



TBL Networks - Case Study

I don't know if and when the guys at StrataVAR ever sleep because they're always there as soon as I ask for help."

Alan Sears, President

StrataVAR's responsive quoting software has helped TBL to increase productivity and operations within their clients' organizations.

TBL has a reputation as a 'Special Forces' team assigned to rapidly resolve Cisco-related operational issues for customers. Their five-year association with StrataVAR has enhanced their ability to be highly pro-active in their performance.

The Challenges

TBL began to focus on automating the quoting process at the end of 2015, a year after starting with the StrataVAR system. From the time of the company's inception in 2007, they had prepared quotes with the 'standard' way. It took a long time and put them at a disadvantage.

An urgent change was needed, said Alan:

"The process was tedious, and we had to catch up, or lose business. We were entering data into Excel templates and then manually manipulating them to create a customer-facing quote. It was fraught with the potential for human error".

About TBL

TBL is a specialist in providing innovative technological solutions that enhance efficiencies in human interaction within the computerized infrastructure. Established in 2007, the company has become a Cisco Gold Partner, a Master Collaboration Specialist and a Master Cloud and Managed Services Provider - all achieved within 7 years. Virginia-based TBL is one of only 42 Cisco Resellers across the USA to have attained all three accreditations.



Switching to StrataVAR allowed TBL to deliver outstanding customer service and achieve record renewal rates. Clients started to get their quotes in half the time.

Given the complexity of working with Cisco equipment, that was a major achievement. When each part has many configuration options, the Bill of Materials - the total job offer to the end customer - becomes a unique design that must be accurately quoted. In addition, customers demand flexibility, so often different designs are being evaluated alongside one another.

"Without a smart tool to help you navigate the whole quoting cycle, you end up burning valuable resources. StrataVAR's PqW proved to be ideal for handling all these options and tracking them as well," said Alan.

The Solution

TBL found that adding StrataVAR's Partner Quoting Workspace (PqW) program was an easy transition and came with many benefits. Their team could make changes in the CCW, create a new copy of the quote and then see those changes appearing immediately in Salesforce.

Day-to-day work has brought two overriding advantages. Quotes of any complexity are prepared while eliminating all errors. The 'Time-to-Quote' period is halved, allowing the whole sales team to generate executable documents for customers faster, more accurately, and move efficiently towards closing the deal. Pre-Sales builds the correct quote configuration and then Sales applies the pricing and profitability before delivering to the customer.

"Timing is of the essence. You have to act when everything is fresh. You've had a great meeting with your client, who's now hungry for a TBL solution. They want to see an impact on the operations of their business. If you lose that valuable time by having a quoting process that lasts more than a week, your contact will go cold," Alan points out..

An added advantage with automated quoting is to give the pre-sales engineers more time to shape the design and explain the technical benefits of the solution offered.

The Results

TBL has seen dramatic improvements with the PqW tool. They have reduced 'time to quote' from 8 days to 3 days. They set up a proven working policy for pricing, discounting and quoting and the tool just makes it happen. Nobody has to rely on memory any more or be extra vigilant. That's a real bonus when work pressure gets ever higher.



As a Tier-2 supplier, TBL works through a Tier 1 Cisco distributor, Ingram Micro. All processes are highly aligned and coordinated, with minimal delay between ordering and delivery. The Excel quoting spreadsheet that TBL gets from Ingram is imported into PqW as a Disti BOM, in order to validate that the costs specified in the customer quote are what are expected.

Sometimes Cisco attaches special pricing to a deal, which is a potential for problems. But StrataVAR's software performs a Disti Quote Merge that compares part numbers, quantities, discounting and pricing between Ingram and TBL figures. PqW allows the company to add a custom field to the Disti BOM, which enables Salesforce to be searchable and indexable at line level detail.

It's one of the software's strong assets, says Alan: "It shows exactly what we quoted to our customers and exactly what we bought from our distributors. We've never had that level of detail before. PqW can show us which customers we sold a specific part to any time we need to know." *

Because TBL avoids tying up Ingram's resources, they qualify for favored status which also benefit their end customers.

So what's the final appraisal of StrataVAR's contribution to TBL's market success?

Alan Sears keeps returning to how much TBL's responsiveness at critical times has improved: "You guys have an extraordinary ability and willingness to adapt your solution to fit our workflows and our data structure. Whenever we've had a question or need help, you're always there."

About StrataVAR

Our mission is to connect ITC/Cisco VAR's with their critical data residing on manufacturer's and distributor's commerce & configuration tools.

Our customers benefit from improved business Intelligence (BI) when using StrataVAR SaaS solutions to increase profitability, eliminate costly errors, improve efficiency and make informed decisions. StrataVAR provides both operational benefits as well as exceptional management view only possible with StrataVAR innovative integration technology.

Our products integrate with Cisco CCW, CCW-R, Subscription, CCW-R Contracts and all major Distributors.