



POWER ON: EFFICIENT PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AT JEAN MÜLLER

Electrical engineering specialist relies on processes structured by product lifecycle management (PLM)

The safe distribution of energy has been the sensitive core business of Jean Müller GmbH for more than a century. No matter whether you're a homeowner or a major energy provider – without distribution boxes and know-how from this electronics specialist, your power won't flow. From its central manufacturing location in Eltville, Jean Müller supplies customers from around the world with fuses and power distribution components. The sensitive energy sector needs maximum flexibility and responsiveness. But maximum quality, absolute safety and process clarity are equally indispensable requirements. Modern manufacturing methods and continual process optimization are means of securing these must-reach targets. And that in turn requires a well-designed strategy for product lifecycle management (PLM). In this field, Jean Müller relies specifically on CATIA V5, ENOVIA SMARTEAM and comprehensive

process consulting by its long-standing partner, CENIT.

► STRUCTURED DATA FILING WITH CATIA AND ENOVIA

PLM allows Jean Müller to respond to the growing innovation pressures in the electrical engineering market, and it also solves what used to be one of the company's greatest problems: the lack of a structured data filing system in the development segment. The company focuses on design variants. To be able to apply different client requirements quickly and efficiently to new or existing products, Jean Müller opted for a cross-board PLM approach. CENIT, as PLM consulting and software provider as well as Value Added Reseller for Dassault Systèmes, was commissioned with introducing CATIA V5 and the closely intermeshed ENOVIA SMARTEAM on the product data side.

"Our products are readied for series production at our plant, and they are designed together with the tools we need to manufacture them", says Harald Bleuel, Head of Design at Jean Müller and thus responsible for the entire PLM Administration.

► RAPID ADAPTATIONS, GREATER TRANSPARENCY

"For us, clearly structured data is an elementary prerequisite because in this safety-sensitive field of electrical engineering one has to observe countless national and international norms and standards. If in that situation you still want to be able to react flexibly to market developments, you have no choice but to introduce a cross-board PLM system", says Jean Müller's Design Chief.

The company's change of approach is owed particularly to the increasing and ever more complex range of customer requirements. In the past, development and design data was usually managed using a file-based method. This resulted in vast amounts of data that at some point simply became unmanageable. Moreover, product development was becoming more and more of a collaborative effort, and demands on the management of the wide range of variants were growing apace. The file-based approach simply became unprofitable. Holistic PLM based on CATIA V5 and ENOVIA SMARTEAM generates flexible structures and nevertheless provides

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a simpler approach to product data management that now networks the entire Jean Müller corporation.

“Most importantly, the new PLM structures boost the quality of our design data. Now, Jean Müller can react flexibly to requirements and quickly develop innovative, team-based solutions” says Bleuel. “We can now make modifications and customizations more quickly and with greater transparency,” he adds.

▶ TIGHT PROJECT MANAGEMENT BY CENIT

The design chief sees clearly structured individual process steps as the guarantee for successful PLM introduction at Jean Müller. “That means going to quite a lot of trouble beforehand, and it requires lots of discipline, but it’s worth the effort.” Spot-on PLM implementation can only be accomplished if one has tight project management and motivated staff on both sides – internally and externally. Harald Bleuel is quite certain that without an experienced partner like CENIT, such a project could be brought to fruition neither quickly nor successfully. “CENIT’s long years of process management experience have been a particular blessing for us”, he says.

The greatest challenge was the transfer of data with different versioning levels. Here, as at other junctures of the project, the CENIT experts managed to innovatively customize the Dassault Systèmes standard solutions and thus quickly resolve the problem – while always keeping customization levels to a minimum so as to maintain full compatibility in the event of later CATIA or ENOVIA SMARTEAM release changes.

▶ A BASIS FOR FURTHER OPTIMIZATION

The introduction process at the Eltville plant is now complete, and CATIA V5 and ENOVIA SMARTEAM are up and running at 20 workstations, proving their productive worth in action. Jean Müller already has its sights set firmly on the next step: The cross-board, translocation integration of all enterprise segments, from development to order processing.

Here a strong focus will lie on further expanding Jean Müller’s service portfolio. For example, offering a means of ordering complex products electronically via an interface with the ERP system, as well as quickly communicating data sheets and information on new products. The PLM introduction provides the foundation for these plans.

▶ ABOUT JEAN MÜLLER GMBH

Since the company’s foundation in 1897 by Jean Müller, the headquarters and the main production facility “Jean Müller GmbH Elektrotechnische Fabrik” have been located in Eltville on the Rhine. In an enterprise that has grown over more than a hundred years, tradition and progress are closely knit. Progress is reflected by the continual advancement of our products, tradition by our customer relations.

Production began with the manufacture of HRC fuse-links, followed by low-voltage switchgears, switchgear combinations, and power distribution components. Electronic monitoring and energy management systems complete today’s product range.

We are committed to quality in the name of safety. We offer our customers individually designed, and innovative solutions for electrical energy distribution.

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