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Cost Advisor- Online Quoting Engine

Background

The Cost Advisor is a US based company that provides services to businesses to avail competitive Quotes for electricity and natural gas. Today in the world of internet/mobile and the understanding that professionals value convenience of the people, the company planned an all-encompassing portal offering insurance services in a unique way.

The requirement was to develop an online quoting engine to allow customers to search the best competitive proposal against their usage. Customers can make search for competitive quotes by entering the utility account number. The system would show quotes from different suppliers in ascending manner. The portal is a B2B portal and allow different suppliers to register and add their quotes, which will be later approved by admin. The portal includes a contract section to email to users at the time of approvals and they can be allowed to submit the signed contracts on the respective portal.

Solution

The Online Quoting portal allows different suppliers to register and add their quotes. Users can search for competitive quotations for electricity and natural gas utilization. Users are required to enter the account number of their electricity and natural gas account and the cumulative usage for one year is displayed and competitive quotations based on the usage are shown on the user screens. The User can choose for the best quotes. The user is allowed to sign the contract online and submit. The contract section is also a wider part of the portal, the amount and supplier name with complete details are automatically updated in the contract. The user would able to sign the contract and submit on the portal.

The major challenge with the project was to develop the quotation module that uses an accumulative calculation for different suppliers and shows different results at the time of search. The calculation is fully dependent on the supplier rate. The account record of the user is triggered by the third party API directly linked with the third party database. The cumulative usage is also calculated through the portal online. The GCT team overcame this challenge and developed a bespoke portal for the client.

The portal includes an admin interface as well that allows administrators the ability to update pricing parameters, supplier information and further discounts so the quotes are always accurate and the most competitive.

The key modules of the portal were:
1. Robust Search

2. Contract with auto-completion

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3. Admin and user login, authentication

4. Diversions and Accumulation in quotes

5. Suppliers can register as Partners with specific partner code to log in to the account and manage quotes

On the **technical front**, the web solution utilizes C#/.NET/.NET Framework 4.0/Microsoft SQL Server 2008/ASP.NET with HTML5 and JQuery/DocuSign in XML format in order to allow customers to sign the contract.

The platform can be **experienced** at: http://costadvisor.us/Index.aspx

Results

1. The portal proves an invaluable tool to improve sales process. The client found it very useful and it helped him in increasing the business revenue and profitability.

2. The revenue increased and the company become one of the best companies in the sector.

3. Huge ratio of suppliers is becoming partners with the organization. The productivity of the company producers was apparent by the numbers.

4. The system helps them to manage the quotes and contracts. Reduction in time and cost are the most benefits to the organization.