



The challenge

Hilmar cheese was looking for a way to sell the off-spec products in their “Opportunity Cheese Division”, while simultaneously using the levers of the sales process to maximize price discovery.

How has it worked in the past?

The Opportunity Division has historically relied on a manual sales process in which price and order details are negotiated through a combination of phone calls and/or email. Specific orders are completed on an individual basis for each customer. This process can involve days of ongoing discussion. This meant that some of their customers had access to products at certain times while others may have inadvertently been left out in the cold.

Customer requests were filtered back to Hilmar via these same channels, which resulted in an incomplete picture of what products the market could and couldn't support at a given point in time. Consequently, Hilmar was unable to accurately gauge the needs of all of their customers. Likewise, expanding their customer base was also limited by the constraints of this process, as there just wasn't enough resource to devote to new client streams.

Moving forward

Hilmar believed that they could improve their trading process by tapping into the benefits of digital trading. Initially, Hilmar considered building their own platform, but quickly realized this would require an outsized investment both in terms of time and money, so instead they identified Nui as a partner.

Hilmar provided Nui with an understanding of their requirements and within weeks Hilmar had a working platform with all the features needed to trade their opportunity products digitally.



The solution

The new digital platform – Hilmar Connect – has quickly established itself as a success, Sales exceeded initial expectations and their customers were energized by the new buying option.

At the two-month mark, Hilmar run a weekly auction with all of their off-spec offerings. The product specs are available within the auction (e.g. tender) so customers can instantly get a comprehensive look at the products on offer.

Hilmar has also had success using the platform's open marketplace function. The marketplace provides a space for both Hilmar and their customers to place bids and offers on approved products. This allows Hilmar to quickly get a sense as to what a given product is worth to their customers. Offers can have a set expiry time, giving Hilmar confidence that all trades can be finalized prior to any logistics cut-off dates.

Utilizing Nui's open marketplace and live tender functions Hilmar Connect is already realizing the following key benefits:

- ✓ Price discovery
- ✓ Transactional transparency
- ✓ Round the clock availability
- ✓ Access to a broader customer base

Two keys to success

Early investment

Hilmar and Nui worked together over a period of weeks to define a clear vision and launch strategy for the platform. Without this early investment in effort to understand Hilmar's needs and specific challenges, Nui would have been unable to provide a solution that would resolve all of their issues.

Change management

Seeing the launch as a business transformation activity, Hilmar understood the need for change management and focused on the steps required to ensure internal alignment and buy-in. Hilmar partnered with Nui to define the customer value proposition and a communication and training plan that would bring their customers on the journey with them.

The outcome

Hilmar's customers seamlessly adopted digital trading as a tool – and were actively engaged from the moment Hilmar placed their first offer. Because the platform gave them easy and intuitive access to all of the necessary information they needed to review an offer, they found they could quickly and effortlessly complete the trades that worked best for them.

