

Business Partner



Cosworth Technology Success Story



Driving Force

Cosworth Technology Ltd, a leading provider of powertrain engineering services to the global automotive industry, was acquired by Audi AG in September 1998, bringing with it more than just a change of management. For the three sites in the UK and one in the US, the new ownership brought a completely new Corporate Identity, and a rollover of many of the existing processes and tools. Among the changes was a move from the existing ERP application to SAP R/3, which was already in use at Audi. When it came to getting printouts on HP LaserJet printers connected to the SAP system that complied with the new Corporate Design, the HP Corporate Account Representative (CAR), Alan Oxley, got in touch with s.a.x. who he trusted to supply a simple, efficient solution.

Last Link

As is often the case, the SAP implementation had already begun when the issue of printing arose. Initially Cosworth Technology was just talking to HP about printers, s.a.x. were called upon to explain how a s.a.x. solution could maximise on their investment in HP LaserJet printers by easily providing effective, representative output. The initial test was to produce the same 10 forms for 3 different sites. The solution was the SAP approved AVP FormServer, which can use the full functionality of the HP LaserJet printer to produce attractive and legible forms, while minimising on time-consuming and expensive SAPScript programming: the s.a.x. AVP FormServer can capture and interpret the relevant information from various data formats (SAP's Raw Data Interface in this case) and place it correctly on the page with the fixed elements of the form.

Complex Coordination

With the change in applications pending, time was of the essence. When Audi acquired the four divisions that make up Cosworth Technology Ltd, they sold a fifth division to Ford. This became Cosworth Racing Ltd, and they kept the original ERP system. To get the greatest possible advantage out of electronic form printing, Cosworth Technology had decided to print onto plain paper – their standard documents (invoices, purchase orders, and so on) would be produced without any pre-printing, logistics or waste. Duplex units in the





printers (mostly HP 4050 LaserJet printers) meant that additional information, such as the terms and conditions, could be printed on the back too. Typically, this sort of solution would have meant 60 or more days of SAPScript programming. With an average form for the AVP FormServer taking less than a day (and often as little as half an hour) s.a.x. undertook to prepare the initial set of 10 forms within a month.

As Simon Callow, the project manager in Cosworth Technology, describes "Initially we did have a lot of teething problems... a lot of changes needed to be made purely because we had such a short space of time to actually put the system in". These changes caused coordination issues between the FormServer and the SAP system, which often got caught up in the complicated web of relations between s.a.x., Cosworth Technology, and the SAP consultants – s.a.x. reacted by developing an extra module to provide diagnostic information for non-conformant data streams, and speed the overall implementation.

Once a routine had been established, completion of the implementation became a lot easier. A standard workflow was also established between Cosworth Technology and s.a.x. for updating and creating new forms and keeping the system up-to-date. As Simon Callow testifies, "within a day we can turn around a small amendment to a form." Training sessions are also pending so that Cosworth Technology will be able to look after changes in-house. The FormServer also provides a preview function for SAP, so users can check the appearance of their document before finally sending it to print.

In addition to the savings over pre-printed stationery, Simon Callow, says, "I'm a lot happier with the format, ... they're a lot easier to service and change. The actual look of the form is a lot better... there used to be three printers within the company we could print from: everything can be done locally now in individual offices, so it makes it an awful lot easier in terms of time."

"I'm very happy with the way the forms are now, and the way the FormServer works."

Hit the Ground Running



For further information please contact
s.a.x. at
<http://www.sax.ltd.uk>

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