

## Manufacturing

# Saint-Gobain Abrasives boosts sales process with Salesforce

Single CRM platform and standardized sales processes for 25 EMEA countries will support revenue growth and enable deals to be closed faster.

### The challenge

Saint-Gobain Abrasives is the world's leading manufacturer of abrasives for shaping and surface-finishing a wide range of materials. The company has a proven history of product quality and investment in R&D and engineering and wanted its customer-facing EMEA teams to have equally high-quality tools to support business development and sales growth.

Growth through acquisition had left Saint-Gobain Abrasives without a standard CRM system in EMEA. For critical activities like new business opportunity management, visit reports and sample orders, it relied on a patchwork of in-country processes and systems—some of them little more than spreadsheets.

### A major IT and change management program

While the company generates a significant amount of business from existing clients, it had a major opportunity to engage and convert net-new prospects by turning a sales culture into a lead culture. Its North American operation had standardized Salesforce with great success—a result Saint-Gobain Abrasives wanted to replicate in EMEA. But this would mean a custom Salesforce implementation for 25 countries, involving new sales processes as well as new software. Saint-Gobain Abrasives needed an experienced partner to manage this major change program.

### The approach

After a competitive tender, Saint-Gobain Abrasives chose Cognizant as its strategic partner for the project, thanks in part to Cognizant's track record of successfully delivering similar projects for Saint-Gobain Abrasives Australia & New Zealand.

The project allowed for a timeframe of just 12 months to get Salesforce live in 25 countries, across multiple languages and cultures. Working closely with Saint-Gobain Abrasives EMEA CRM Manager Thomas Roulet and IT/IS Director Sébastien Royon, Cognizant kicked off a three-phase program of change management and technical solution delivery.



## At a glance

### Industry

Manufacturing

### Location

France

### Challenge

Get 25 countries live on Salesforce Sales Cloud in a tight 12-month timeframe

### Success Highlights

- Technical go-live achieved for 25 countries in just 12 months
- Efficient, standardized processes for opportunity management and quoting
- 360-degree view of all opportunities across EMEA

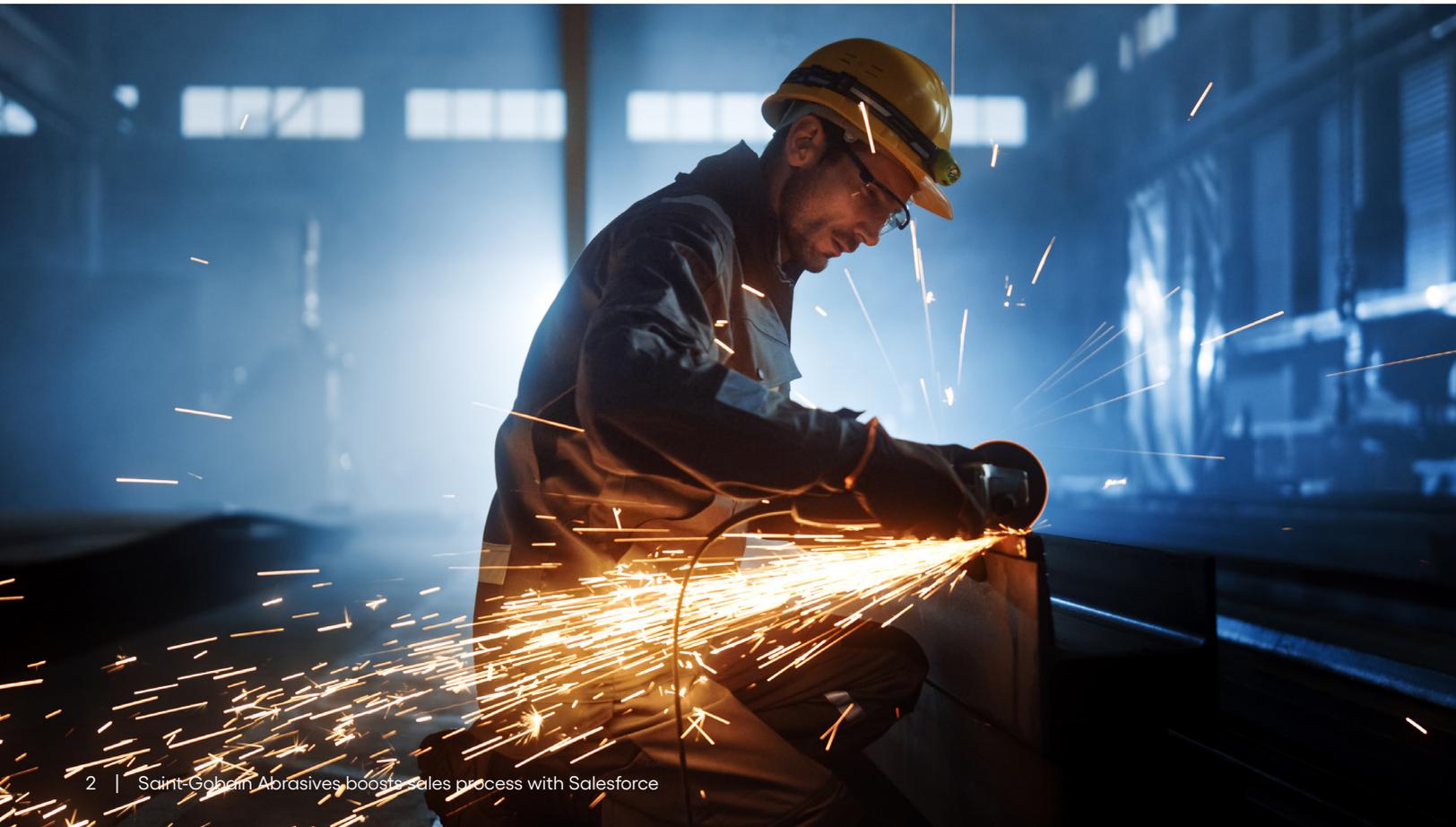
## Three steps to successful delivery

**Phase 1** involved understanding current processes, gathering requirements and defining standardized processes. Key elements included:

- **Discovery:** To understand project scope and requirements
- **Identification of country champions:** Experienced sales, customer service and marketing professionals and key users from each country were recruited as Salesforce evangelists for their teams
- **Core model analysis:** Countries were grouped into core and non-core segments based on business volume and maturity of their existing CRM processes and tools
- **Process definition:** Standardized processes were defined based on the needs of the core group of countries—particularly around customer service and marketing, ensuring a single “Customer 360” mindset across all customer-facing roles
- **Fit gap analysis:** Non-core countries were fully involved in the process definition for core countries, and their additional requirements taken on board as needed

**Phase 2** comprised design and development of the customized Salesforce solution, including ongoing change management to ensure user buy-in and adoption. Key elements in this phase were:

- **Agile methodology** involving six-week sprints with “show and tell” presentations and user feedback sessions after each sprint
- **Custom screens** developed for new prospect creation, visit reports and sample ordering, in line with company-specific processes was easy and quick
- **Integrations** to SAP as the core system of record, using webMethods and Talend as the customer’s in-house choice of middleware
- **Sandbox environment** to allow country champions and key users to experiment with the solution
- **Continuous communications** with country managers, country champions and central IT to understand issues and ensure buy-in
- **Comprehensive training** of country champions and key users in a train-the-trainer model, including creation of sales materials and around 70 hours of hands-on training across four trainer groups



**Phase 3** involved data migration, UAT and deployment to production. Key elements included:

- **Data migration:** Working with central IT to migrate relevant data into Salesforce
- **UAT:** A 10-week window for users to test the system and report any defects, followed by remediation by the Cognizant team
- **Staggered release:** Starting with France and rolling out to key users first and the whole country user community a week later
- **Onboarding of external agents:** 35 external sales agents onboarded to the system through Salesforce Experience Cloud

### Business outcomes

In just 12 months, Cognizant completed a complex business and IT change project for Saint-Gobain Abrasives, successfully delivering a customized implementation of Salesforce Sales Cloud to 650 users (from sales, customer service and marketing) across 25 EMEA countries, including external agents.

### Transforming from a sales culture to a lead culture

The new solution is projected to transform sales effectiveness for this venerable French manufacturing firm, enabling it to:

- **Transform sales effectiveness** in 25 EMEA countries, with a single, integrated CRM platform
- **Standardize sales processes** across the entire EMEA region, including several dozen external sales agents
- **Deliver quotes faster and more accurately** to prospective customers, drawing product pricing data directly from SAP
- **Streamline the sample ordering process**, where customers trial products before buying, using Cognizant-built custom functionality in Sales Cloud
- **Accelerate lead-to-cash cycles** by making new business opportunities easier to track and manage in-country and across the region
- **Accelerate business development**, to identify and capitalize on untapped demand from net-new prospects

- **Improve customer relationships** by giving sales directors and relationship managers a 360-degree view of current opportunities prior to each customer meeting

Following a successful go-live, Saint-Gobain Abrasives has, for the first time, a standardized CRM system and standardized processes to track and manage new business opportunities. The new Salesforce platform has turned the organization's sales culture into a data-driven lead culture, enabling it to capitalize more fully on net-new revenue opportunities across EMEA

## About Saint-Gobain Abrasives

Saint-Gobain Abrasives is the world's leading manufacturer of abrasives, offering powerful, precise and user-friendly solutions enabling customers to shape and surface-finish all types of materials even in the most complex and challenging applications across a diverse range of markets. For more information visit [www.saint-gobain-abrasives.com](http://www.saint-gobain-abrasives.com)

“We wanted a superior CRM solution with a Customer 360 view that would allow us to accelerate business development while improving the customer experience for new and existing customers. Cognizant provided valuable perspectives and designed a collaborative project structure involving IT representatives, country champions and key users from sales, service and marketing teams across EMEA. The result was a successful on-time delivery of a challenging project.”

Thomas Roulet, EMEA CRM Manager, Saint-Gobain Abrasives



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