

# Airedale Grows with Configit Quote

Configit Quote helps Airedale reduce errors and control margins. The result is high double digit profit margins



"I want to deskill the administration process and speed up sales!" On the surface a rather controversial statement, but the CEO of Airedale, Clive Parkman, is a man with a plan. A veteran of several MRP implementations, he knows exactly how to make the most of change and reap the benefits of new technology.

His point is this: It took skills, too many people, and a lot of time to go through the quoting and ordering process. Time, skills, and resources that could be put to much better use by adding value to the customer experience, not just unnecessary administration.

## 800 complex quotes a month

The impact on Airedale is significant. Airedale is a manufacturer of bespoke air-conditioning units and chillers used for data centres and server farms as well as hospitals, laboratories, and technical installations in the telecom industry – where it is critical to ensure the correct temperature and humidity 100% of the time.

With as many as 40 product ranges that can be customized according to psychrometric requirements - temperature, pressure, and humidity - the quoting process is potentially cumbersome, time consuming, and prone to human error.

Airedale previously used SAP and the Variant Configurator – and they still do with the addition of Configit Quote. But now it is much easier and error free. "I have a high level of control, for example, on margins. Configit Quote controls

margins and although there is room for discounts, it is flexible and within acceptable levels. Quote makes sure that you don't make mistakes and that you will always be profitable," explains Clive Parkman.

Other issues of the past include selection errors and time-consuming changes resulting from incorrect configuration. "Now you simply cannot configure a product the wrong way; configuration is achieved using inherent logic and enabling product options to be done on-the-fly, immediately showing the consequences in both price and engineering acceptability."

## The intuitive solution sparked interest and enthusiasm

"I am not just an IT person," says CIO of Airedale, George Apostolakis. "Rather, my background is as a management consultant. Without being too philosophical, I will say this: In my understanding, IT is much more about strategy. It is about providing the important and underlying value-net of information that a company needs to make information flow freely.

The value-net creates another positive differentiator for the company. And Configit Quote is an extremely powerful tool for just that purpose. It allows for quick decisions, enables creativity and just speeds everything up without jeopardizing quality."

"And that's not all. It looks great. After researching and ploughing through the Internet in search of an SAP variant



configurator solution that would help us fulfil our vision, I came across Configit. What struck me was the fact that it worked outside SAP – and that it looked like Microsoft.

Our sales people generally had a poor impression of SAP and did not want to use it, however, we showed them the potential of using Configit with SAP and their reaction became one of interest and enthusiasm – initially laced with scepticism. The solution is so intuitive that anyone can use it right away. The same cannot be said about the SAP Variant Configurator. The sales team bought into our proposals and we had a basis for going forward.”

#### **A cracking idea to work outside SAP**

Lead developer for Airedale, Stephen Reading, agrees. “Being a developer myself I am not easily impressed, but I must admit that the idea of running the quotation process outside SAP is a cracking idea. It really enables people with no prior experience to work very efficiently with SAP in an intuitive and familiar interface.

Another effect due to the openness of the system is its ability to integrate with pretty much anything, for instance, our reporting and forecasting tool that I developed as a part of this project.”

#### **Configit Quote makes you think things over – and revisit your setup**

“Putting in something as fundamentally important as Configit Quote is obviously not just Plug ‘n’ Play,” says George. “All these new abilities multiplied by the number of eager users who are going to be much more efficient doing their job. I mean, just think about the number of quotes – AND the potential for increased win rates.

That will, of course, require you to have a good look at how

## **“Now you simply cannot configure a product the wrong way”**

well this integrates into your production planning in order to keep up.”

Clive adds, “The same goes for the whole change management, your databases, and your business processes. It probably needs a good clean up. For one thing, we totally reworked our BOM structure. But it is well worth it. In our case, we are now much better prepared to really reap all the benefits of Configit, just revisiting our setup has meant an increase in profit margins from single digits or low double digits to high double digits.”

#### **The people from Configit are very willing to share information**

Clive, George, and Stephen all agree on one thing: The consultants from Configit have a different mindset than others you generally come across in the industry. “In my experience, they are rather unique,” Stephen says. “I have worked with other consultancies in the past, but it is the first time I have worked with someone as open and willing to share information.

They will readily admit if there is something they don’t know or do not have an immediate answer for, but you can rest assured that they will come back with an answer pretty quick. And it is always a good one.”

“I agree,” says George, “the product is fantastic, but the people at Configit are really their core competency.”

“Well, you could say that Airedale’s words are a testament to our philosophy, the way we work, and to our mindset,” replies Simon Mørk, Consulting Manager at Configit. “We are indeed open, because in our view an implementation project initiates a close partnership with the customer. And for us it is not just a matter of giving. From every customer we receive new insight – just as we provide them with new ideas. Consequently, we approach each project with an open mind – and open arms.”

#### **Our future with Configit Quote**

“It will grow with us!” responds Clive without hesitation when asked what the future looks like with Configit Quote. “Our vision is that my sales guys and our distributors around the world will be able to configure the right bespoke air-conditioning solution based on fundamental psychrometric characteristics. And that they can do so in their own language. At the same time, I, or any of my colleagues, will be able to help and assist and work with them in real time, thus providing customer confidence and creating a unique customer experience.”

Clive concludes, “As a result of an error-free sales operation and an effective as well as an increasingly responsive production process, I expect that Airedale will become a more profitable business with greater potential”.

“The solution is so intuitive that anyone can use it right away”



#### **Configit Quote is developed by Configit A/S**

Configit is SAP Software Partner and headquartered in Copenhagen with a branch office in Palo Alto. More than 30.000 users in over 50 countries use Configit applications. The core technology - Virtual Tabulation™ - is based on extensive research in formal verification and constraint solving and uses mathematics to provide businesses with powerful solutions that are loved by the users.

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#### **Configit A/S**

Kristianiagade 7  
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø  
Denmark

Phone: +45 7022 6700  
[www.configit.com](http://www.configit.com)

