SAP Customer Success Story

SCHULER PRESSEN GmbH & CO. KG

Enterprise-wide access to product information with mySAP™ Product Lifecycle Management (mySAP PLM)

It took Schuler Pressen just six months to implement mySAP Product Lifecycle Management (mySAP PLM), a move that has revolutionized the distribution and management of product data and related documents. Gone are the days of painfully slow searches and expensive microfilming. Today, thanks to mySAP PLM, all product information can be accessed quickly and directly from every workstation.

PRODUCT LIFE-CYCLE MANAGEMENT AT SCHULER PRESSEN

Schuler Pressen GmbH & Co. KG is a company of Schuler AG whose product and service portfolio spans the entire range of metal-forming technologies. A world leader in its field, Schuler AG supplies the metal processing industry with production plants, tools, and support services based on its process expertise. Founded in 1839, the company now posts annual sales in excess of DM 1.14 billion and employs more than 4,200 people. One of its business lines is mechanical press systems, the field in which Schuler Pressen operates. Schuler Pressen manufactures mechanical presses and provides engineering and design services for customers.

THE GOAL: REPLACE MICROFILM WITH DIGITAL DATA

Schuler Pressen has chosen to deploy SAP® solutions in almost all areas of its business. The Big Bang implementation started in the company's Göppingen, Germany headquarters in January 1999. In conjunction with the migration to SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, Schuler Pressen also tackled the problem of storing and managing technical documentation.

For a company whose core business is engineering, design, and development, the management of technical data is a crucial issue. Schuler Pressen manages a large volume of data, including some 1.3 million drawings, which can now be retrieved and viewed at will from anywhere in the company.

Employees can also retrieve any one of the company's 1.3 million drawings stored on microfilm. If a user requests a drawing that is not yet available in digital form, the request automatically triggers a scanning procedure. Thanks to scanning on demand, the number of digital drawings is growing all the time.

ROI ON TARGET

Faster searches for drawings and the elimination of maintenance for decentralized archives have significantly lowered costs. Higher-quality product data is now available earlier in the development process. This also cuts costs by reducing errors that arise from incomplete product data. By mid-1999, Schuler Pressen had already recovered 15% of its investment costs. Project leader Thomas Hirtz is confident that the project will pay for itself within five years as planned.

"We have taken on a lot and achieved a great deal," says Rolf Kellenbenz, former vice president for production machines. "However, there is still much to be done." New systems for various media (photographs, videos, and so on) and for calculations like FEM have already been implemented. Schuler Pressen plans to introduce systems for integrating CATIA-based tools with mySAP PLM and to implement an archive for business documents, microfilm, and one million master records. Every day, it reproduces 1,000 to 1,500 drawings and creates about 100 new ones in the design process. Printing these documents consumes 300,000 square meters of paper per year.

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>
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With the legacy mainframe-based system and the outdated microfilming and output devices, finding the right documents was a laborious process, costs were high, and efficiency was far from satisfactory. The company's goal in introducing a new solution was to provide rapid access to all product data and documentation throughout the enterprise.

RAPID ACCESS TO INFORMATION FROM EVERY WORKSTATION

Schuler Pressen saw the need to introduce comprehensive product life-cycle management to complement the new SAP-based ERP solution. Therefore, it set up a project specifically to address the issues of product data and document management. Employees throughout the company were to be given online access to technical information at their workstations. The company wanted to improve plotter and printer management in its multi-platform network and to enhance support for complex, parallel design and engineering processes. To meet these requirements, existing data needed to be digitized, and multiple decentralized, paper-based archives had to make way for a single electronic archive. The new system also had to integrate with the Microsoft Office products used to create text files for descriptions and specifications.

mySAP PLM: THE RIGHT CHOICE

On the basis of substantial market research and several product comparisons, Schuler Pressen decided that mySAP PLM was the best solution. The main arguments in its favor were SAP's strategic focus on this field, tight integration with SAP's ERP system, long-term protection of investment, and the availability of support. Four SAP partners were brought in to help with the digital archive, plotter and repro system, viewing, and CAD integration. This collaboration was very successful, and all project goals were achieved quickly. The design phase was completed in the third quarter of 1998, and the system went live in January 1999 together with the new ERP solution.

AUTOMATIC DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT THE COMPANY

Today, the management of product information at Schuler Pressen is totally integrated into the logistics chain. mySAP PLM controls and coordinates the flow of technical data and documents and integrates directly with the company's CAD and Plotspool systems. At the heart of the system is the digital archive, containing an 100,000 technical drawings that have been converted into a neutral format. An integrated viewer provides users with easy access to all documents.

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At A Glance

SAP solution components	mySAP PLM Life-Cycle Data Management, PS, MM, PP, SD, HR
Hardware platform	AIX
Number of users	500
Number of sites	2
Length of implementation	6 month (for Product Data Management)
Implementation partners	SEAL (former SEEP Plotmanagement), COI (Archiv) Atos (CAD Interface)

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