



## INTEGRATION IN ONE DAY

More than 3,200 microturbines sold worldwide with a combined running time in excess of 10 million operating hours: the American machine builder, Capstone Turbine Corporation, from the state of California, has penned a true success story. To enable the company to continue to grow as it has done and to satisfy the increasing demands of its customers, Capstone has now opted for a fully integrated PLM solution. To implement this solution, CENIT has installed its own SAP PLM INTEGRATION TO CATIA software in order to seamlessly integrate the systems from CATIA and SAP. In doing so, it has succeeded in grand style in migrating Capstone's data.

Innovation is the name of the game at Capstone. Not only with respect to its products: microturbines are seen as decentralised, highly efficient, mini power stations and as environment-friendly power supply sources with a promising future ahead of them.

This West Coast enterprise is also a trailblazer when it comes to its own IT. Take its implementation of SAP, for instance, a step that's by no means a matter of course for a company of this size; or the speed with which it migrated to CATIA 5.0.

### ► PROBLEMS WITH DATA MANAGEMENT

In the past, this willingness to install new systems has led to Capstone running a total of four different applications simultaneously: SAP for the business side of things, CATIA as their engineering tool, AXALANT for product data management and Smart-team as the CATIA file

management system.

But the good times were destined not to last. After all, as IT Director Luke Pfaffinger admits, „Until now, our product developers have had to work with the various applications simultaneously.“ The applications ran parallel to one another with a negligible degree of integration. Above all, this constellation caused real

by Capstone at the beginning of 2005: „There was no way we could carry on like that – we had too many points of friction,“ explains Pfaffinger.

It was clear right from the start that the solution sought after would involve SAP as the central, backbone system as part of a new application environment. With

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problems when it came to data management. „If a customer wanted us to make a quick modification to something, we had to input the changes manually in each of the systems,“ reports the IT expert, Pfaffinger.

### ► SOLUTION

This not only meant tedious and time-consuming extra work, but also led to inconsistent data structures and sources of error. Although it functioned well for a while, this constellation was soon overwhelmed by the rapid growth and increased customer demand experienced

this in mind, Pfaffinger, an accomplished IT specialist, studied the potentials for integration with CATIA and came across CENIT's SAP PLM INTEGRATION TO CATIA software, which offers seamless integration of the two systems. „It was obvious from the word go,“ says Pfaffinger, „that this was what we were looking for.“

Because PLM is still in its infancy in the US market, Capstone contacted the Stuttgart-based software company directly. After just a few meetings at Capstone's premises, the specifications for the PLM implementation project were drawn up and the contract awarded.



# CAPSTONE OPTS FOR SAP SOLUTION FROM CENIT

## ► ADVANTAGES

Whole range of positive effects have already become apparent just a few months into full-time operational deployment:

- Reduced licensing costs due to halving the number of applications in use: this consolidation of its IT systems alone enables Capstone to cut its costs substantially
- Reduced volume of administrative work: the machine builder's IT professionals no longer have to maintain three systems at the same time, rather they can concentrate fully on SAP PLM
- No multiple input of data thanks to direct integration of the systems: all systems now access the same data from within SAP
- Massively improved data quality: thanks to direct integration, it is always totally clear which file is the latest version – an inestimable advantage when handling complex engineering projects Shorter search times when accessing the latest data: the transparency of the database as good as eradicates the need for time-intensive searching for the right data
- Fewer sources of error: the potential sources of error in data maintenance have been reduced spectacularly
- Greater flexibility and speed in product development: by focusing work procedures on one system, the developers are able to proceed quicker and with greater purpose.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION

What's more, it wasn't a case of wringing benefits from an expensive and lengthy IT project. On the contrary: „The

cost-benefit ratio is outstanding,“ says Capstone manager, Pfaffinger. CENIT was able to complete the entire project in just six months – from conception and definition of the processes through programming, acceptance of the data, training of Capstone's staff, testing and finally commissioning of the new system. „The guys from CENIT have been unbelievably professional and efficient,“ enthuses Pfaffinger.

The starting point was the implementation of CENIT's SAP PLM INTEGRATION TO CATIA software, which interconnects SAP and CATIA. The first data could be exchanged between the two systems after just 24 hours. „Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect the integration would be up and running after just one day,“ exclaims Pfaffinger.

Step 2 consisted of defining in great detail how the design engineers are to work with the new system – that is, compiling a precise description of the processes and

mapping them in SAP and CATIA. Then, all the data were read into SAP PLM and ‚cleaned up‘ – more than 6,000 files in all. Here, too, Capstone's employees were amazed by the performance of the CENIT solution. „It saved us more than 100 man-hours of manual labour,“ says Pfaffinger, adding, „We really were impressed by the quality.“

## ► SUCCESS OF PLM

PLM projects of this kind are CENIT's bread and butter. The PLM Consulting company has made a name for itself in the PLM market having implemented a large number of successful integrations (see box) – at the machine builder ABB, the automotive supplier Hirschmann or the medical technology manufacturer Braun Melsungen, for instance – and is one of the market leaders in this segment.

CENIT now wants to conquer the US market with this concept. „The challenges facing US industry are identical with those in Europe,“ says Horst Heckhorn, President CENIT North America, who adds: „We are convinced we can facilitate considerable increases in efficiency, improvements in quality and a higher degree of flexibility by implementing our solutions.“ As such, the successful PLM project at Capstone is a milestone not only for the US machine builder but for the German software Supplier, too.

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## ► ABOUT CAPSTONE

Capstone Turbine Corporation (Nasdaq: CPST) is the world's leading producer of low-emission microturbine systems. In 1998, Capstone was the first to offer commercial energy products utilising microturbine technology, the result of more than ten years of focused research. Capstone Turbine has shipped more than 3,200 Capstone MicroTurbine systems to customers worldwide.

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