



“

Marc Käßner, European Product Manager HPE, ALSO Deutschland GmbH

The improved functionality that came with iQuote 2.0, combined with restructuring of our own team formed the ideal opportunity to roll-out iQuote across the HPE selling countries in the ALSO Group. It is a localized tool but, in part, centrally managed. The excellent functionality has meant that we serve our SMB customers fantastically, especially through our Webstore.

”

Service

iQuote: HPE's Channel CPQ Service.

Requirements

ALSO Group needed a European-wide CPQ tool for sales staff to offer accurate quotations based on real-time inventory, whilst maintaining or even increasing the pitch rate for its HPE SMB server customers. ALSO's Resellers were also requesting the ability to self-serve HPE quotations via the ALSO eCommerce Store.



Background and challenges

ALSO Group operates in 23 European countries as an end-to-end service provider for the ICT industry. The ALSO ecosystem brings together the providers and buyers of the ICT industry as their end-to-end technology provider. The ALSO ecosystem, comprises: technology manufacturers, technology service providers, distributors, and end users.

ALSO's three business models – Supply, Solutions and Service – cover the entire range from “on-premise” (transactional, acquisition of hardware and software) to “off premise,” (consumptional, usage-based IT-as-a-Service via the cloud) including possible hybrid solutions.

ALSO Group had its own configure tool, largely relying on spreadsheets, to configure and price products for its buyers. ALSO felt their in-house tool helped with quoting HPE Servers, but that there may be a better option outsourcing to serve many of their 100,000 buyers and 50,000 SMB Resellers, particularly so that they would have an accurate snapshot of their inventory at any given time.

There were some reservations for ALSO in taking an iQuote subscription, many other Distributors were already using iQuote, so ALSO felt that there was little opportunity to differentiate itself. However, the overhead of maintaining the inhouse spreadsheet system was preventing pre-sales and product management resources from being proactive and interacting with customers/sales. **The utilization of the spreadsheet was good, but it offered no centralized reporting, stock availability or individual customer prices.**

ALSO needed a facility to be up and running both quickly, and across most of its European countries, with minimal disruption to its front-line staff.

Solution

Having a close relationship with HPE, ALSO became aware of iQuote, the Configure Price Quote (CPQ) tool for quoting the HPE SMB BTO Portfolio of Servers, Storage and Networking. Although ALSO Germany was hosting iQuote very early on, it was the functionality improving with the launch of iQuote 2.0 that led to ALSO realising the opportunities, and, in collaboration with HPE, became very active with it.

This improved functionality includes integration in iQuote for promotional Bundles, the ability to integrate into ALSO's Webstore showing online stock availability and integrated order process through the Webstore basket displaying individual customer prices.



By consolidating the iQuote CPQ application and the local inventory, ALSO's staff and customers are able to optimize quotes based on available inventory and actual sell/buy price leveraging local promotions and bundles.

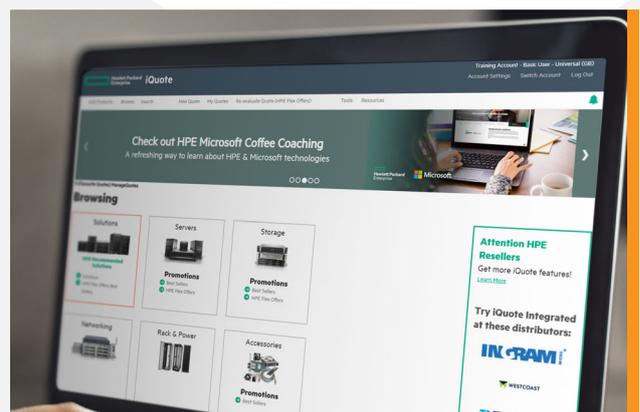
Implementation and Benefits

The implementation and onboarding were complete quickly as channelcentral uses industry standard APIs to onboard iQuote Hosts. Despite some prior concerns, Staff have found iQuote straightforward to use and fully supported by HPE and channelcentral with Training Videos and User Guides, should a user require assistance with using the tool.

There is no doubt iQuote has increased productivity and created a more efficient workflow at ALSO. ALSO's buyers can self-serve for simpler configurations, sales staff have more time to work on more complex and higher value deals. iQuote intelligently provides compatible recommendations for products and services leading to higher pitch rates, particularly for self-serve quotes in some instances at ALSO.

Very rapidly ALSO saw the benefit of correctly configured quotations with a significant drop in costly sales/customer errors and resultant product returns.

In addition, ALSO has utilized the marketing opportunity within iQuote to place banners on browsing and configuring pages, raising awareness and directing users for specific promotional campaigns.



ALSO receives concise monthly BI Reports. These reports provide each Host with statistics on utilization, clearly demonstrating return on investment. In addition, ALSO receives Detailed Data Reports for more in-depth analysis including popular product combinations.

Recommendations

ALSO is fully satisfied with the value of the iQuote tool and now champions it. Quote values have increased, costs have lowered and buyer satisfaction has increased. iQuote is fully integrated into ALSO's sales enablement ecosystem.

ALSO is currently interested in progressing channelcentral's proposal for Quote Vault: a Web Service for Hosts, injecting customer quotes directly to the Host's CRM System for follow up (by Telesales for example). Quote Vault aims to improve the 'close rate' on quotes for iQuote Hosts.

“

Tim Moyle, CEO, channelcentral.net

ALSO is a strategic customer for iQuote. Their geographical coverage is one of their Unique Selling Points. The work they have done to drive iQuote for HPE has contributed to their success. As ALSO drives more innovation in their Sales processes, channelcentral looks forward to supporting them in the future.



”

About channelcentral

channelcentral is a highly focused and dynamic software provider for organisations in the IT Channel.



channelcentral's key strength is its expertise and ability to take complex data sets and provide user friendly tools that provide fast, accurate and relevant product and service quotations for Manufacturers, Resellers and Distributors in the IT Channel. channelcentral services enable companies in the IT Channel to become more efficient, profitable and easier to do business with. channelcentral is a leading Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) Software as a Service (SaaS) Company with clear specialisms in the IT Industry and eCommerce environments.

For more information on channelcentral services go to
www.channelcentral.net

