

## Aluminum Trailer Company (ATC)

# ATC Gains Full Visibility into Dealer Network and Improves Close Rate by 25%

### Client

- Aluminum Trailer Company (ATC)

### Industry

- Manufactures customized cargo, auto and specialty trailers

### Size

- \$45-\$50 million in annual sales
- 200 employees
- 75 dealers in the U.S. and Canada
- 3,500 trailers built annually

### Location

- Nappanee, IN

### Solution Goals

- Reduce order defects by 90%
- Reduce time to quote a custom trailer by 50%
- Improve office throughput by 20% without additional resources
- Improve dealer close rate by 25%

### Integrations

- Order entry, engineering, production, shipping and billing

### Applications

- Internally built custom order configurator, order management, CRM

### Solution Selected

- Cincom CPQ<sup>™</sup>

*"We now have a treasure trove of data we can use to predict what our sales will be and what capacity we need to have onsite."*

- Steve Brenneman, Owner



L-R: CFO, Peter Gingerich; owner and founder, Steve Brenneman; and IT Software Projects Manager, Aaron Cannon

Since 1999, a key part of ATC's sales success has been partnerships with independent retail dealers across the US and Canada. Using an internally built online platform, dealers would configure and submit customer orders that ATC would review and then send back with pricing and fulfillment details.

However, this method lacked standardization and allowed dealers to put together orders that were often incompatible with ATC's current product line. This required a time-consuming, back-and-forth exchange that was becoming more and more unacceptable to the dealers, the company and the customers. According to Brenneman, "We needed a way to make our quoting system better reflect the actual processes that take place to build the product."

### The Roadmap

Brenneman and his team considered all options:

- **CFO, Peter Gingerich**, led an internal selection team that evaluated solutions in the marketplace.
- **IT Software Projects Manager, Aaron Cannon**, considered all factors involved in pursuing the "built from scratch" option.
- **An independent analytics firm** was hired to observe firsthand how dealers were actually using the existing online tool.



Air Support Control Tower Trailer

What they learned about the dealer's workflow allowed ATC to conceptualize a roadmap that would help them develop a system to best fit their unique business model. Additionally, it would maximize efficiencies in the order-build process and improve the dealer-customer experience as well.

## Encouragement from an Existing Partner

ATC had already determined that a market-ready solution was more practical and cost-efficient than building its own configurator when an existing partner stepped in with a recommendation.

*"Pinnacle demonstrated how Cincom CPQ was being used in an organization similar to ours, which encouraged us to contact Cincom."*

– Steve Brenneman

ATC met with Cincom to discuss a multi-phased implementation plan that would work best with the manufacturer's day-to-day operations and cause as few disruptions as possible. This exercise helped ATC decide to move forward with Cincom.

## The Solution

The project included integrating Cincom CPQ into ATC's IT infrastructure, thereby creating a seamless flow of information between processes. This allowed ATC to create a more structured environment and connect it to the dealer platform using an interface that displays clearly defined menu options.

*"Cincom CPQ is structured in a way that allows us to maintain control and modify our own business rules."*

– Peter Gingerich

## Dealer Roll-Out and Training

One of ATC's guiding principles was to build something that didn't require a user manual to operate. Gingerich says, "We found that new dealers were able to pick it up right away. Additionally, there are far fewer errors during the ordering process because the dealer and customer are guided through each step, creating an order based on available customization options."

## Advanced Reporting and Forecasting

ATC can now capture data in a whole new way and at a much deeper level than previously possible. Order input can be displayed in a big-picture view or "cherry-picked" for more granular insight. ATC streams this information into its sales model for a complete view of its pipeline—an analytical level unable to be captured previously.

## Visual Value Stream Mapping (VSM)

With ATC's previous order-quoting system, it was very hard to modify business rules. According to Gingerich, "It's refreshing to have a learning system in place where we can fix one issue at a time and then apply the fix globally throughout the system and ensure that all of the value streams adhere to it."

*"The visual display of Cincom CPQ helps identify areas that need better consistency across our value streams."*

– Aaron Cannon

## The Overall Experience

Today, ATC uses its order platform to process more than 80 order submittals from its retail dealers each week. This data-rich input is now uniformly channeled to the proper manufacturing areas to better coordinate all product efforts and expedite fulfillment.

Achieving this level of technological advancement began with the initial strategic planning that took place between ATC and Cincom.



*"I would definitely recommend Cincom to other companies seeking a CPQ solution."*

– Peter Gingerich



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