



ACCELERATION OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION

Over and done with: numerous media gaps, idle periods, lengthy planning times and a complex data jungle are no more for Hansgrohe. With SAP PLM, CATIA V5 and a comprehensive process redesign as a base, IT manager Klaus Buchholz and his team have joined forces with the departments to put the development and manufacturing process on an entirely new footing.

► A NEW ERA

„This is the beginning of a new era in design and production for us,” says Buchholz enthusiastically. Although the project has yet to be completed in every area, the benefits are already evident: “We’re bringing our products to the marketplace much quicker, which at the same time is slashing costs,” adds Buchholz. SAP Consulting Services and CENIT AG Systemhaus are providing the necessary support as external project partners.

► NEW MARKET REQUIREMENTS

In just six months, the current complex operating processes at Hansgrohe (annual sales of €365 million, 2,400 employees) were mapped and a new, forward-looking target process was designed. A further five months were sufficient to convert the objectives in the SAP PLM and CATIA V5 systems. A timely initiative: “Market requirements are getting more and more complex and short-term,” says Buch-

holz. The result: shrinking lot sizes and a greater range of products, which need to be placed on the market at shorter intervals. On average, half of the 10,000-plus articles for sale are replaced every five years. The legacy IT systems could no longer adequately support the necessary processes, with product data management a growing source of headaches in particular.

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Klaus Buchholz
IT Manager, Hansgrohe AG

► THE APPROACH

The turnaround came at the beginning of 2003 with the much-anticipated implementation project “PLM@Hansgrohe”. The solution at company headquarters in Schiltach manages the central storage, administration and preparation of all product data – “from the cradle to the grave,” according to IT manager Buchholz. “With SAP PLM, private data is a thing of the past - as are redundancies in data retention, time-consuming searches and queries,” he continues, outlining the key benefits. Further advantages are increased transparency and up-to-dateness, thanks to the integrated mapping of

versioning and revisioning along with targeted document distribution, integrated action triggers and automated workflows for examination requests, authorisation procedures and releases.

Another reason for the project’s successful implementation was the effortless integration of SAP PLM into the existing SAP R/3 landscape. “Our PLM solution can seamlessly combine our ERP, Office

and CAD/CAM environments,” says Buchholz.

In this respect, Buchholz and his team still have a lot of work to do, despite the successful project start. This year, Hansgrohe AG is set to extend the work processes with SAP PLM, tap into new user groups and expand the classification system. The company is therefore setting its sights on global engineering: in order to improve the exchange of data yet further, more international locations and external partners are being integrated. As Buchholz says: “We haven’t exploited the full potential of PLM yet – not by a long way.”

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