

# Case study: **Order-to-Cash**

## Guidecraft



**HOW RHENUS EFFECTIVELY  
REDUCED CONTACT LEAD TIME  
WITH OUR EUROPEAN CUSTOMERS  
FROM 48 HOURS TO JUST 30 MINUTES!**

# How Rhenus effectively reduced contact lead time with our European customers from 48 hours to just 30 minutes!

## ABOUT GUIDECRAFT

Classroom and playroom design choices, as well as the furniture chosen and toys offered, are all instrumental parts of early childhood education. Through each of these avenues, Guidecraft strives to create learning environments that are wholly inspiring and enriching for a child. With an emphasis on the use of natural materials and loose parts theory, Guidecraft creates open-ended toys that unleash a child's imagination through free, unstructured play. The company's home furniture focuses on engaging children in artistic, literary, and dramatic play activities, while the preschool furniture collections straddle the needs of both teachers and parents to provide choices in some uniquely beautiful ways.

Guidecraft is a family-owned, small-sized company located in the United States of America. Their products are sold worldwide in more than 50 countries.

## CHALLENGE

In 2013, Guidecraft introduced its products to the European market via its web shop and resellers. They entered into a logistics services agreement with Rhenus in the Netherlands for their warehousing and distribution of products in Europe. At that time, Guidecraft's communication with its European customers was coordinated with its headquarters in Winthrop, USA. It soon became clear that to be successful on a different continent, they had to be able to provide support to end users in their time zone. Guidecraft needed a provider who could offer customer support during European opening hours in different languages.

## SOLUTION

Aside from the warehousing and distribution of products, Rhenus in the Netherlands provides value-added services called "order-to-cash" to Guidecraft. Within a 5-week timeframe, Rhenus established a call center to support the European customers of Guidecraft by e-mail and telephone during the European business hours and in the local languages. The call center support includes the following:

- answering customer queries
- checking product specifications and stock availability
- performing as the back office for the European sales team
- order entry
- pre-payment and invoicing task reminders
- back-order management

Additionally, Rhenus took over the operational management and added value to Guidecraft by being the company's order-to-cash partner in Europe. In this independent role, Rhenus truly understands and highlights the needs of Guidecraft and its end users.

Testimonial

RESULTS

As a result of using the order-to-cash services of Rhenus, Guidecraft was able to reduce the contact lead time with their European customer base from 2-3 days to 30 minutes. This efficiency improvement has allowed Guidecraft to grow its European sales by 37 percent on average.

Today, Rhenus continues to support and work with Guidecraft on:

- Sales campaigns to stimulate growth in Europe and fulfil increasing demand efficiently and effectively.
- Continuous improvement to improve every process by focusing on enhancing the activities that generate the most value for the customer. An example is the recent move from Guidecraft the Rhenus enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, which offers great benefits to Guidecraft such as automation of processes transfer of data, and thus removing waste.



Working with Rhenus allows me as the Sales Director of Europe to be more focused on sales and creates time for more strategic business development for myself, my team and our company allowing us to meet and exceed our corporate goals.



Lorna Smith, Director of Sales EMEA



Testimonial



Rhenus has been an added asset to Guidecraft. Our growth together has been immeasurable and is a true partnership.



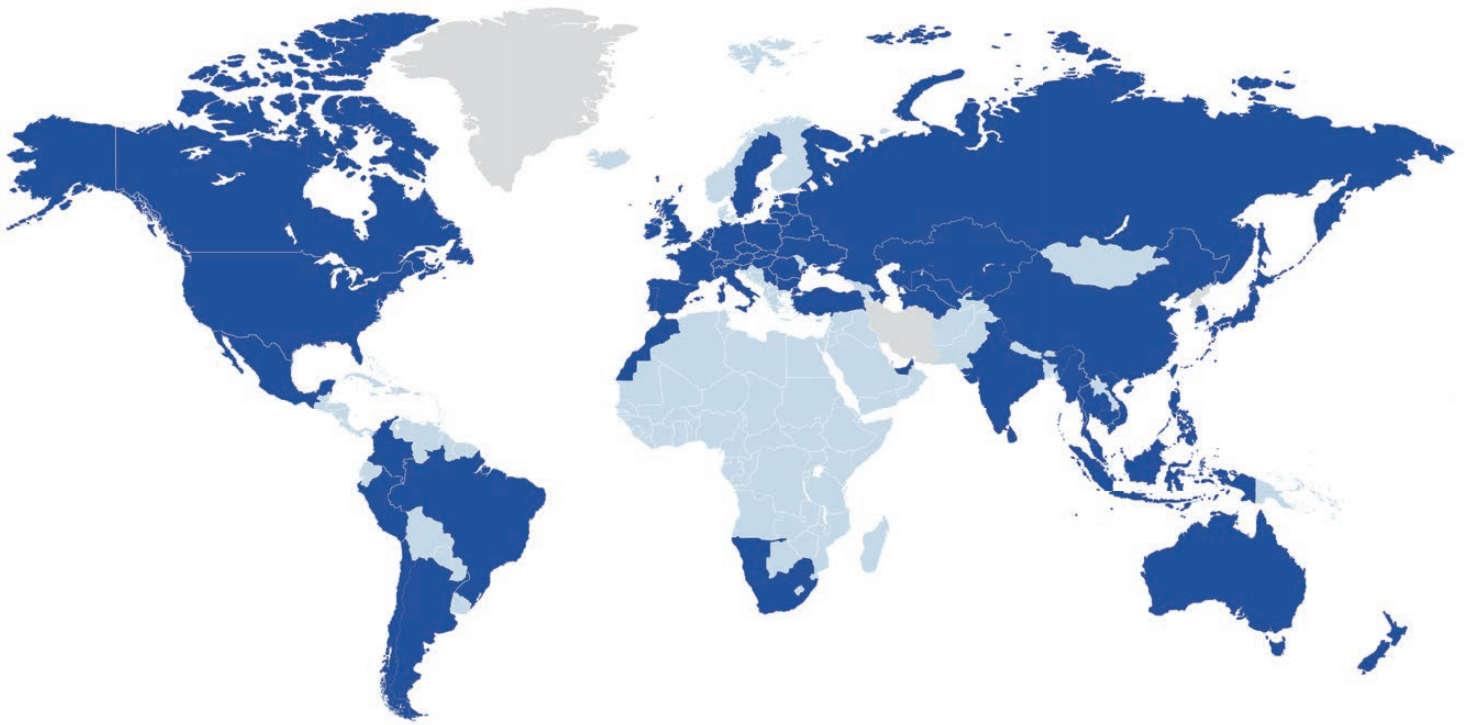
Kevin Caldwell, Director of International Operations







# THE RHENUS GROUP IS A LEADING LOGISTICS SERVICE PROVIDER WITH GLOBAL BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND AN ANNUAL TURNOVER OF EUR 8.6 BILLION.






## AT A GLANCE

With an annual turnover of EUR 8.6 billion, the Rhenus Group is one of the leading global logistics service providers. Rhenus has 39,000 employees across 1,120 sites.

The Rhenus Group offers solutions for a wide range of industries along the entire supply chain, including multimodal transport, warehousing, customs clearance and innovative value-added services.

The order-to-cash services of Rhenus help brands to launch their European operations by managing everything from the initial customer enquiry through to the fulfilment of the order and the payment processing. This allows businesses to get cash flow moving quickly, without the investment required to establish a physical base.

-  Rhenus group
-  Partner and agents
-  No partner and agents

**If you want to know more** about partnering  
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