



INSIDE

Improved Customer Service	1
Approved Vendor Program	1
On the Grow	3
News Briefs	4
Support on the Web	6
To Market To Market (CRM Strategies)	10
eComm Central	13
Proof of Delivery Software	16
NOW Catalog	16

Customer Service: Moving Forward in 2002



"I believe in being a customer advocate and doing whatever it takes to exceed customer expectations." These are the words of ECI²'s **new chief operating officer**, David Boast. And they're not just words. David's professional history, as well as his recent implementations at DDMS and his plans for the future, back up those words.

"The customer has always been the major focus in every position I have held," said David, who has served as Qwest's Executive Vice President, Worldwide Networks; VP of Access at UUNET; and VP of Worldwide Client Services at Legent Corporation. David defines customer service as more than "technical support." It is follow-through and delivery. It is every aspect of the business that affects customers, directly or indirectly.

In accordance with ECI²'s Direction 2002 Initiatives, technical support/customer service operations are being moved to the DDMS headquarters, under the direction of Ines Colazo, AVP of Customer Services.



ECI² Direction 2002 Key Initiative #1:
By the end of 2002, ECI² will be the recognized leader in customer satisfaction, delivering reliable, feature-rich products supported by the most responsive, knowledgeable technical staff in the industry.

Also a customer service veteran, Ines comes to us from Microsoft Corporation where she held various positions in Product Support Services (PSS). In her most recent position, she managed the global Content Team of PSS Learning Services, where she was responsible for design, production and/or acquisition.

Customer Service, continued on page 5

DDMS Approved Vendor Program

eNsite™ and eNsite Pro™ by DDMS are built using a Windows®-based open architecture. One benefit of using an open architecture system is that it provides you the opportunity to use a wide variety of third-party products—like reporting tools and customer relationship management systems—in conjunction with DDMS software. In addition, you can have custom applications developed for use with eNsite and eNsite Pro. Because of our open architecture and adherence to standards, we make it easy to use third-party products and custom applications. If you're interested in



using a particular third-party software application in conjunction with your DDMS software—or if you would like to have a custom application developed for you—you now have a way of verifying a vendor's relationship with DDMS.

ECI²/DDMS has initiated an Approved Vendor program to facilitate expansion of third-party products available to DDMS customers. Allowing third-party Approved Vendors to develop custom applications gives DDMS more opportunity to focus on our core

APPROVED VENDORS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

development projects so that our customers' needs are met in a more timely fashion. "Concentrating on eNsite and eNsite Pro—making them faster and even more feature-rich—is DDMS' main development priority," said Charles Russell, DDMS President, "Being a team-player means bringing the very best to our customers. We encourage third-party software development. We want our customers to be able to select from a wide variety of add-on tools and products that enhance the value of DDMS applications."

Approved Vendors are formally trained on DDMS software, and we supply them with the technical information

required to develop and revise their software as necessary. We require Approved Vendors to disclose their data transfer method to us and to the customer. Some developers use Dynamic Link Library (DLL) files to transfer data, while others write directly to the DDMS file layout. No matter which method they use, DDMS will inform them of software code changes that might affect your data. This formal communication process between DDMS and each Approved Vendor minimizes the risk to your data that otherwise may arise when a third-party vendor without this information provides software intended to work with DDMS software.

This does not mean that software from a developer who is not an Approved Vendor will not work with DDMS software...at least today. But without ongoing communication with DDMS, that vendor won't know what's coming tomorrow. Because the vendor doesn't have access to the information required to update their software, a new DDMS feature or enhancement may stop their program from working or could even cause problems with a dealer's data.

"We created this program to benefit our customers," said Charles Russell, DDMS President, "While no one can guarantee that you'll never have problems with your data, the Approved Vendor program gives you peace of mind knowing that vendors have an open line of communication with us. Without that, quite frankly, your software and your business data could be at risk."

The Approved Vendors currently are:

- Chuckals Consulting, L.L.C.



ECI² Direction 2002 Key Initiative

#3: Continue producing the most reliable, feature-rich products in the industry using open standards. **Action:** Continue to add robust new features and integration with leading-edge business system software like sales force automation and mobile proof-of-delivery systems.

- Computer Dynamics.
- Insignia Systems, Inc.
- i2® Technologies
- Longbow Consulting Group
- Mike Kelly Consulting
- R. Smith Consulting

We are always interested in expanding our Approved Vendor Program to meet your needs. We will keep you informed as the list of Approved Vendors grows. 

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ECI² Global Users

Conference—June 6-8

What has become of the DDMS National Users' Meeting? Originally planned for April, the meeting has grown to become the ECI² Global Users Conference and will now be held **June 6-8, 2002** to avoid a conflict with the dates for the AOPD-TriMega Joint Meeting. The schedule change will also allow us to expand the venue to accommodate DDMS, UBC, Maytech, and ECI² customers.

We believe this will be an exciting conference, offering you more opportunity to meet with other dealers and exchange ideas as well as find out about other industries served by the ECI² family of companies.

As more information becomes available, we will post it on our Website. Check our home page at www.ddms.com, for a link that will give you the latest information on the ECI² Global Users Conference. 

On the Grow

PORTIONS OF THIS ARTICLE ORIGINALLY APPEARED
IN *eNSITE NEWS*, FEBRUARY, 2001

Profile of a Small, Progressive Business

LONGHORN OFFICE PRODUCTS

Est. 1999

ANNUAL REVENUES \$2.5M

Mike Winkler and his wife started Longhorn Office Products, Inc., in January 1999. "It was one of those wing-and-a-prayer start-ups! We started with no funding, no money, no nothing. We're now a \$2M company. We have no loans and no outstanding debts," said Mike. In fact, Mike's company grew so fast, the software they chose couldn't keep up with their growth.

"WE STARTED IN 1999 WITH 2 EMPLOYEES. WE HAD NO LINE OF CREDIT. WE NOW HAVE 12 EMPLOYEES, A HUGE OFFICE. . . WE'VE INCREASED 200% SINCE LAST YEAR AND ARE EXPECTING TO INCREASE ANOTHER 200%"

"When we started, we just needed a software program that got us by, and that's what it did; it got us by..." said Mike. They chose software that was well-known in the industry among small dealers. "We thought the system would be able to handle our demands as we grew. Their marketing led us to believe that it could handle any size company. So we thought it would sustain our growth."

Two factors influenced Mike to change his mind about the software he chose:

- **The cost.** While his start-up costs had been fairly low, his monthly costs began to skyrocket as he added more employees, since leasing was his only option.
- **The performance.** The system became progressively slower and began to fail repeatedly because it couldn't handle the load.

Switching to *eNsite* (a scaled-down version of the powerful *eNsite Pro*) has made a tremendous difference for Longhorn. "When we had the other system, we had to take turns using the computer. That alone has been a big improvement. With *eNsite*, everyone can do everything—enter contracts, do quotes... We use every feature—the history, the commissions—we've done it all."

"Overall, it's simple to learn. It will definitely help our growth," said Mike. He recently hired a new employee who learned *eNsite*'s graphical interface quite easily. "Its been real nice that he can just get on it, and he's ready to rock."

Of course there is a learning curve involved when a company switches software, and Mike had to go live on *eNsite* faster than usual. "The other software was getting to the point that it was actually unreliable for what we were doing, so we had to go live on *eNsite* immediately. It was kind of a hectic beginning.

"We were used to a really simple system. It's simple because it was made for small businesses. So, when we converted over, we found that *eNsite* was definitely 'more adult,'" said Mike, "I would say the other program was more like a child's program. *eNsite* is more like an adult's program. But once we got through the teenage years, we were flying through the system. We're getting things done. *eNsite* is a great system."

Mike did quite a bit of shopping around before choosing *eNsite*. In fact, the DDMS family of companies was at the bottom of his list when he first started his search. He had heard that DDMS software was "tough to learn," and that there was "too much to it."

"I was originally going to go with *eNsite Pro* instead of *eNsite*, but the salespeople at DDMS were very helpful; they knew *eNsite* would be more economical for my company, and at the same time offer everything we needed." And, because *eNsite* is a scaled-down version of *eNsite Pro*, whenever Mike's company is ready to move up to the more robust software, the transition will be painless.

"I was skeptical at first, but that's because I didn't know it was a new graphical package. Then I saw the demo site online. I also talked to my United rep, and others, who confirmed that it was a good system."

Mike was also influenced by the fact that DDMS was a part of ECI², developer of his e-commerce solution. Since Longhorn used Base Station™, the predecessor to Dealer

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

The Bottom

Efficiency in Action with DDMS Software



Line

News Briefs

Dealer Station DDMS Edition Passes 500 Customer Milestone

The number of Dealer Station™ DDMS Edition systems ordered has topped the 500 mark. At this time, over 400 dealers are live on the product and handling over \$125M per year in Internet orders (projected from current monthly transaction volume).

Graphical Task Force Formed—eNsite and eNsite Pro Break Speed Barriers

Vast improvements in the speed and usability of eNsite and eNsite Pro graphical products are the result of a special graphical task force formed by DDMS. These DDMS employees from several different departments including programming and QC are dedicated full-time to making improvements to graphical functionality. The results are already impressive, with a considerable amount of speed gained in the latest released version.

Also included in the latest release is the ability to use text-based order entry, A/R, A/P, and purchasing from within the graphical product. This parameter can be set up by user and by action code. So, for instance, if a particular user prefers to use text-based order entry, when that user logs in, the software will automatically display the text-based order entry screen. Or, text-based can be selected from a drop down menu at any time.

Crossing Over at the Speed of eNsite

Ask Joel Carrara from The Office People/Spaceworks of Malden, Massachusetts what has made his work life better and he will tell you that it is switching from the classic DDMS text-based software to the much improved, graphical eNsite Pro.

According to Joel, “with the graphical software compared to the text system, the overall look is better and presents the

information in a much more logical way.” Also, “for furniture order entry, the editing function is much easier and you are able to see the whole order on one screen.” More important, when asked about the speed of the eNsite Pro system, Joel stated, “It’s great! Movement from screen to screen is seamless and fast.”

Joel’s day to day responsibilities center on furniture order entry and project management. He commented that eNsite Pro is quicker and easier to use than ever before.

With improved speed, improved function and ease of use, now is the time to consider “crossing over” to the eNsite product from DDMS.

Internet-based Vendor Communications Software Released!

DDMS is proud to announce the release of software supporting Internet-based vendor communications. DDMS customers using software version 5.10.22 and paying EDI maintenance can now take advantage of this powerful tool. The software uses ECI²’s Internet-based communication network to provide the functionality of a traditional value-added network (VAN) plus additional capabilities **at a much lower cost** to dealers. The new software allows dealers to send purchase orders and receive acknowledgements via the Internet with Daisytek, S.P. Richards, and United Stationers.

ECI²’s software can be customized to create private supply networks (PSNs) for specific vendors who want to provide additional services to their customers. Daisytek is the first vendor to take advantage of this option. The new software allows dealers to do realtime price and stock checks, and even create purchase orders—online. Additional capabilities will be added in future releases of the software.

CUSTOMER SERVICE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

tion of quality learning solutions that enabled support readiness worldwide. Before Ines's role in content, she was responsible for teams of technical professionals supporting back-office products.

"There is a talented pool of technical support staff in the company," said Ines, "It's very unusual to have so many support employees who have such long tenures with a company. They are an impressive group."

The six support operations managers—Kelly Pederson, Sean Jowers, Richard Meager, Paul Lewis, Allen Beavers, and Bryan Grissom—have 60 years of combined service with DDMS and over 75 years of experience in technology, customer service, or one the industries of our customer base.

"With ECI² Direction 2002, our goal is to be a recognized leader in customer satisfaction," said Ines, "I am excited to be given the opportunity to help make that happen."

A Continuous Improvement Program has been implemented in technical support. New practices that are now in place under Ines's direction include:

- CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**
- GOLDEN HOURS
- ELIMINATION OF WEDNESDAY TRAINING SESSION
- CUSTOMER CARE PROGRAM
- IMPROVED CALL FLOW PROCESS
- IMPROVED CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION

Golden Hours

Golden hours are the hours during the day when the technical support staff is totally focused on the customer. No internal meetings or functions are allowed during this time.

Customer Care Program

A more proactive approach is the key to the Customer Care Program. The Support/Customer Service department is now placing more emphasis on finding out what customers' concerns and issues are and addressing them, as well as helping customers use our products and services more effectively.

Elimination of Wednesday Training Session

In the past, technical support was closed between the hours of noon and 2:00 p.m. on Wednesdays for weekly training sessions. Since this is during the Golden Hour period, these sessions have been cancelled so that support staff is available to work with the customers. All training will be scheduled on an individual basis outside of the golden hours.

Improved Call Flow Process

We are changing the call flow process for all critical situations in which customers are unable to operate. We will no longer handle these critical types of calls through the queue mechanism with call-backs. We will instead hand off these calls to the senior support specialists for immediate resolution.

Improved Customer Communication

We are implementing a new communication program to keep customers better informed about issues, changes, and procedures, as well as provide better access to helpful information like tips and hints. We plan to provide more content in the newsletters and significantly improve the information available on the Website.

The programs mentioned above are "only the beginning," according to David. "We are improving a number of practices such as 24/7 support and technician training. We are reorganizing into larger pools of cross-trained employees, resulting in faster, better customer service. We are very excited about these changes, and we believe customers will see a marked difference not only in the speed at which their problems are solved, but in the depth of knowledge shared with them, helping them make their own operations run more smoothly and efficiently."

Meet Our Support Managers

Name, Title	Years Experience	DDMS Experience
Paul Lewis, Support Operations Manager	14	10
Allen Beavers, Training Program Manager	8	7
Kelly Pederson, Team Manager	13	3
Sean Jowers, Team Manager	14	14
Richard Meager, Team Manager	15	12
Bryan Grissom, Special Projects Manager	14	14

Meet Dave Boast, COO

David Boast accepted the position of Chief Operating Officer for ECI² in August 2001. His responsibilities include customer service for the entire company, front-end product development, production operations, account consulting, installation, training, and internal operations.

David came to ECI² from Qwest Communications where he was Executive Vice President, Worldwide Networks, responsible for planning, architecture, engineering, provisioning and operation of the worldwide Qwest fiber optic network, including all service layers such as IP, ATM, FR, and voice. Previously, he oversaw business development and operations for Qwest Internet Solutions, including IP communications and professional services which positioned Qwest as the end-to-end Internet solutions provider for businesses.

Before joining Qwest, David was Vice President of Access at UUNET, responsible for building the world's largest dial access infrastructure, serving customers such as America Online, Microsoft, and Earthlink.

Prior to UUNET, David was the Corporate Vice President, Customer Service responsible for worldwide customer service for Legent Corporation, a systems management software and services company where he worked for 13 years.

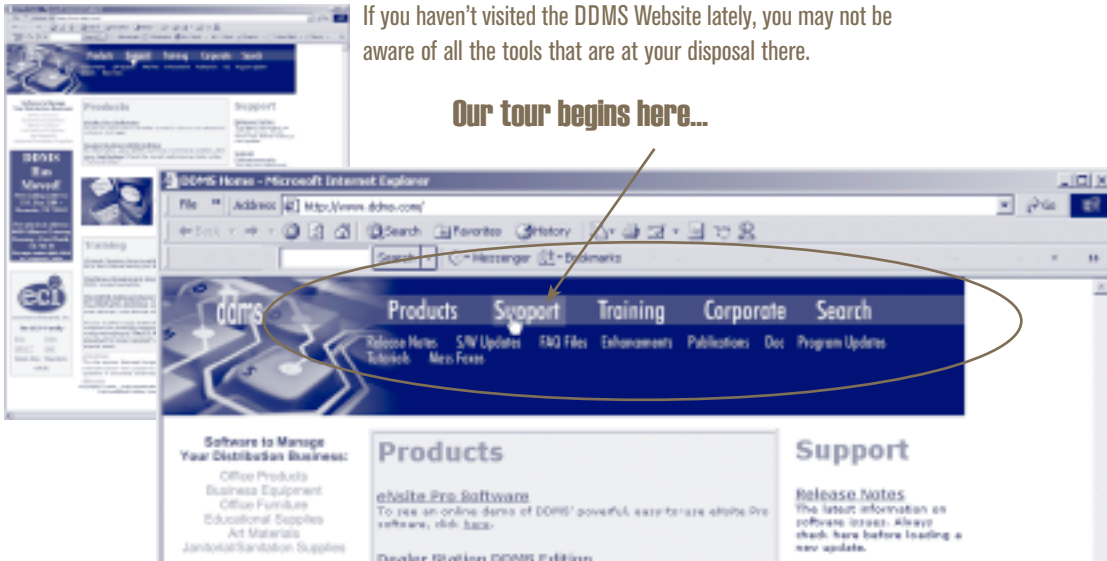


Welcome to www.ddms.com

Support Pages

If you haven't visited the DDMS Website lately, you may not be aware of all the tools that are at your disposal there.

Our tour begins here...



Release Notes

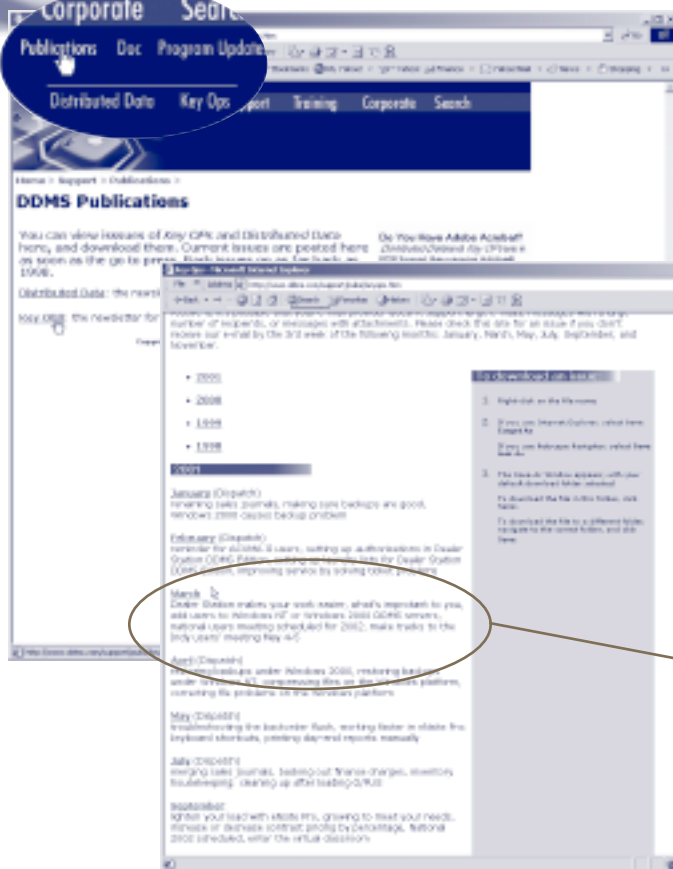
Before loading software updates, click on Release Notes for information about any known problems regarding that release.



Software Updates

Click on S/W Updates for instructions on how to update your software. You will also find articles that summarize major enhancements.





Publications

Our regular publications include *Key OPs* and *Distributed Data* newsletters. *Key OPs*, the newsletter for key operators of DDMS systems, keeps key operators, or system administrators, informed about issues, procedures, and events that affect their day-to-day technical operations. Newsletters dating back to 1998 can be viewed and downloaded from www.ddms.com. *Key OPs* newsletter is e-mailed to customers every month. If you have not been receiving the e-mail version of *Key OPs*, please e-mail keyops@ddms.com from the address at which you wish to receive your newsletter.

Distributed Data, the newsletter you are reading now, is also available on our website for viewing and downloading. In fact, it appears online as soon as we send it to the printer...up to three weeks before it arrives in your mailbox.

Browse the contents of each issue or do a site search to find information about your topic of choice.



Documentation

A great deal of documentation—for core software as well as additional productivity tools—is available on our Website.



Search the Site

Looking for a specific topic? Search the entire DDMS site, or just the support pages.



Support Training Corporate Search

Tutorials

This page contains online tutorials. These tutorials show you each step of different processes. Instead of just reading about how to build a report, you can watch one being made.

We present each tutorial in two formats: you can view them online, or download a copy. The downloadable versions are self-contained programs; once you download them, you can explore, navigate to the folder you downloaded the program to, and double-click the file to start it.

Please note: We write many of these tutorials for eSite Pro users; however, with our online manuals, they will also be applicable to those who use text-based DDMS.

Description	View online	Download
Creating Your Own Reports Using To Build your Own reports with eReport writer	Creating Your Own Reports	Creating Your Own Reports
Specifying Tax Information for Groups of Customers: Use the (F4) screen to make mass changes to tax districts.	Specifying Tax Information for Groups of Customers	Specifying Tax Information for Groups of Customers
Specifying Stock Classes for Groups of Items: Use the (F4) screen to make mass changes to stock classes.	Specifying Stock Classes for Groups of Items	Specifying Stock Classes for Groups of Items
Placing Orders in eOrder Pro: Learn to place orders in the graphical order entry module.	Placing Orders in eOrder Pro	Placing Orders in eOrder Pro

Specifying Tax Information Tutorial

Specifying Tax Information for Groups of Customers

There are two methods you can use to set the taxable tax code for DDMS. As an end user, you'll use the eOrder Entry Sub-Index Customer Window.

Every customer must be able to have tax set, or else you can't properly calculate sales tax.

Tutorials

Your training starts here. The perfect tools for beginners, our tutorials show you the basics of each major module in eNsite Pro—with dynamic, animated demonstrations, not just text. After going through all of the tutorials, you'll be ready for virtual or live training.



Program Updates

Looking for documentation of program updates? Find out what's included in each update by clicking on Program Updates in the Support menu. You'll find a list of all updates, and descriptions of each change.

Program Updates

On-Line

To view a...

To search, click the...

Program Update

Program Update

Program Update

Program Update

Click here to view contents

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Version 5.0	04/11/00	Initial release
Version 5.1	05/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.2	06/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.3	07/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.4	08/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.5	09/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.6	10/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.7	11/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.8	12/11/00	Added new features
Version 5.9	01/11/01	Added new features
Version 5.10	02/11/01	Added new features
Version 5.11	03/11/01	Added new features
Version 5.12	04/11/01	Added new features
Version 5.13	05/11/01	Added new features
Version 5.14	06/11/01	Added new features

VERSION 5.9,14

Contents

- Category A: Accounting
- Category B: Standard Inventory
- Category C: Order Entry
- Category D: Shipping
- Category E: Purchasing and Inventory
- Category F: Report Writing
- Category G: ECR
- Category H: Warehouse Communications
- Category I: Utilities

To Market... To Market

Buy the cart, but don't forget the horse.

Sound strategy for sales force automation.

One half of all sales force automation/CRM (customer relationship management) projects fail—A sobering fact, considering the investment required for good CRM software. Experts agree that while technology plays a critical role in implementing CRM and sales force automation, it is only one of three key factors of a successful program.

The ingredients for a successful CRM program are: the right people, the right processes, and the right technology. Without the first two, the third ingredient is a costly investment that probably won't pay off. In fact, if used ineffectively, it becomes simply an expensive address book.

Randy Larrimore, President and CEO of United Stationers, stated in November at the NPA Convention, "If there's one weakness we see among independents today, it's a lack of focus on sales management." He stated that dealers need to have clear sales goals and be working closely with their people to ensure those goals are met.

The most effective way to do that is to establish a CRM program that uses sound practices combined with technology so that any given employee in any department can put a finger on the pulse of your customer base at any time. This not only increases sales, but gives all of your employees—from order takers to accountants and ware-

Technology alone cannot transform struggling sales and marketing programs into high profit-producing entities. It takes:

1. The right people
2. The right processes
3. The right technology

housemen—the tools they need to provide the best customer service, thereby strengthening relationships and ensuring that your customers *remain* your customers.

Fortunately for DDMS customers, we are affiliated with two superb consulting groups that specialize in Goldmine® CRM software—Chuckals Consulting, L.L.C., a division of Chuckals Office Products, and Longbow Consulting Group, who has worked with office supply dealers for 11 years. Both of

these **DDMS Approved Vendors** offer integration solutions that connect your DDMS databases with Goldmine® software (see related stories on pages 1 and 14). Just as important, both vendors offer excellent consulting services that will help ensure a successful CRM program for your company.

We talked with Michael Gunther of Chuckals and Neil Saviano of Longbow about the kinds of mistakes dealers make when implementing CRM and the steps they can take to improve their sales and customer service, ensuring a great return on their investment.

"We find that people buy GoldMine and install it, but they're just using it for a big Rolodex," said Michael. "They may be sold on the possibilities of what GoldMine can do for them, but until their people are trained on it and learn how to use it to its capabilities, it might as well just be sitting on the shelf."

That isn't to say that dealers don't already have processes for prospecting and customer service in place. It's just that the processes aren't always followed consistently. GoldMine can bridge that gap, according to Neil. "The organization more than likely has a sound process in theory, but they're not able to execute it. If everything went as planned, they'd be writing all kinds of new business. But what happens is everyday things like checking for credits or following up on a failed delivery, or



any number of business matters intervene and keep people from following their own well-planned process,” said Neil, “Someone might go to the fax machine, but it’s being used, so they put the fax aside to tend to other matters, and somehow the sales flyer or information a customer requested doesn’t get faxed.”

If every aspect of your prospecting process—as well as the processes you go through after a customer has placed their first order—were automated, several things would be accomplished:

- You could “touch” your customers and prospects more often, and more consistently
- Salespeople would be freed from mundane tasks that take time away from getting more business
- Everyone in your organization would have the tools they need—information about the customer and the customer’s buying patterns—to perform superb customer service

- Management would have the information it needs to analyze and improve sales performance

Both Neil and Michael encounter the same kinds of problems among dealers—problems they help them solve through good CRM practices:

- Dealers miss a lot of opportunities because they don’t know what’s going on with their customers and prospects.
- Dealers have difficulty building customer loyalty because they don’t have a CRM process in place for customers *after* they place their first order



“ONE OF THE CORE PIECES OF CUSTOMER INFORMATION THAT MANY OFFICE PRODUCTS DEALERS DON’T HAVE—THE INFORMATION THAT SHOULD DRIVE THEIR WHOLE SALES STRATEGY—IS THE NUMBER OF OFFICE WORKERS.”

Crucial Customer Information

In order to analyze data—to know who’s buying what and how often, compare it with established norms, and work toward meeting the needs of those customers—the first thing you need is information (data). If all you have is name, address, phone number, and contact person, no report in the world will give you an accurate picture of the customer so that you can devise a sales strategy. Information is the key element of the entire process.

“One of the things that has been established as the reason for failure is an absence of buy-in,” said Neil. If your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

CRM Success

Plan, plan, plan. Set long-term goals. Establish a high-level plan that addresses tactics, processes, skill sets, and technology. Make sure everyone in the company understands it and sees it as a priority and an avenue for transformation and growth.

CRM is for everyone. Appoint a senior manager to be responsible for cross-departmental CRM. A successful program requires a company-wide effort. Do not allow departmental needs to overrule company needs.

Involve the technical experts. While CRM is a business strategy, it is dependent on technology. The IT department should contribute to the decision-making process. Business users and IT need to work together.

Process first. Automation second. Examine your processes before attempting to automate them. Automating a flawed process will compound

problems. CRM implementation is a good opportunity to improve your processes. Draw a flow chart, fill in gaps, and remove unnecessary steps before automating.

Garbage in/garbage out. Customer, product, inventory, and transaction data is the core of CRM. Continuously ensure that your data is current and accurate, and that it gives you the information you need.

The customer is the reason. The ultimate goal of CRM is to better serve your customers. Involve customers and customer advocates in the process to make sure customer needs are met.

Train employees. Almost every employee provides customer service in some way, so everyone should be trained on the CRM system. Pouring money into technology that is not used correctly ensures failure. **DD**

Station™, Mike could see the benefits of choosing compatible software from the makers of the most progressive software in the industry. **“Eventually, it’ll just be one fluid motion, from order entry straight to transmission to wholesalers, straight to customers.** We’ll need a lot fewer customer service people,” said Mike.

Longhorn Office Products is a perfect example of the kind of business that thrives using eNsite. At their present rate of growth, they’ll be ready for the more feature-rich eNsite Pro before long, and the transition will be easy.

“We’re trying to be the number one office supplier in our area. That’s what we’re shooting for. Right now we’re number two or three. We’re already up there, and we’ve only been in business two years...compared to our main competitor’s 20 years. Here we come! Be careful!”

Longhorn Update Q4 2001

The preceding article was first published in February of 2001. We talked to Mike again in July ‘01 and January ‘02, and he was still very excited about his company’s growth, and confident in eNsite’s ability to support his operation as it grows. In 1999, Longhorn consisted of two employees. In July ‘01, there were 10, and now Longhorn employs 12 people, with plans to hire three more.

While Longhorn is using eNsite software, they have gradually added some of the robust features from eNsite Pro software, including Automated Short Buy. “We’ve practically got the full-blown system now,” said Mike.

When asked if eNsite is still meeting his company’s needs, Mike said it’s better now than ever. **“There used to be an issue with speed. But we just got an update, and it’s incredible. It’s fast; it’s super fast.** Also, in order entry, they’ve integrated a button so that if you’d prefer to use text-based, you can actually click on a button and switch to text-based order entry. I have one person in the office that used to use the text-based, and they’re very excited. There’s a lot of exciting things. It’s amazing what they’re coming up with.”

Even in a depressed economy, Longhorn had its best month ever in December 2001, and has seen a 200% increase in the past year. “We’re going crazy!” said Mike, “I didn’t expect such massive growth in one month. No one would expect selling to almost double from one month to the next...and we’re doing better this month than last! We’re bucking the economy!”

WHEN WE FIRST GOT BASE STATION™
WE WERE ONLY DOING ABOUT \$2-4,000
A MONTH. WE’RE DOING ABOUT
\$50,000 A MONTH NOW!”

While Longhorn’s overall sales have increased greatly, online sales have skyrocketed. “When we first got Base Station we were only doing about \$2-4,000 a month. We’re doing about \$50,000 a month now!” said Mike. New and existing customers


alike are asking for online ordering. “We’re more than happy to let people order online. And we get more and more customers using online, people that don’t want to call in because they don’t have the time. They’re loving it.” Mike plans to upgrade to Dealer Station™ DDMS Edition to take advantage of the cost savings that an integrated solution will bring him as well as the added features it offers his customers.

“I’m also really looking forward to Internet-based transactions with wholesalers, and want to get started just as soon as we can,” said Mike.

“IF I WERE STILL DOING A MILLION, I’D
PROBABLY STILL BE ON MY PREVIOUS SOFTWARE...BUT WHEN I’M DOING \$10-30 MILLION,
I’LL STILL BE USING eNSITE”

Needless to say, Mike is extremely happy that he made the switch from his previous software to eNsite. “Don’t get me wrong, it was a great system for a smaller dealer. If I were still doing a million, I’d probably still be on it.

But eNsite has made the growth easier. The reports are more concise, I have so much more functionality, and the support is great. I get very consistent customer service. I don’t even have to say my name any more when I call. They know who I am.”

We have no doubt that you’ll be hearing more about Longhorn Office Products in the future, as Mike’s plans for growth continue. “When I’m doing \$10-30 million, I’ll still be using this system!” said Mike. 

Interactive Week's Top 500 Have Strategies in Common

When *Interactive Week* posted its Annual “Interactive 500”* in November 2001, it looked very different from the previous year. Many of the companies on 2000’s list don’t even exist anymore. However, even after the disappearance—through failures and mergers—of so many “dot-goners”, the news is very encouraging.

According to the magazine, “The aggregate revenue of this year’s Interactive 500 is a downright jaw-dropping \$378.38 billion—more than double last year’s total of \$183.56 billion. Many of the dot-coms on the list are profitable, and **traditional businesses continue to be a dominating presence** on Interactive Week’s annual ranking of e-commerce powerhouses.”

E-commerce has given many traditional companies a sharp, competitive edge, according to *Interactive Week*. “Properly mastered, that edge can cut new paths to online opportunity... Take for example,” the article continues, “Office Depot, the leading office products company: It’s No. 30 on this year’s list, and is considered by many e-tail experts to be **the company to watch in the space.**”

“WE VIEWED [E-COMMERCE] AS A CRITICAL BUSINESS FUNCTION.”
—MONICA LUECHTEFELD, OFFICE DEPOT


What accounts for Office Depot’s success? “We had decided as a company from day one that the Web was going to be totally integrated into our systems and our company. We viewed it as a strategic initiative,” says Monica Luechtefeld, Office Depot’s executive vice president of e-commerce. “We viewed it as a critical business function.”

What were the lessons learned in this critical year of dismal failures and steady successes? “Most of the top companies on 2001’s Interactive 500 have learned how to integrate their supply chains, back-end databases, customer service operations, and procurement systems with their Web operations to get a jump on the competition. They figured out how to get people to visit their Web sites and even buy something once

“**MOST OF THE TOP COMPANIES ON THIS YEAR’S INTERACTIVE 500 HAVE LEARNED HOW TO INTEGRATE THEIR SUPPLY CHAINS, BACK-END DATABASES, CUSTOMER SERVICE OPERATIONS, AND PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS WITH THEIR WEB OPERATIONS TO GET A JUMP ON THE COMPETITION.**”

they’re there. These companies also have developed more mature mechanisms for determining whether they’re getting payback from Internet expenditures.”

According to *Interactive Week*, common success story factors among the Interactive 500 include:

- A commitment to push the e-envelope, to try new initiatives and to migrate customers onto the Web—a cost-effective selling platform that allows companies to establish strong ties with buyers.
- E-commerce is woven into the very fabric of the corporation—from the supply chain to procurement to business intelligence and analytics
- Companies leverage their existing Internet infrastructures for business improvements and expansions. 

* Source: “The Annual Interactive 500: Secrets of their Success,” John McCormick, Editor, *Interactive Week*, November 5, 2001, page 24.

NEW PRODUCTS OFFERED BY APPROVED VENDORS MAKE CRM EASIER AND BETTER

Two exceptional products recently made available by DDMS Approved Vendors will open up a new world of information exchange between your DDMS databases and GoldMine.



Both of these vendors work closely with DDMS to ensure product compatibility. Please contact the vendors for more specific feature information.

GOLDDeX® from **Chuckals Consulting L.L.C.** and **GoldLink™** from **Longbow Consulting Group** are tools designed for the exchange of information between GoldMine and DDMS software. Customers utilizing these products will have the ability to map fields in their DDMS software to fields in GoldMine and import/export information from one program to the other on a scheduled basis. With advanced data filtering capabilities, these interfaces will prove invaluable to your sales organization and your entire company.

For more information, contact the individual vendors:

GOLDDeX from **Chuckals Consulting, L.L.C.**. Michael Gunther (253) 620-2350 or guntherm@chuckals.net. www.chuckals.net.

GoldLink from **Longbow Consulting Group**. Neil Saviano at (978) 750-6882 or info@longbowcg.com. www.longbowcg.com.

people are reluctant to find out the necessary information, enter it into the system, and keep it updated, no contact process can work properly.

“What is astounding is that, in our experience, one of the core pieces of customer information that office products dealers don’t have—the information that should drive their whole sales strategy—is the number of office workers,” Neil said, “There’s been a ratio established that one office worker may consume \$600-\$700 a year in office products. So, when you compare that to their YTD sales and see a disparity, your whole strategic focus with that account is established.

“Otherwise,” he continued, “you may think you’re doing well if an account is bringing you \$5,000 a year when in reality, they *should* be bringing you \$20,000 a year.”

How do you ensure that you have the information you need? A system of accountability must be established. “Our GoldMine database changes constantly,” said Michael, “It is the sales manager or marketing manager’s responsibility to run reports and keep salespeople accountable for ‘filling in the blanks.’ If we’ve got bad or missing data, that’s when the sales manager steps in and keeps the salespeople to task. We

also train salespeople in things like how to talk to customers and how to get the information we need to perform good market analyses.”

Both Neil and Michael agree that getting accurate data is not only a crucial part of the entire CRM process, but it’s also an area where many businesses fall short. They meet resistance in the sales force when it comes to using technology. “Quite frankly,” said Michael, “we believe in taking a hard line. If a salesperson doesn’t want to ask questions, fill out a form, and enter information that will help increase business, then he should work somewhere else.”

“You’ve got to win those salespeople over,” says Neil, “and one of the ways to win them over is to make them understand that it will put more money in their pocket.” And, indeed, a good, automated CRM process will increase sales if the people driving it stay the course.

CRM—a One to One Strategy

While some organizations focus on getting the sale, successful companies know that sales continue long after the customer is won. It costs more to regain a lost customer than it did to get that same customer in the first place. Most lost customers don’t kick and scream on their way out the door. They’re silent. They simply fade away. But if you have your finger on the pulse of your customer base—if you have good customer relationships—you’ll know when a customer is unhappy, or when an organization has untapped sales potential. Perhaps they’ve merged with another organization that purchases their paper from someone else. Winning their business in one area may ensure that you’ll keep their business in other areas.

ONE TO ONE STRATEGY

DETERMINE CUSTOMER'S POTENTIAL...

BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP...

SELL TO THE CUSTOMER'S POTENTIAL.

This kind of relationship management is not new. In fact, it's a "back to basics" formula. For centuries, successful businesspeople have *been* successful because they know their customers. Take for example the

corner grocer from decades past. He knew more than just his customers' names. He knew their family members; he knew if their child was ill; he knew if they didn't eat meat on Fridays. All of the things he knew about his customers translated into serving those customers' needs. Good customer relationship management helps your sales force do the same thing—operate on an account-by-account basis—except on a larger scale.

The beauty of automation is that you don't have to get mired in it. Once you've established a process, you can continue to focus on urgent daily matters and know that customers are being "touched" and customer information is being updated on a regular basis.

"You have to know, on a one-to-one basis—where you are, where you've been, and where you want to go" says Neil, "That means establishing a process of determining potential, building a strong relationship, and selling to that potential."

Neil says that one of the problems he encounters most with dealers is that they focus on *getting* the sale, then fail to follow up with good sales practices once the customer has been established. "They may go in with their loss leader program," said Neil, "which means

they're getting this new account by giving away product. The goal now should be to leverage this door opener and go in with the non-commodity so you can drive margin."



Both Longbow and Chuckals have established automated processes to fill in the

gaps that may develop between the initial sale and ongoing business. And now, with programs available from each of these vendors that provide a direct link from your DDMS databases to your GoldMine (see sidebar on page 14), the process is even smoother. It all begins when the "1st order" field is no longer empty. From that point, the customer becomes immersed in information from your company's different product areas. You can set up these processes however you like. Perhaps flyers are automatically faxed or e-mailed. Or a salesperson may be automatically notified when a certain amount of time elapses between orders.

"What we've been developing lately is what we call the sick process," said Michael, "where we look at how often a customer is purchasing." A different process can be set up for different customers, depending on their buying patterns. If they normally purchase every 30 days, but 40 have elapsed, a process is triggered. Combining that information with NOPA standards can help you determine whether you're reaching maximum penetration.

The advantage of using the services of consultants like Longbow and Chuckals is that they can dramatically reduce implementation time. Because they have proven, established processes, they can give your sales organization a jump start. "Basically, we give you a one to two year head start," said Michael, "But that isn't to say that businesses can just plug in our template and start making money. Every business is different, and each one of our customers will make adjustments and changes to their system once it's been established...and we're here for them all along the way."

As DDMS Approved Vendors, both Chuckals and Longbow are highly recommended to DDMS customers as technology partners. We encourage you to contact them to find out about the services they can offer your company.

For more information about the products and services offered by **Chuckals Consulting, L.L.C.**, contact Michael Gunther at (253) 620-2350 or guntherm@chuckals.net.

For more information about products and services offered by **Longbow Consulting Group**, contact Neil Saviano at (978) 750-6882 or info@longbowcwg.com. 



Proof of Delivery Software

R. Smith Consulting, a DDMS Approved Vendor, announces recent developments in its Proof of Delivery Software:

- **“One-Step” feature**—collect signatures for the whole delivery rather than scanning every box.
- **Inquiry Program**—quickly look up the actual signature by invoice, company name, customer P/O number, manifest number, zip code, or phone number. All details, including the signature, can be viewed and printed for faxing. If the dealer uses Winfax® or a similar program, he can fax the POD right from his desk. This Windows®-based program may be used by everyone in the company.
- Dealers who want to make monthly payments now have a 3-year **lease option**. A 3-year warranty, covering repairs on all of the units, is included.
- The Palm® software is now available in **Spanish**.
- Now in beta testing—**Point-of-sale** signature capture



For more information, contact Rich Smith at 973.361.6235 or info@rsmithconsult.com.



New Catalog Available through OPUS

New Office Products Wholesale (NOW), a stocking wholesale distributor dedicated exclusively to marketing and distribution of products not yet available through traditional wholesalers, is now part of OPUS offerings, making it available to all DDMS and ECI² dealers.

NOW bridges the gap between the time a manufacturer introduces a new product and the time it is available through traditional distribution, making new products available to dealers 18 to 24 months before catalogued by major wholesalers.



Authorized NOW resellers may provide NOW's products to their customers via traditional means, such as their quarterly flyer program, or as Web content. Their new product catalog is available on Dealer Station™ DDMS Edition. Dealers may also receive orders—and therefore new customers—via NOW's Website, www.nopshowcase.com.

Contact Harry Cherek at NOW (877.667.9988 or harry@intronow.com) to find out about becoming a NOW reseller. You may also call OPUS at 800.359.6787 for more information about using the catalog with your DDMS software.

