, IT Manager
SMIT TEXTILE, S.p.A.*

Now, Quicker and More Accurate Quotes ...

SMIT chose Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution because the Configurator rules and properties were easy to learn, use and maintain. Also, there are no limits to the configuration applications that SMIT can create, and the reputation of the Cincom support team providing top-quality professional support was well-known. An important result of using the Configurator is that SMIT has standardized the descriptions of the specifications and options. Using SAP item numbers to identify the specifications allows SMIT to enter the order in SAP

quickly and accurately. Complete visibility of all the specifications and options allows the user to see all the configuration possibilities of the machine, and ensures that the entire sales force has access to the same information. Sales representatives can now create all the different types of configurations, ranging from the simplest to the most complex, and have online access to the price list. The Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution tools allow them to calculate discounts quickly and easily, and quotations can now be configured and printed in less than 30 minutes – a process which used to take weeks.

... Mean Savings in Time and Cost

With Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution, quotations are now generated quickly and accurately, and complex pricing and discount margin calculations are also handled very easily. The Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution Configurator significantly reduces the “inquiry-to-order” time for all products ranging from new solutions to updated products. When asked about the results of using the Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution, Giampietro Rappanella, IT Manager, responded, “The easy definition of the properties and rules, the easy integration of other tools such as Word and Excel to generate documents, the unlimited possibilities for creating the ‘look and feel’ and the screen flow for a configuration session are undoubtedly the most important factors for our sales success. The savings in time is significant. Cincom Inquiry-to-Order Solution enhances the communications between the sales back-office and the sales representative at the customer site, mainly because all parties now use the same tool to define the configuration.”

Textile World 2004 Innovation Awards



SMIT TEXTILE's newest weaving machines have been honored by the prestigious “2004 Innovation Award” presented by the *Textile World* magazine to the “industry leaders that have developed and are producing technologies that make a difference in plants around the world.”

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