



MULTILINGUALISM WITHOUT EXTRA EFFORT

VEKA AG manages international collaboration with the CIDEON Conversion Engine

A central development site serving several international production sites creates special challenges for the information management of VEKA AG. Multilingualism is one key aspect along with the protection of highly sensitive design data. To meet both requirements and to improve the efficiency of the procedures involved in the document management process, the group is now using the CIDEON Conversion Engine.

VEKA AG is a world-leading manufacturer of plastic profile systems for windows, doors, shutters and plastic boards. The company based in Sendenhorst in Westphalia was established in 1969 and is now represented on three continents with more than 3,000 staff members in 28 subsidiary companies. In 2006 sales of 700 million Euros were generated by processing more than 200,000 tons of PVC. The group is continuing to grow with new companies being established and extensive investments being planned to strengthen the German site.

Technological decisions are made to support the group's growth strategy. VEKA already introduced SAP in the 1990s and has been using SAP R/3 since 1998. At Sendenhorst, the group's development center, design engineers are using Autodesk AutoCAD on 13 CAD workstations. A standards center is responsible for processing and distributing the CAD documents and design drawings of the production department for use by other members of the group.

The Challenge of International Cooperation

The internal throughput of design data is growing along with the growth of the company. The introduction of new products, sites and languages meant that the traditional ways of using CAD files and drawings could no longer cope with the dynamic growth of the company. Here, a high-performance filing system was required which could handle the great increase in the volume of CAD, drawing and meta data.

The new system should not only support the AutoCAD files but also the documents of the 3D CAD system CATIA V5. Special conditions applied to the transfer of knowledge between the design engineers and the international production sites. These procedures had to become more efficient with authority over the standards and development remaining with the group's head office in Sendenhorst.

In addition, the system was meant to provide exchange formats to enable cooperation with the customers and with the company departments located downstream from the design department. Further requirements affected the general optimization of the search for information and the transfer of information from the design department to the departments subsequent.

CIDEON Conversion Engine

VEKA decided to use SAP-CAD direct integration and deposit files in the SAP DMS system. For this purpose a KPro-Server was installed in Sendenhorst with other servers being planned. The SAP direct integration represents the ideal version to handle documents in the logistical, SAP-based process. The released drawings are now immediately available for production purposes with

exchange formats (DFX) available for the customers and the architect offices and PDF documents for subsequent departments. This is made possible by the CIDEON Conversion Engine operating in the background which automatically converts the released documents into the required formats.



A special challenge is the integration into the VEKA material master. For this purpose the SAP material master was adjusted to the specific conditions of the plastic industry and to the special requirements of the company with the technical parameters of the program also being extended. In addition, this information is meant to be administrated between AutoCAD and SAP without any redundancy and filed in the SAP system whenever required. Here the IT-Management and the CAD-Administration are relying on the producer and have commissioned CIDEON Software GmbH with the implementation and customer service.

Output in National Language

The CIDEON Conversion Engine also provides a solution for the challenge posed by the use of the Polish, Russian, German, English, French and Spanish languages. Here the multilingual data administration option available through the SAP standard is being used. This enables meta data to be filed in the required languages. When the released CAD files are being converted, these data will be used to transfer language-specific text elements such as explanations located at the top or bottom of a drawing, into the required national language.

Originals Remain Protected

The CIDEON Conversion Engine automatically generates a PDF document of all released CAD drawings in each language. If an SAP user requests the PDF version of a drawing, then the locally selected language is

automatically recognized and the corresponding document is made available. Versions in other languages and the AutoCAD original cannot be accessed. A positive side effect of using the PDF format is the comparably small size of the files.

An important factor for the success of a project is its acceptance by the users. The positive experiences here show that this was a worthwhile investment for VEKA AG. This successful solution is now being used by VEKA AG on its new international markets.

“It was important to store the data in a way so they could be issued in any required language.”

Hubert Erpenbeck, SAP-Consultant at VEKA AG



CIDEON Conversion Engine

The CIDEON Conversion Engine is the answer to the special challenges posed by the international cooperation in the design field. The automatic conversion of the CAD documents in the linguistically neutral exchange formats enables a quick information flow between the design and the production departments and also to the customers and other partners whereas the original CAD files can only be accessed by authorized design engineers.

