



## Premier Farnell plc

## Premier Farnell Increases Marketing ROI with Help from The Alterian Suite

The UK's premier electronic components and industrial products distributor gained a clearer picture of its international customer base and implemented plans for a new CRM system with help from Alterian.

### Background

From oscilloscopes to cables to semiconductors, Farnell is one of the world's leading distributors of electronic components and industrial products, and part of the global Premier Farnell group. The Group employs 5,500 people in 22 countries around the world and offers over 400,000 stocked items. Farnell achieved its market lead through a rigorous commitment to customer service, including a policy that makes products available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. This continuous operation makes top-notch information systems critical to Farnell's success.

### The Problem

As its customer numbers continued to swell Farnell was finding it challenging to manage customer data and took the decision to improve its understanding of customers, their buying patterns and industry/job segmentation. While the company was able to provide electronic components to customers within hours of initial requests, its legacy marketing information systems needed upgrading to improve performance on the product side. Previously, customer records were limited to basic associations such as "active" or "inactive" and sales data.

"Our overall business goal was to achieve better customer segmentation and profiling," said Russell Harvey, Project Manager at Farnell. "We had gathered a tremendous amount of business logic about the way our customers operated, but getting that logic into a useable data analysis system was key. For example, one customer segment – test engineers at manufacturers – very often come to us for oscilloscopes. That type of person will also eventually need a soldering iron to

complete his job. If we could capture that sort of link, and make its expression automatic, we knew it would make our targeted marketing campaigns much more effective. In short 'How do we make sure that oscilloscope customers know we also sell soldering irons?' was the critical question we wanted answered."

Farnell executives also wanted a solution that would put the power of data analysis into the hands of the business analysts themselves.

Harvey continued: "Our previous process was fairly inefficient, in that business analysts had to write requests for marketing reports, which were then sent to the IT department to be processed. We were looking for software that was simple to use, and easy enough to customise, so that our business analysts and other non-technical people could produce their own reports, saving time and money for everyone."

In 2001, as part of a Group-wide front-office integration project, Premier Farnell adopted a Siebel customer relationship management system, and began searching for an analytical application to learn more about its data. The potential benefits of a powerful, fast, easy-to-use data analysis software became even more apparent with the adoption of the CRM system, which would eventually work in tandem with such software to save time and money across the enterprise.

### The Solution

In May of 2001, Farnell chose The Alterian Suite – a flexible, powerful data management software that analyses millions of records per second. The Alterian Suite analyses the large amounts of customer and product data produced by

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Russell Harvey,  
Project Manager, Farnell.



### Further information

For further information on Alterian, our partners and products, visit [www.alterian.com](http://www.alterian.com)

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Farnell each day, providing critical, analyst reports to the Farnell management and marketing teams.

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### The Benefits

Farnell managers cite the following top benefits of the Alterian solution:

- Business and marketing teams are now able to add business logic to the system themselves, without intervention from IT staff. This allows for more flexibility, saves time, and enables different groups to experiment with "what-if" scenarios and categories;
- Customer data is now integrated with complex business and marketing logic, setting up valuable relationships between different data sets;
- The Alterian Suite is much faster than the previous solutions, providing answers to complex queries in minutes, rather than days. This means that questions that arise during business meetings can be answered by the end of the meeting, rather than being added to a "to do" list.

"Our marketing team and business analysts are now able to produce detailed, graphical reports that break customers down into segments, and provide rich information on the different segments. We're now able to target customers much more effectively, and have found quite significant increases in ROI on our marketing campaigns," reported Harvey.

### The Future

The next goal is to export the Alterian solution to company locations worldwide, which is a major part of Farnell's plan to increase its customer intelligence and market share throughout the world.