

WILO

PRODUCTION SUPPORT FROM CATALOGUE EXPERTS



Complete project execution with asimsuite

Producing four new product catalogues for two markets in six months is a challenge even for modern large companies like WILO. That's why the Dortmund pump specialist looked for outside support when preparing its catalogue in summer of last year. Catalogue specialists from asim took over the entire implementation of the project in-house in the context of the service package „Professional Service“, using software of the same name.

Actually a classic: Sales needs more market-specific catalogues on an ad-hoc basis than were provided by the yearly plan. But on short notice there just isn't the capacity to handle the time-consuming production alone. For cases like this, asim has instituted a new service package that Thomas Milde, Head of Technical Documentation at WILO SE,

requested immediately for his latest catalogue production run. He didn't just make use of support for the process, automated for years, but even for the preparation of all the catalogue data for the Swiss market.

„Where necessary, priorities can be realigned even on short notice“

A few days later, six catalogue experts from WILO and asim sat down together in Dortmund and set up the planning for the upcoming production project. Tasks were defined and assigned, responsibilities clarified and specifications for project communication were determined. „During time- and cost-optimised product data maintenance with distributed teams, it's essential for everyone involved to have knowledge about tools, techniques and methods of automatic catalogue production as well as a real understanding of the processes,“ explains Thomas Milde. He found it particularly important to be able to decide quickly throughout the project what tasks absolutely required product knowledge and thus had to be done in-house.

The beginning of August was the starting gun for data maintenance: asim specialists travelled to Dortmund to work on creating and maintaining product information, technical data, XML text, graphics and pump characteristics on site. Later, these would be the basis for creating the four catalogue publications. Product specialists from WILO provided manuscripts as templates that were marked up by hand. The asim team entered the product information into asim, exported it to FrameMaker and PDF files and presented it to the product specialists for inspection. The correction loops were repeated with an eye on content and layout until the last finishing of each page was complete.



CASE STUDY NO.

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„Due to the simultaneous editing of different pages, there were no clearly definable project phases in the sense of separate data entry, page production and page approval,” recalls Marco Krämer, the Professional Services team leader who coordinated catalogue production in Waiblingen. „Instead, a page schedule that was updated every day provided an overview of the status of each individual page.” The page schedule was installed on the WILO server and was continually maintained by everyone in the project. Along with this, a central resource plan was used to coordinate which employees were assigned to which days. „Using that overview, we were able to change priorities on short notice, which was a central concern of our customer,” reports Krämer.

„The challenge was really more organisational than technical”

The direct integration into the working organisation on site made coordination fast and enabled optimum exchange of know-how between the employees of the two companies. Along with this, asim coupled multiple workstations in Waiblingen to the WILO system using Citrix and secure VPN connections.

Over the next few weeks, data maintenance was progressively moved from Dortmund to Waiblingen. But even after complete migration of data maintenance, asim still sent people to WILO every week, to clarify questions, discuss results and coordinate new tasks. During peak times, up to seven people were involved in the ongoing project at a time. Targeted communication was still ensured by WILO and asim using central contacts: „The particular challenge in the context of the project was therefore not so much technical as really more of an organisational nature – for example with respect to ongoing coordination between project members,” recalls Thomas Milde. First on-site at WILO and in later phases listening in by conference calls, Netmeeting and a central email Inbox to which everyone on the project had access.

In the last phase of the project, the catalogue experts adapted the product data to the WILO brand EMB and the Swiss market in order to create a catalogue specific to the neighbouring country. Thanks to the central management of different language and media formats, the effort required for adaptation of the product information could be minimised.

„Fast coordination and optimum exchange of know-how”

„The effort required for data maintenance cannot be underestimated,” Milde sums up. „But now we know that we can let the complete production process run fully automatically

for the next catalogue, and it will also be the basis for the online catalogue we have in the works. Without the support of the Professional Service by asim, we could never have managed to implement either the production or preparation for the online catalogue in this short a time.”



The variety of catalogues at WILO

FACTBOX



- 6,200 employees
- 60 subsidiaries worldwide
- turnover in 2010: 1,021.4 billion Euros
- Manufacturer of pumps and pump systems in Dortmund
- 10,000 products
- 25 users
- 5,000 documents
- Areas of application of asimSuite: Catalogue production, image price lists, accessories catalogues and Web shops