HANDSHAKE / Camelot Chilled Foods

Increasing Margins with Better Business Intelligence

How foodservice distributor Camelot Chilled Foods transformed their sales operation with mobile technology and custom business reporting.

Like most suppliers, Camelot's primary business objective is maximizing customer profitability.

A family-run business in operation for over 25 years, Camelot Chilled Foods is a foodservice manufacturer and distributor based in London, serving corner stores in the South London area. They distribute not only chilled foods, bakery products, organic foods, drinks and snacks, but also manufacture and distribute pasta salads, wraps, and grab-n-go snack items under several of their own brands.

Like most suppliers in manufacturing and distribution, Camelot's primary business objective is building a sales process that maximizes customer profitability. As a foodservice distributor of perishable items, one of their biggest challenges is the optimization of allotted fridge space in their respective stores. With a densely distributed sales operation consisting of over 900 retail and corner store customers, 85-90% of which are visited on weekly basis by their team of 9 sales reps, ensuring this vast customer base is ordering the right product mix is paramount to the profitability equation.

This case study details how Camelot used Handshake to update their existing antiquated ordering technology, and how they gave reps access to mission-critical business intelligence to maximize profits.

Life Before Handshake: Outdated Mobile Technology & Suffering Margins

Before finding Handshake, Camelot reps were using a PDA-based ordering solution, one that would regularly crash or go unresponsive for up to 45 minutes. The highly analog technology lacked imagery, had illegible text, and even required the use of a stylus. Altogether, it was an outdated user experience that left much to be desired.

Updating the devices with new product information was also cumbersome. In order to upload a new item or inventory data, the PDA had to physically be inserted into a docking station. This meant that their sales reps, already on the road all day, had to start each morning with an extra trip to Camelot headquarters to load up their devices, rather than using that time to sell.

Pre-Handshake Challenges

An outdated PDA-based ordering solution

- No images
- Illegible text
- Manual product updates
- No sync capacity

Suffering margins

- Customers over-ordering
- Credits impacting margins

The desired technology was one that worked on iPad and give reps data to control the sales conversation.

What's more, because the PDA update was only done once-a-day, in person, any product shipments that arrived at Camelot throughout the business day couldn't be added to the reps' PDAs until the following morning. It meant that reps were missing opportunities to sell these new products simply because the information couldn't get to them fast enough.

The biggest problem Camelot was facing, however, was related to profitability. Because the PDA was unable to provide reps with the sales and ordering intelligence they needed to advise their buyers, reps had to rely too heavily on the customer to build the order for their store. And because Camelot bears the financial burden of all unsold items, there was no risk to the customer to simply place the same order, week over week, even if they weren't able to sell the full quantities. Explains Kirtan Patel, Camelot's Sales & Marketing Manager:

> "Our business operates on a buy and return basis. Customers give us space in their fridge, and we manage that space for them. But food products have a shelf life. If something goes out of date, we give them a full credit."

When customers ordered too much, not only was product wasted, but the issued credit reduced profit on all subsequent orders, cutting into margins. Even less desirable was the alternative scenario, where the customer placed a smaller order and sold out of product, as it was a wasted opportunity to make more sales.

It was clear that until the business was able to put control of the ordering process back in the hands of the sales rep, they were going to continue to lose money. This, coupled with the poor user experience and unreliable performance of their PDA technology, was a strong motivating factor that led the Camelot team to look for a new ordering solution.

The desired technology was a user-friendly application that would work on everyday consumer mobile devices and give their sales reps the data they needed to control the sales conversation. Fortunately,

"

"Our business operates on a buy and return basis. Customers give us space in their fridge, and we manage that space for them. But food products have a shelf life. If something goes out of date, we give them a full credit."

"

Kirtan Patel
Sales & Marketing Manager

HANDSHAKE

After implementing Handshake, Camelot was able to nearly double their daily sales appointment volume.

Kirtan and his team found this solution in Handshake Rep, setting out to improve their sales operations with a mobile order writing application the reps could use on their iPads.

Life After Handshake: A Smarter, Faster, Easier Sales Appointment

Since implementing Handshake, Camelot has seen the following improvements in their sales operation.

A more user-friendly ordering experience

A drastic improvement from their previous mobile ordering solution, reps find Handshake's iPad ordering application much easier to use. According to Patel, "It's been great. The PDA used to crash all the time, but the Apple hardware just works."

Reps browse an image-rich digital catalog, tap items to add them to an order, and have access to product availability, customer order history, and customer-specific pricing and product assortments.

*More customer appointments & saved time*

When Camelot reps were still using the PDA ordering solution, they were only able to see 18-20 customers per day. After implementing Handshake, they were able to nearly double their appointment volume, seeing up to 30 customers in one day. They attribute this massive uptick in efficiency to the speed at which they can now write orders.

Handshake has also eliminated the need for reps to make unnecessary visits to Camelot headquarters. Product or inventory updates are managed in a web admin portal by the Camelot team, and changes are immediately synced out to the sales team in the field.

Smarter selling with custom reporting

By default, every Handshake account includes access to order history for all buyers. Sales reps across all industries find this

Before Handshake
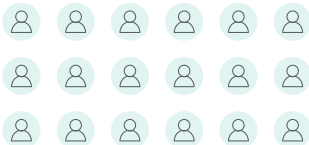
18-20 customer visits per day

After Handshake

30 customer visits per day

Sales rep access to custom sales reporting has played a critical role in improving customer profitability.

intelligence useful for offering product suggestions, pushing upsell opportunities, and informing a more strategic sales conversation.

Given Camelot's particular business needs as a distributor of perishable goods, it was imperative that reps could access sales intelligence that included not only past order history, but also any credits that had been issued to the buyer. Therefore, the Handshake Customer Success Team worked with Camelot to build a custom report that would give reps access to order history and credits issued to each buyer.

Now, if a customer wants to place an order for 40 wrapped sandwiches, for example, the rep references the custom report. If the customer has only been able to sell, on average, 20 sandwiches per week for the last 5 weeks, the sales rep will recommend to reduce the quantity on the sandwiches, suggesting alternate items to fill the fridge space. This gives the customer the chance to benefit from their reps' expertise in what's selling in their market in this concentrated regional area, and Camelot the ability to expand the customer into new product categories.

Sales reps also use the custom report to identify and suggest products that historically sold well, but might not have been ordered in months.

This custom sales intelligence has been the key factor in building an accurate sales order that has improved customer profitability. What's more, Camelot reps are now providing strategic value to their customers, rather than serving as mere order takers.

To learn more about maximizing your customer profitability or providing your sales team with actionable business reporting, contact us today.

Email: info@handshake.com
US Toll Free: +1 (855) 532-9044
International: +1 (646) 434-25533

The Custom Report