

# CRM Trough Collaborative Channel Management

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Every manufacturer deploying an e-commerce site knows that the way to stand out, generate traffic, and therefore close more sales is to build a reputation for exceptional customer satisfaction through an effective customer relationship management (CRM) program. For companies that have spent years investing in a network of channel partners such as value-added resellers and large manufacturers working with distributors, the Internet has opened Pandora's Box. These channel-dependent companies are tempted to sell direct, but this threatens to disrupt the local dealer relationships that add a high degree of value and customized service and support for the companies' customers.

Miller Electric, one of the largest welding equipment manufacturers in the country, faced this challenge when the company began to think of ways to leverage the Internet to sell its products online. Although Miller Electric struggled with the temptation to sell direct, the company sought out alternatives to embrace its channel and incorporate all aspects of the supply chain for ultimate customer satisfaction.

Miller implemented InfoNow's iCommerce technology to partner with its distributors. InfoNow's iCommerce makes it possible for customers who visit MillerWelds.com to browse through products using a co-branded site that links both Miller and the distributor best aligned to close the sale. With this technology, customers can retain the service of a local distributor while gaining access to the inventory of Miller's products from the convenience of home or office.

In this session, Miller and InfoNow will discuss this implementation process and how a manufacturer's relationships with its partners are key to an effective CRM program.