



PROCESS DRIVEN SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY

Family-owned Business Chooses i-Sight to Ensure Improved Customer Satisfaction

“By helping us to isolate the cause of the problem and fix it, the i-Sight solution contributes to higher customer satisfaction and saves us both time and money.”

Customer name: Mid-Atlantic Vegetable Shortening

Challenge:

- The company had outgrown its old manual, case-by-case approach to dealing with customer complaints
- To win larger contracts, Mid-Atlantic needed to satisfy customers’ audit requirements for case management
- Managers considered other software-based complaint-handling systems but rejected them as requiring too much in-house IT management

Solution:

- i-Sight Complaint Handling Software is remotely hosted, eliminating the need for additional server hardware and on-site system administration
- Customizable workflow and built-in alerts ensure that complaints are routed to the appropriate department and addressed promptly
- i-Sight is web-based, so sales reps and the company’s owners can check the status of complaints anytime, anywhere

Results:

- Senior managers have the assurance of knowing that complaints are handled promptly and consistently
- Faster response times, leading to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Built-in i-Sight reporting tools make it easy to trace the source of recurring problems

Founded by three brothers in 1983, Mid-Atlantic Vegetable Shortening Co., Inc. is one of the largest suppliers of shortening, oil, and margarine products on the East Coast. Among the secrets to its success is its owners’ commitment to carefully managing the growth of the business -- offering customers “big company” benefits while preserving the soul of a small, family-run enterprise.

In the process, Mid-Atlantic has acquired a reputation for high-quality customer service with a personal touch. But as the company has expanded and sales have multiplied, so too has the need for a more formalized system of tracking and responding to customer feedback.

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The solution: i-Sight Complaint Handling Software from Customer Expressions, the leader in customizable, web-based solutions for managing complaints, suggestions and other forms of customer feedback.

"Choosing the i-Sight system made a whole lot of sense for us," explains Jeff Terry, Mid-Atlantic's controller. "We realized that as our company continued to grow and add more people, it was going to be tougher to address problems as they cropped up. i-Sight makes everything easier to manage by allowing us to track and resolve complaints in a reliable, systematic fashion."

THE CHALLENGE

Until recently, Mid-Atlantic did not have a dedicated case-management system for tracking, handling and analyzing complaints. Instead, when a customer contacted the company to report a problem, a customer service representative (CSR) would manually take note of the details and then attempt to troubleshoot the issue. Later, the CSR would fill out a form and enter the case details on a spreadsheet. "We pretty much just dealt with problems as they came along," Mr. Terry says. "Beyond that, we didn't have any way to track complaints historically by customer, type of problem, etc."

Over time, the need for a more sophisticated and consistent case-management system became obvious. According to Mr. Terry, one of the deciding factors was the company's success in winning a major vegetable-oil packaging contract from one of the world's largest and best-known food-processing companies. To ensure that it continues to meet its own high quality standards, the larger company requires that each of its suppliers implement a standardized set of procedures for tracking and handling complaints. "A number of our larger customers are very stringent in their requirements," Mr. Terry points out. "They come in here on a regular basis and audit our facilities, and one of things that kept coming up was our need for a formal complaint-handling system."

THE SOLUTION

Mr. Terry and his colleagues examined a number of well-known complaint-handling solutions before selecting i-Sight Complaint-Handling Software from Customer Expressions. He was impressed by i-Sight's flexibility and ease-of-use – but what really sealed the deal was that i-Sight is web-based and remotely hosted. "In addition to being the controller of our company, I also function as the IT guy," he explains. "All of the other [complaint-handling] products I looked at would have required us to install and manage a separate, standalone server. The great thing about i-Sight is that the people who sell it to you also take responsibility for managing the system and making sure all of the data is backed up. That's a big plus as far as I'm concerned."

The fact that i-Sight is web-based also means that Mid-Atlantic's staff and managers can access the system from any location with an Internet connection – whether they are in the office, at home or on the road. "If our owners want to check the number of outstanding issues or the status of any specific complaint, they can login from wherever they happen to be," Mr. Terry says. Similarly, i-Sight's remote-access capabilities will make it much easier for Mid-Atlantic's outside sales representatives to keep informed about their customers' concerns.

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The key to any successful complaint-handling strategy is to ensure that problems, once reported, are brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel and then addressed promptly and professionally. To ensure the highest possible levels of customer satisfaction, Mid-Atlantic needed a complaint-handling solution that could be adapted to suit its existing management structure and business procedures. i-Sight, the world's most customizable case management solution, fit the bill perfectly, with a user-friendly interface, built-in automatic alerts, flexible workflow rules and advanced reporting capabilities. "When a customer contacts us with a complaint, a CSR can now quickly enter the information in the system and escalate it to the appropriate person, whether it's the plant manager, the shipping manager, the QA manager or the VP of sales," Mr. Terry says. "At the same time, we'll be able to monitor the system to make sure that complaints are picked up and resolved in a timely manner."

For Mr. Terry and his colleagues at Mid-Atlantic, that all adds up to peace of mind. No longer will they need to worry that a customer's complaint has accidentally been forgotten or overlooked. Best of all, i-Sight provides actionable business intelligence, helping Mid-Atlantic to identify the source of recurring problems and address each issue at its source, eliminating future complaints. "For the first time, i-Sight gives us the ability to track complaints historically and analyze them by customer, by type of complaint, by date, etc.," Mr. Terry says. "It might be a problem with product quality, or an issue in our shipping department, or improper refrigeration – you name it. By helping us to isolate the cause of the problem and fix it, the i-Sight solution contributes to higher customer satisfaction and saves us both time and money."