



Success Story

msg and Stibo Systems

deliver the “Race Car” in Data Management



Industrial company WAGO implemented the Master Data Management (MDM) platform from Stibo Systems, but failed to take advantage of the platform’s potential. The consequence? Performance deficiencies and acceptance problems within the workforce. That’s why the company brought msg on board. This developed into a long-term partnership, crowned by many joint successes.

Customer

The WAGO Group is one of the worldwide leading suppliers of connection and automation technology as well as interface electronics. In the field of spring pressure clamping technology, the family-run company is the world market leader. WAGO products and solutions ensure safety and efficiency in industry, in railroad and energy technology, in the marine and offshore sectors, and in building and lighting technology. WAGO employs around 8,600 people and achieved sales of €1.19 billion in 2021.

The starting situation

Consolidating product information and making it available to customers and partners with high data quality is of pivotal importance to WAGO. A product information management system (PIM) is used to map the broad and sometimes complex portfolio centrally and keep this mapping up-to-date. However, when WAGO’s provider discontinued its product, a new system was needed and the decision was made in favor of Stibo Systems STEP. Because: “STEP is very well established and has excellent references,” emphasizes Karsten Urban, Head of Customer Facing IT at WAGO. Thus, WAGO began introducing

the software in the summer of 2017. Once a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) was introduced and secured, WAGO initially had to deal with some performance difficulties and acceptance problems within the workforce. The platform was usable, and access permissions had been granted. However, this generic introduction simply did not yet meet WAGO’s requirements.

WAGO needed a partner who could handle the extensive possibilities offered by the Stibo Systems solution. Contact with msg even came about directly through Stibo Systems. “msg is one of the best trained partners we have in the DACH region,” explains Sascha Orth, Head of Account Management for EMEA at Stibo Systems. That’s why he established contact between the two companies at Stibo Systems Connect Conference 2019 in Copenhagen and got the ball rolling.



“What I appreciate about msg employees is their creative, innovative thinking. We formulated questions and a week later they presented an idea.”

Thomas Brandstätter – Head of Product Experience Management at WAGO

The solution

The collaboration initially involved analyzing and optimizing product master data and maintenance processes as well as describing the roles involved in this process. One of the first steps was to conduct a “health check”. This served the purpose of identifying and listing existing problems in the implementation and use of STEP. The results were the basis for making recommendations and developing a plan for redesigning the solution. “In some cases, uncomfortable things came to light,” Urban recounts. “For example, some weak points in the data structures.” To solve these problems, the team from WAGO and msg optimized the IT architecture and the data model. For example, the number of asset types (electronic artifacts and descriptions of a product) was significantly reduced from 120 to nine, and interfaces were improved.

A new start in terms of process

In parallel, msg and WAGO worked together on the process audit. “We had pure functionality. We still had to properly model and record the process world and the workflows for the various employees,” explains Thomas Brandstätter, Head of Product Experience Management at WAGO. That’s why WAGO employees who work with the solution on a daily basis came together with the experts from msg in workshops.

Together, this working group defined the basic processes and also a responsibility matrix, roles and role systems. “It was a fresh start, you could say,” Brandstätter emphasizes. “We had a wonderful technical shell. But what we were missing was the trappings.”

The task

- Analysis of the product master data maintenance processes and description of the roles involved
- Re-engineering and optimization of the data model
- Consulting and support on master data management issues
- Improvement of workflows and maintenance processes
- Web interface modeling (Web UI) to simplify data maintenance and improve clarity
- Specification of article information
- Interface optimization
- Shortening of time-to-market for new and adapted products
- Support for data migration



“We’re fortunate to have such a partner. The cooperation is on an equal footing, we can learn from each other and the team works well. The employees on both sides are doing an excellent job.”

Karsten Urban – Head of Customer Facing IT at WAGO

Intuitive use thanks to modern web interface

Another goal and sub-project of the collaboration was to develop and introduce a new web interface. The new user interface was to be more structured and directly display the information about the product that is important. This includes reference knowledge, images and relevant documents. In addition, an optimized administrator interface (Web UI Product Experience Platform) was to enable product information to be maintained in a more intuitive way. The implementation met all the requirements of a modern, intuitive web interface in the WAGO corporate design.

The benefit

In the cooperation with msg, which has already lasted three years, WAGO achieved more intensive use of the standard STEP functions. Due to the improved interfaces, as well as the use of event processors, all data is now brought together in the web interface and can be conveniently edited. This has raised acceptance. Product managers can now see all data related to the respective product – even that from upstream systems. This has created real data transparency. Overall, the higher performance and acceptance of the solution has reduced the maintenance effort and shortened time-to-market. “Product managers now have a single point of contact to see the state

of a product,” says Urban. Guido Göbel, area manager at msg, adds: “WAGO used to have a Porsche in the garage and only took it for a spin to buy bread rolls - but now they’re really exploiting the potential.”

Outlook

These successes are just the beginning of a joint journey. For example, there are plans to automate the translation of product information into 22 languages. Another goal is also to capture the CO₂ footprint of the products. “We’re looking forward to further functionalities that the system will deliver,” says Urban. “Now we can open up new subject areas and are planning a long-term cooperation with msg to achieve this.”

Do you have questions about the project? Feel free to contact us.



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