



Success Story

BMW Manufacturing Corp. — Efficient and flexible in today's competitive market

To leverage its investment in the existing enterprise SAP system, BMW Manufacturing Corp. deployed Livelink ECM – Suite for SAP Solutions from Open Text™ in the production and accounts payable business areas of its Spartanburg, U.S. plant. The imaging and archiving solution has ensured faster data access and optimum system performance. As a result, the plant has realized cost and time savings—which means the facility can maintain its goals of agility, efficiency and flexibility.

Organization

BMW Manufacturing Corp., based in Spartanburg, plays a vital role in BMW's standing as a global vehicle manufacturer. The factory is committed to continuous improvement through advancements in education and research and development.

The Spartanburg facility has been designed to focus on quality and create an easy exchange of information by placing all manufacturing processes in a single location. That has resulted in a smooth flow of information, parts and knowledge through the body, paint, assembly, quality and logistics areas. Visual communication among the process, quality and support functions emphasizes BMW's team-focused organizational approach.

Situation

BMW, well-known for its precision and careful planning, is continuously searching for more streamlined and efficient methods to run its business. At the Spartanburg facility, the organization identified and targeted several improvement areas, which included reducing paper-based processes, decreasing filing storage, enabling faster data access and ensuring optimal system performance.

A six-page inspection card follows every BMW roadster through the production process. Whenever employees needed to view a particular card, they used to have to physically search through stored paper files. Stephen Martin, SAP system administrator at BMW, realized that a solution was needed to “enable us to retain, and quickly retrieve, any of the inspection cards of the roadsters that we have built.”

BMW's accounts payable department needed a similar solution for invoices. As all invoice documents were stored in paper form, A/P staff had to manually retrieve invoice data from stored files.

Solution

Optimum system performance is necessary to meet the high quality standards demanded by BMW. In order to maintain these standards, BMW chose Open Text's Suite for SAP Solutions as the imaging and archiving solution for the enterprise SAP system.

The key decision-making factors for that choice were the solution's seamless integration with SAP, and its breadth of functionality.

“We've seen dramatic improvements in our materials documents' response time since we started data archiving with Open Text. As the volume of data increases across operations, we're going to be archiving data in every module: sales, finance, control, etc. It makes sense that to protect your investment, you have to archive your data.”

Stephen Martin
SAP System Administrator, BMW Manufacturing Corp.

Industry

Automotive

Customer

BMW Manufacturing Corp.

Business Challenges

- Reduce paper-based processes and filing storage
- Enable faster data access
- Retain and quickly retrieve documents
- Ensure optimum system performance

Business Solution

Livelink ECM – for SAP Solutions

- Easy archiving of materials in the production department
- Imaging and scanning of invoices in the A/P department
- Seamless integration with the enterprise SAP system

Business Benefits

- Streamlined retrieval time of documents
- Improved vendor relations and employee productivity
- Faster data access
- Reduced paper processing and filing storage
- Optimum system performance

"The system required practically no implementation. We've seen dramatic improvements in our material documents' response time since we started data archiving with Suite for SAP Solutions," Martin commented. As a result of the successful implementation, BMW is planning to archive additional data.

The ECM solution ensures that the overall enterprise system runs at its top performance. The sheer volume of data in a plant such as the Spartanburg facility puts quite a load on the SAP system. However, using the archiving functionality of the Open Text product suite, the BMW team does not have to worry about failing performance.

BMW utilizes the suite to image and store each of the six-page inspection cards that follow each roadster through the manufacturing process. The A/P department uses the solution to image all invoices. With Suite for SAP Solutions, all affected processes have been greatly simplified. The archived invoices are readily accessible by simply pulling the document up on the screen. Problem invoices, and requests for goods' receipts, are routed via SAP workflow rather than slow inter-office mail. Invoice issues that previously required four or five days to resolve, are now cleared up in one to two days.

The solution has improved vendor relations as well as employee productivity. In addition, data security has been enabled: when internal or external auditors need to perform an audit, they simply retrieve the necessary data online.

Benefits

"Open Text has really saved us a lot of time. We don't have to file, and we no longer have to rely on the archaic inter-office mail system. Also we used to keep our invoices in a separate storage building for safekeeping; now, after four weeks, the original documents are destroyed. Costs have been reduced because we don't have to pay for storage space. Open Text has really helped streamline our department's processes," reported Stephanie Moss, accounts payable supervisor at BMW.

BMW plans to use the archiving functionality of Suite for SAP Solutions for sales documents. "We've seen how archiving data can really keep our system from slowing down," said Martin. "As the volume of data increases across operations, we're going to be archiving data in every module: sales, finance, control, etc. It makes sense that to protect your investment, you have to archive your data."

The vision statement of BMW's Spartanburg plant calls for it "to be an agile, efficient and flexible BMW plant" — and it is no surprise that, with the implementation of Suite for SAP Solutions, this vision has been realized.



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