CASE STUDY: SGF Streamlines CAD Interoperability with Proficiency, Achieving Efficient Development Collaboration and Cost Savings

"No longer tied down by format issues, we are now able to turn in proposals in a flash. Proficiency plays a pivotal role in our development environment."

-Wilfried Schneider,
SGF CAD Project Manager

Founded in 1946, SGF is headquartered in Waldkraiburg, Germany. As a globally active supplier for the automotive industry, SGF employs a staff of approximately 700 in four locations in Germany and one in Manchester, MI, U.S.A. With more than 50 years of experience in thread and adhesive technology for rubber and silicon processing, SGF is a market leader in the torque transmission industry. SGF's product range comprises elastic, temperature resistant assemblies for torque transmission and vibration absorption, including flexible steering couplings and disks, vibration absorbers and rubber moldings as well as drive shaft, steering, and exhaust systems. All major auto manufacturers, including BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Volkswagen, Audi, Opel, Lamborghini, Rolls Royce, Jaguar, and Ferrari are SGF customers. www.sgf.de

Overview

As a supplier for multiple national and international automobile manufacturers, Süddeutsche Gelenkscheibenfabrik (SGF), headquartered in Waldkraiburg, Germany, is a leading manufacturer for safety and comfort components for the automotive and other industries. SGF had for some time been struggling with poor interoperability of its various high-end CAD systems, a problem costing considerable time and money. However, since deploying the Proficiency CAD interoperability solution, SGF has achieved what many other companies are still striving for: efficient development collaboration – without having to jump through all kinds of technological hoops.

Challenges

Automobile manufacturers increasingly demand native design data in their standard formats for direct processing. This posed two major challenges for suppliers. Suppliers could use multiple CAD systems to design in each client's format. While this saved time by eliminating manual rework, it incurred high costs, prevented design reuse, and required establishing best practices for several formats. Alternatively, suppliers could adopt a single CAD system, allowing for best practices and design reuse. However, meeting OEM specifications required costly and time-consuming remastering of designs. This process involved converting geometrical data using translators like IGES or STEP and manually redesigning features, history, and metadata.

Solution

SGF decided to move forward with Proficiency. The software solution of this company – at that time still quite new in Europe – ensures feature based CAD interoperability. Proficiency's web-based software solution enables the exchange of key information for product design during the entire product lifecycle, including features, history, constraints, assembly structures, measurements, and meta data. "After converting some parts of Unigraphics to the other formats, SGF didn't waste any time choosing Proficiency," Markus Linder, project manager at Proficiency, recalled.

In addition to the considerable time and money SGF expected to be saving, another advantage of using Proficiency was that the manufacturers' quality assurance recognizes the designs exchanged by Proficiency as "native". This lets SGF adhere to its single CAD strategy, use Best Practices and also support the reuse of existing designs. "These are major issues if you want to survive in the automotive industry – a highly competitive market," Mr. Schneider pointed out.

Result

After only one year of using Proficiency, SGF's innovation has paid off. The expectations raised at the beginning of the project have already been met. As Mr. Schneider said, "No longer tied down by format issues, we are now able to turn in proposals in a flash. Proficiency plays a pivotal role in our development environment."

www.iti-global.com
info@iti-global.com
1-800-783-9199

5303 DuPont Circle
Milford, OH 45150, USA

ITI
a wipro company