



GLOBAL SOLUTION FOR A GLOBAL PLAYER

FRIWO Power Solutions (FPS), which specializes in platform- and customer-focused network and charging devices, is a global player in the sector. The company has several international manufacturing locations and uses the regional sales force approach to marketing to reach its customers worldwide. On the one hand special sales teams ensure a high degree of flexibility in relation to customer requests in the core markets of Germany, the USA, China and Japan. In addition, FPS is supported by commercial agents and distributors. Because of its strong international focus, it has become increasingly important for FPS to operate business-critical IT solutions across its locations.

LEGACY SOFTWARE HAMPERED COMMUNICATION

At the start of the new millennium, FPS set itself the medium-term goal of introducing a single set of enterprise applications and creating the basic conditions for a standardization of its business processes. In 2001, the group restructured, so that the enterprise applications project was then initiated separately in the FPS business unit. The starting position was that various business software solutions were operating on the basis of partly outdated data bases at the three locations in Germany, in the USA and in China. For example, at the German site, the Brain product (now Infor) was being used on an elderly AS400 system. In the USA, they were working with Business Works/Alliance, again in older versions of Windows plus an Access data base, and in China with JDE in Windows with an SQL server. At the individual locations, therefore, the business processes were also being done differently. Direct communication between the systems was not possible. Similarly, the distributors had no link to these systems. At the planning stage, therefore, the philosophy was to get the best overall solution across the locations.

EVALUATION, SELECTION, IMPLEMENTATION

During the subsequent evaluation, the likeliest solutions were shortlisted. In 2004, the real selection began and the company opted for IFS Applications. The FPS project team assessed IFS Applications in practice during a visit to industrial motors manufacturer, maxon motor, in Switzerland.

Here the FPS people found a situation which to a large extent mirrored that in their own company. This insight was to be helpful during the subsequent stages of the project. It was planned to deploy the IFS Applications components for financials, sales & support, engineering, manufacturing and distribution.

ABOUT FRIWO

Headquartered in Germany, Friwo develops, produces and markets power-supply and charging devices that are designed to meet a very wide range of technical and country-specific requirements.

As a globally active technology company, Friwo is represented on all the important markets with its own development, production and marketing units.



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Implementation began in March 2005 in Germany. The system installed at FPS on HP hardware runs in Windows, with the data being stored in an Oracle database. So as to ensure as smooth an implementation as possible, the specialist areas were divided according to the various components in IFS Applications. In-house trained key users familiarized themselves with the system in order to instruct the users in the various specialist areas. Key users were released to spend time on this task in agreement with management.

After the successful migration came the IFS Applications go-live at FPS in Germany in March 2006. Six months later, the system also went live at the 14 distributors in Europe and the manufacturing site in Poland, which serves as an “extended workbench”. In January 2007, live operation began in the U.S.A. and in November 2007, after a very brief planning period, also in China. This takes the user base to 150 employees in Germany, 10 in the USA, 75 in China (final configuration level) and 4 in Poland. The European distributors access IFS Applications via Citrix.

TROUBLE-FREE ROLL-OUT AND GO-LIVE

Internal project manager Frank Smolka, in charge of applications management at FPS, is happy: “We had a completely trouble-free go-live, so that hardly any reworking was needed. This is thanks in particular to the very good migration tools. The success of the project is due not least to the quality of the advice from IFS. One particularity of this location-wide, international project was also the roll-out of the English version of IFS Applications in China.” With the successful implementation of IFS Applications, FPS today has a location-wide, globally interconnected enterprise software solution that fulfils all core business processes and the special requirements of the company.

BENEFITS

- Integrated corporate business applications
- Uniform platform for all business processes
- Industry-specific solution
- Multisite, multilanguage enterprise applications to aid global operations

SOFTWARE

IFS Financials™

IFS Sales & Support™

IFS Engineering™

IFS Manufacturing™

IFS Distribution™



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