



CEAT uses technology to help micro-retailers in rural India race ahead

CEAT, one of the largest tyre producers in India, manufactures more than 95,000 tyres a day. The company aims to be the leading player in the country by improving the consumer-channel experience and using technology to become a truly customer-centric organisation.

“Traditionally, tyre companies focused on growing manufacturing capacity, mass marketing, and selling through dealers in big and medium-sized cities and towns, paying little or no attention to customer experience,” explains Arnab Banerjee, Executive Director. “CEAT helped to change that mindset when we launched an extensive micro-retailer network to make tyres more easily available to consumers.”

CEAT now works with 25,000 micro-retailers across 85% of India’s small towns and cities. The company is upping its game by using technology to enhance retailer efficiency and service levels.

Roadblocks on the path to growth

CEAT’s growth journey was hampered by a CRM system that lacked several functionalities key to the success of channel operations. Dealers could not access the information they needed to enable strategic decisions.

With data spread across disparate systems, the internal team lacked visibility into channel operations and struggled to work efficiently with their vast network.

The management team realised that they needed a reliable platform that would integrate all their processes and data, and function as a seamless interface between the channel and the consumer.

They found the answer in Salesforce.

“This year is all about collecting customer data; from next year on, we intend to use that data to design and implement superlative customer journeys.”

Revving up channel performance through a feature-rich dealer portal

“The Salesforce platform offered a powerful technology roadmap,” says Banerjee. “The innovation that Salesforce is known for, its proven track record, and the clear benefits their solutions offer, all convinced us to look no further.”

CEAT were especially attracted by the features that Salesforce Community Cloud offers, and built a dealer portal for all its retailers using this solution.

The dealer portal delivers a frictionless experience to channel partners and consumers alike. Dealer processes are digitised on the portal, creating a self-service platform. With the ability to manage their orders more efficiently through the portal, dealers have seen a 3% improvement in sales.

Rich features, such as e-claims, e-catalogues, and warranty registration, help them deliver a transparent and consistent consumer experience. “Using e-claims, a dealer can instantly settle a customer’s claim



through the app,” details Ritesh Arora, Chief Digital Officer. This has reduced the claim settlement time from two working days to instant settlement in 40% of cases across the channel.

But the most important benefit is more qualitative in nature.

“300 sales people manage all channel partners, including the 25,000 micro-retailers,” explains Banerjee. “Earlier, the micro-retailers felt isolated, with no direct connect to the company.”

Now the portal has created a community of dealers, and even the micro-retailers feel like an integral part of the CEAT family. The platform makes it easy for them to work with CEAT, and features like e-catalogues and e-claims are improving their credibility with their consumers. This is boosting dealer loyalty.

Steering the company towards improved service and faster growth

CEAT also uses Service Cloud for case management. Automating and streamlining complaint and resolution processes on the platform has reduced complaint settlement time from four to two days on average.

Service Cloud is also used to better track and optimise fleet operation, resulting in a 20% growth in the fleet business.

After streamlining operations, the management team turned their attention to consumer experience. “When we revamped and optimised our website, the number of in-bound leads suddenly shot up from 500 to 5,000 a month,” says Arora. “To manage this increased volume, we deployed lead management on Salesforce Sales Cloud.”

The automation of lead management has significantly improved lead conversion rates – from less than 5% to more than 20%.

Sales Cloud also offers the sales team a consolidated view of channel operations, enabling them to monitor and manage these on a daily basis. This improves execution efficiency and decision-making.

Keeping their eyes on the road ahead

At a strategic level, the Salesforce platform offers the CEAT management team visibility into all business operations. Armed with data and insights on dealer and sales rep performance, the products and regions that perform best, and on case resolution and customer satisfaction, the management team now makes data-driven decisions to strategically grow the business.

Arora says that CEAT’s technology roadmap calls for the implementation of many more value-adding Salesforce solutions. “This year is all about collecting customer data; next year, we intend to use that data to design superlative customer journeys.”

CEAT plans to next deploy Salesforce Marketing Cloud for better campaign management, and Einstein analytics to arm the sales team with forecasting abilities.



As CEAT sets out to transform and empower 25,000 rural and semi-urban partners by unlocking the power of digital, Salesforce is paving the way for their customer-centric journey.