



## Natureva SAS, France

Wireless solution: the natural choice for garden equipment wholesalers

« The solution has cut order entry errors by 50%. These savings alone will cover the investment in six months. »

Henry Wilhelm, CEO of Natureva



### Business

Wholesaling of garden products

### Solution

Sales force automation

### Main features

- Replacement of the paper-based ordering system with Palm Powered™ handheld computers.
- Penbase® solution tailored for sales representatives covering large geographic areas.
- Bluetooth™ technology wireless link between the palmOne device and barcode readers or mobile phones.
- Orders sent via GPRS network.
- Handheld application data updated via GPRS.

### Architecture

- Palm Powered™ palmOne™ Tungsten T5 handheld computers running under Palm OS 5.4.
- Baracoda Bluetooth™ barcode readers.
- Penbase® SFA mobile solution
- Penbase® Engine mobile database query engine.

### Context

Natureva is wholesaler that provides gardening equipment and products to the large department stores and garden centres of the North East of France. Its vast product range includes fertilizer, pesticides, watering equipment and ornamental objects.

Natureva is an average-sized company with annual revenue of € 15 million. Its sales representatives spend most of their working hours on the road visiting customers to offer new products and take new orders.

### Issue

The order-taking process lacked was inefficient and caused errors. On average, each salesperson negotiates six orders per day, each holding 200 items. At the end of the day, the representatives would have to fax the orders to the head office to be registered in the corporate system.

With the company's high growth rate, this system proved to be slow and costly. Due to order entry errors, some customers would receive the wrong products and return them. Further to the bother caused by such events, these errors were the source of disputes between Natureva and customers.

### Opportunity

Natureva quickly realized that sales force automation solution had to be set up that would reduce errors and improve the efficiency of the order-taking process.

« We wanted a solution that would cut both order-taking time and errors », explains Pierre Puig, Natureva's IT manager.

### Solution

Natureva called on m-Penbase first for advice, then to adapt and integrate the Penbase® SFA mobile solution.

« We carefully studied Natureva's specific needs, both in the field and at the head office », explains James Newton, CSO of m-Penbase. « We quickly determined that the best-suited solution had to combine handheld computers with barcode readers. We chose the Palm Powered™ Tungsten™ T5 handheld computer from palmOne and the BL1000 barcode reader from Baracoda ».

The Baracoda barcode reader is connected to the Tungsten T5 using wireless Bluetooth™ technology.

On the handheld computer, each representative has access to Natureva's full product catalogue that contains over 7,000 items. The application also provides customer details and ordering history.

The orders are made out directly on the device, identifying products from the catalogue with the barcode reader. This also makes it possible to read the references of products that are no longer in stock.

Once the order has been completed and signed on the screen by the customer, it is synchronized via the salesperson's GSM/GPRS mobile phone with the corporate ordering system via Penbase® Syncserver. Simultaneously, a carbon copy of the signed order is sent to the customer's fax or e-mail inbox.

The product catalogue is also updated using the same synchronization technology.

Penbase® mobile applications are built on a relational database system, Penbase® Engine, that enables users to continue working without GPRS access. The data are stored on the Tungsten T5 until synchronization is possible. Furthermore, the Tungsten T5's being equipped with non volatile memory means data are safely kept in memory, even if the user forgets to recharge the battery.

### Benefits

Among the benefits Natureva gains from the solution based on the Palm Powered™ handheld computer are:

- Improved customer satisfaction
- Boosted sales force productivity
- Optimization of sales force resources

« We estimate the gains induced by this solution to cut order entry errors by 50%. These savings alone will cover the investment in six months », declares Henry Wilhelm, CEO of Natureva.

« Moreover, the ease of use of Penbase® SFA on the Tungsten T5 with the power of the Palm OS system, the large screen, integrated Bluetooth and Baracoda readers has surpassed our expectations », adds Pierre Puig. « This solution is to become one of the mainstays of our information system ».



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