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- Amy Smyth, Manager of Dealer Service

**Manufacturing**  
Pipes and Fittings

Invendia Success Story #76

## Improving Customer Service at an Industrial Manufacturer

*In order to increase the customer success rates across large distribution networks that are controlled by dealers, manufacturers/ distributors need to better match inventories to demand.*

A manufacturer of pipe and pipe fittings possessed multiple product lines, totalling 500 stock keeping units (SKUs). With a dealer network of over 60 dealer locations, the company was facing poor customer service at the dealer level because dealers were using paper based tools that were incapable of managing inventory and simple re-order points.

"Our poor service levels were becoming critical to our long term survival," said Amy Smyth, the company's manager of dealer service. "It didn't matter what our customer service levels to our dealers were, the end customer couldn't get our products, so we ended up with a poor reputation in the field and falling sales. Something had to be done, and quickly."

The company's executives could no longer rely on the dealer network to provide great service and we facing the difficult decision to either scrap the dealer network and go it alone or find a solution to solve their dealer's inventory management problems for them. Not only that, their dealers were considering dropping them as suppliers.

### Why Invendia?

After looking at expensive solutions provided by the vendors of their manufacturing systems, the company found the Invendia solution fit their needs. As a hosted solution, It was easy to adopt both for themselves and for their dealers, it could easily integrate with whichever systems everyone had, and the application was easy to use.

"The fact that the solution came nicely packaged 'in a box,' and had a very low monthly cost with no up-front fees, truly appealed to us at the company," said Andy Wynn, VP of Operations. "We were able to try the solution with almost no risk and get it running in days with dealers and immediately start to see the benefits."

### Invendia's Contribution

As inventories are sold by dealers, Invendia tracks the inventory usage against appropriate and simple-to-use re-order mechanisms, providing dealers and the company with suggested re-orders. This allows the company to trigger replenishment orders that fill dealer needs while managing against shipping constraints such as full pallets or shipment windows (hours of operation).

### Challenges

- Poor dealer customer service
- Poor dealer service to end-customer
- High administration effort and cost

### Solution

- Vendor managed inventory to give visibility into dealer stocks
- Replenishment orders created from reorder points

### Results

- Increased customer service
- Increased sales
- Better relationships with dealers
- Decreased administration
- Decreased inventory write-offs



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### Company Results

The company has seen significant results with Invendia. The solution has provided better customer service to their dealers, which has allowed the dealer network to provide better customer service to end-users. This has resulted in higher revenues and increased market share. Visibility into field inventories has enabled the company to increase their manufacturing efficiencies through better planning. The company also expects that inventory write-offs will decrease at the dealer level as the right inventory is at the right place.

"Without a doubt, Invendia has been the best IT money we have spent this year," said Andy Wynn. "The solution has benefits that we didn't anticipate such as the ability to ship little-used product from dealer to another to increase customer service, due to our better visibility. Invendia's customer support has been great, too. They really understand manufacturing and distribution and helped us leverage this small investment across other areas."

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