

Case Study: Critical Data at Reasonable Rates



INTERSTATE *Pride in Service*

Company Overview

For over 50 years, **Interstate** has stood by their motto, “Pride in Service.” Interstate has divisions selling and servicing products ranging from transmissions to assembly systems to transport refrigeration. They have over 25 locations across Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Challenges

The parent, Interstate Companies, provides shared services including credit and collections for all operating divisions. With a small centralized staff and limited budget, they must evaluate credit applications, monitor existing customers’ accounts, and manage their overall portfolio within company-defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Results

About five years ago, the team at Interstate was looking for a new vendor that could provide quality data without exorbitant fees. After looking at a number of alternatives, they selected Cortera Pulse®.

According to James Sarkkinen, Credit Manager, Interstate, “Pulse has made my job easier in multiple ways. It has freed me from making individual trade reference calls, which are very time consuming and – since the applicant provides the reference – not very reliable. With Pulse, I have reliable trade data at my fingertips. Instead of spending hours trying to monitor and build trade data, I use Cortera to do it for me.”

Sarkkinen continued, “I have found Cortera’s data to be very accurate and cost effective and it allows me to spend my time on value-added tasks versus crunching numbers, creating reports, and analyzing the data. We have tried other “big name” data shops and have found Cortera’s solution to offer the best value for the lowest cost. Cortera has come into the marketplace and added value.”

In addition to Pulse, Sarkkinen and his team also purchase a la carte reports including the Cortera Risk Report. This report offers a detailed view of a company’s health, payment behavior, recent events, corporate structure and public records. Sarkkinen said, “When evaluating a new credit line, we rely on Cortera’s \$4 Risk Reports to look at trade data. We also look at the Daily Alerts that come in through email to monitor bankruptcy, lien and judgment filings on existing accounts. We measure the capacity of a given company by its trade lines and use Cortera’s data to establish credit availability for customers that are applying for credit.”

“It’s been a good relationship to have Cortera as a business partner, and I would recommend them to any business that is looking to lower their costs and still achieve the same level of data and reporting as some of the other big brands offer for less!”

- James Sarkkinen, Credit Manager, Interstate

Sarkkinen also finds value in the CFO Report, which is a monthly report that provides an easy-to-read snapshot of what’s going well and which customers could be turning into problems. This report gives insights into Interstate’s A/R portfolio with information on:

- A/R summary by aging buckets and how this percentage is trending month over month
- Top account balances with simple to read red-yellow-green indicators showing each account’s risk level
- Top accounts that are paying others faster than they are paying Interstate
- Analysis of top customers – payment speed, purchasing trends
- List of accounts with highest risk exposure, analyzing both the accounts’ past payment behavior as well as predicting future delinquency

The CFO Report is included with Cortera Pulse and according to Sarkkinen, “The cost benefit analysis is really through the roof. We manage our company’s portfolio risk through the monthly CFO Report. The data in the report allows me to quickly and easily take action. Our CEO and CFO both view Cortera’s CFO Report and have stated that the data is presented in a very easy-to-read, digestible format, where you can clearly see what is going on with the overall financial health of your customers.”

Sarkkinen concluded, “We want to be able to keep tabs on our customers without spending a fortune and I think Cortera nicely complements what we do. With about \$40 million in receivables, we trust Cortera to monitor the risk within our portfolio. It’s been a good relationship to have Cortera as a business partner, and I would recommend them to any business that is looking to lower their costs and still achieve the same level of data and reporting as some of the other big brands offer for less!”

About Cortera®

Cortera provides analytics and cloud-based workflow solutions that enable companies of all sizes to better understand their customers, suppliers and business partners. Our comprehensive solutions increase visibility into the financial health of your B2B customers while keeping you informed of important changes that traditional credit reporting tools miss. Thousands of companies across diverse industries use Cortera’s solutions to increase revenue, improve sales effectiveness, and reduce risk.

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information, call:
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