Blum

Combining product innovation and process improvements with ENOVIA V6 and SolidWorks

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Head of Engineering Services
Blum

Challenge
Blum needs to provide its diverse customers with products tailored to their specific functional and geographic requirements.

Solution
Blum uses an interim combination of ENOVIA V6 and ENOVIA SmarTeam to manage its SolidWorks designs and all technical product and process information.

Benefits
ENOVIA V6's flexibility and robust platform have enabled Blum to continue using its ENOVIA SmarTeam information, leveraging the company's past investment while benefiting from V6's more advanced features.

DASSAULT SYSTEMES

blum
Perfecting motion

Julius Blum, an iron fitter and blacksmith, founded Blum in 1952. Since his first product was introduced – a horseshoe that prevented horses from slipping – the company has evolved into an internationally renowned manufacturer of fitting systems for high-end furniture primarily for the kitchen. The company creates lift systems that effortlessly raise cabinet openings, hinges that connect cabinet doors, and pull-out systems made of metal. Blum is based in Austria and has over 5,300 employees worldwide with manufacturing locations in Austria, USA, Brazil, and Poland.

Blum's primary challenge is to provide solutions for a variety of customers with unique needs. Its customers are: kitchen manufacturers who use Blum products when building furniture; dealers who need to demonstrate to the end consumer how the furniture works; and cabinet makers who custom-build and install furniture.

Product and process innovation

Attracting customers requires constant product innovation. "Our product innovation process begins by analyzing trends, ideas, and the latest technology in order to make our products unique," said Christoph Lutz, head of Engineering Services, Blum. But product innovation is only part of the picture and the company wanted to innovate its engineering processes as well. "Focusing on process innovation enables us to cover every aspect of product

development, from the design and manufacturing of the molding section tools, to the stamping tools and assembly lines we build to assemble parts – it is a deep process chain in our engineering activities," said Lutz.

Open, flexible solution accessible via the web

Currently an ENOVIA SmarTeam user, Blum opted for ENOVIA V6 in part because of its open platform, which gives Blum employees the opportunity to manage information at the object level and to collaborate on a global scale. "One of the reasons we chose ENOVIA V6 was because it is a web application that provides employees with easy and secure access to product information from every manufacturing location in the world," explained Lutz.

Lutz also appreciates ENOVIA V6's flexibility. "We can use ENOVIA V6 out of the box, or customize it to fit our processes and way of working and derive process improvements," he said. "Let's take workflow management,

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for example. We can capitalize our approval processes in ENOVIA V6 and automatically roll out these processes or bypass certain steps when the job requires it. It's a challenge for a company to enforce policies, while providing engineers with creative freedom," he said. "ENOVIA V6 is flexible enough to do both."

While transitioning to ENOVIA V6, Blum is using Dassault Systèmes' Adaplet technology, which enables a seamless coexistence between its applications. The technology enables Blum to continue using the information capitalized over the years in ENOVIA SmarTeam while taking advantage of specific ENOVIA V6 features such as BOM, configuration, and change management. "With Adaplet technology, we can very easily access all of our ENOVIA SmarTeam information from ENOVIA V6 while benefiting from unique V6 features we did not have before. It provides us with the kind of integration we need before a complete transition to ENOVIA V6," concluded Lutz.
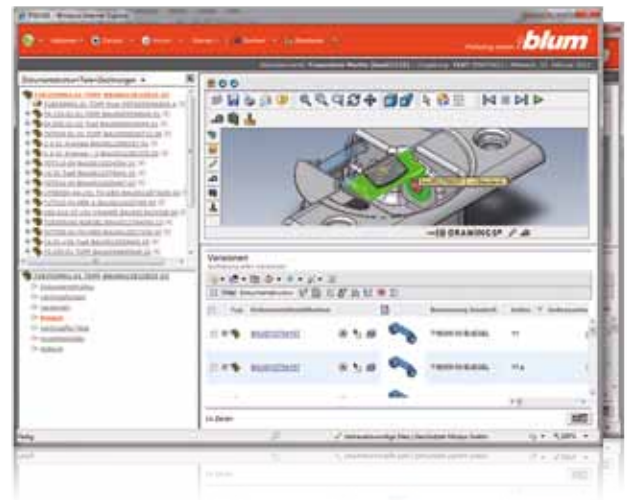
A 3D approach to design

Blum has been a SolidWorks software user for over ten years, and was one of the first companies in its industry to use a 3D design approach. "The world is three dimensional. It's only natural for

technicians and engineers to have the tools that enable them to design in a language that everyone can understand," said Lutz. "SolidWorks is intuitive and easy to use with a short learning curve."

Blum uses ENOVIA SmarTeam to manage all its SolidWorks CAD data. It is also a forum for knowledge-based management and design reuse, as well as change management at the document level. "We realized that we needed to do more at the engineering BOM level as well as the change management level of parts, not only of documents," explained Lutz. "This is why we looked for a new solution that would be viable long term."

3S SOLIDWORKS   *3S ENOVIA*

3S DASSAULT SYSTEMES