



## Schuler Pressen GmbH & Co. KG

Enterprise-wide access to product information with mySAP.com PLM

It took Schuler Pressen just six months to implement Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) with mySAP.com, 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 PLM, all product information can be accessed quickly and directly from every workstation.

### Product Lifecycle Management at Schuler Pressen

Schuler Pressen is a company of the 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 plant, 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 over 4,200 people. One of its business lines is mechanical press systems, the field in which Schuler Pressen GmbH & Co. KG operates. Schuler Pressen manufactures mechanical presses and provides engineering and design services for customers.

### The Goal: To Replace Microfilms with Digital Data Flows

Schuler Pressen has chosen to deploy SAP software in almost all areas of its business. The big-bang implementation started in the company's Göppingen headquarters in January 1999. In conjunction with the migration to SAP 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, management of technical data is a central issue. Schuler Pressen manages a large volume of data, including some 1.3 million drawings on



microfilm and 1.0 million master records. Every day, one to 1.5 thousand engineering drawings are reproduced, and about 100 new ones are created in the design process. Printing these documents consumes 300,000 square meters of paper per year.

With the legacy mainframe-based system, and the technically dated microfilming and output devices then used, 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.

*"We have taken on a lot and achieved a great deal."*

Rolf Kellenbenz, former Vice President for Production Machines.

### Rapid Access to Information From Every Workstation

Schuler Pressen saw the need to introduce comprehensive product lifecycle management to complement the new SAP-based ERP solution. It therefore 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 wished 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 Microsoft Office products used to create text files for descriptions and specifications.



### mySAP.com PLM the Right Choice

On the basis of substantial market research and several product comparisons, Schuler Pressen decided that Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) with mySAP.com 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 other partners were brought in to assist with the digital archive, plotter and repro system, viewing and CAD integration. This collaboration was very successful. All the project goals were achieved within a short time frame. 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.com 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 initial 100,000 technical drawings that have been converted into a neutral format. An integrated viewer provides users with easy access to all

drawings, which they can retrieve and view at will, from anywhere in the company.

### Scanning on Demand

Similarly, employees can now retrieve any one of the company's 1.3 million drawings stored on microfilm. If a drawing is requested 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 searching for drawings and the elimination of maintenance for decentralized archives: these factors have led to significantly lower costs. Higher-quality product data are now available earlier in the development process. This also cuts costs by reducing errors arising from incomplete product data. By mid-1999, 15 per cent of the investment costs had already been recovered. Project leader Thomas Hirtz is confident that the project will pay for itself within five years, as planned.

### Looking Ahead

"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 (FEM etc.) have already been implemented. Future plans at Schuler Pressen include introducing systems for integrating CATIA-based tools with mySAP.com, and implementing an archive for business documents.

