



“When retrieving a file, an employee no longer has to wander through different file paths searching for the desired information. Instead, a quick and precise search of one or two key terms brings up the correct document instantly.”

-Jouni Akras
IM Manager,
Fläkt Woods

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Success Story

Fläkt Woods Creates a Comfortable Environment for Quality Management

Leading Worldwide Manufacturer of Air Handling Units Utilizes M-Files Easy Document Management for ISO Documentation, Supplier Management and Project Reporting

Headquartered in Switzerland, Fläkt Woods is one of the world's leading manufacturers of air handling units and air terminal devices for non-residential buildings. A global market leader in the production of ventilation systems for infrastructure and industrial facilities, the company ranks second worldwide in fan production for cement plants, tunnels, and subways. With more than 3,500 employees serving customers in 75 countries, Fläkt Woods generates over €670 million in revenue.

In 2009, Fläkt Woods realized it required a comprehensive solution for managing product designs and all other support documentation, which included CAD drawings, Word files, Excel documents, and PDFs. The company selected the M-Files easy document management solution, which proved to be a simple and effective solution for organizing and managing information and processes.

“Fläkt Woods initially utilized M-Files for the same reason as many other companies,” said Jouni Akras, IM Manager at Fläkt Woods. “We were employing a standard, ad-hoc, folder-based system for storing and managing documentation, which was inefficient and error-prone. For example, important design documents were sometimes accidentally placed into the wrong folder location, or the same file was saved in multiple places – one version on a server, and one on a workstation.”

Better Document Management through Metadata

M-Files presents a novel approach to the common problems of misplaced documents and lack of version control. The M-Files interface replaces the file-path trees -- what you find in Windows Explorer or in the application dialogue boxes when saving or opening -- with a simple set of metadata fields. Instead of clicking through folder structures to indicate a location, users simply enter keywords that define the document, such as the product or customer associated with a project, or general categories, such as which phase a document in a particular workflow is in, or its status (i.e., “waiting for approval”).

Along with date and author information, the metadata becomes the identification for the file, which is stored in one repository, or “vault.” M-Files removes the requirement to know the “location” with respect to documents.

Fläkt Woods also connected the M-Files document vault to its main customer and supplier databases. The M-Files vault tracking system ensures that files are uniquely identified without multiple versions. Simple “check-in” and “check-out” features treat



“With the ability to effectively manage our design files and other mission-critical documentation, we’ve been able to improve quality management and reduce our quality-related claims.”

-Paul Ellison

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a collaborative document like a library book – only one user at a time can modify the file, which prevents one user from overwriting another user’s edits, whether it is a 3D model or an Excel spreadsheet.

Simplicity, Ease-of-Use Drives Expansion of M-Files within Fläkt Woods

Fläkt Woods has a direct presence in 30 different countries in Europe, Asia and the United States. The company generates a huge number of documents related to manufacturing and production, ranging from design drawings, quality control documents, product reports, customer invoices and other vital business information.

“After the successful M-Files implementation in our design department, we decided to widen our M-Files deployment to other parts of the organization,” said Paul Ellison, Business IM Manager with Fläkt Woods.

In 2010, Fläkt Woods expanded its use of M-Files to its Global Infrastructure & Industry (GII) Växjö site in order to provide the foundation for enforcing consistent quality management processes and to ensure that all personnel are managing documentation according to the company’s standard operating procedures.

M-Files Helps Fläkt Woods Unit Reduce Design Errors

At its GII Växjö site, Fläkt Woods utilizes M-Files to implement process control mechanisms to ensure proper project management and document handling for ISO documentation, supplier invoice approval process automation, project reporting, and supplier agreement management. Since implementing M-Files, the GII group has seen a significant reduction in design errors due to outdated versions of documents, which has resulted in fewer claims from quality issues.

By relying on M-Files to establish and enforce document management and control processes as a key part of their quality management systems, Fläkt Woods has improved their manufacturing and production processes, enhanced collaboration internally and with their suppliers, and driven organizational efficiencies that have had a major impact on their bottom-line business objectives.

M-Files has proven to be impressive in the command it gives Fläkt Woods managers over thousands of important design and general office projects.

With M-Files, Fläkt Woods can instantly see the current stage of a particular document workflow, have a clear understanding of changes that have taken place, and can follow all interactions that have taken place with customers and suppliers. Staff members can type in a certain project number and determine where it stands in the development process just by viewing what documents have been created, and which are still in progress.

“The M-Files implementation in Fläkt Woods’ GII unit has enabled our project managers to efficiently handle the vast amount of technical, commercial and quality-related documentation associated with large commercial projects,” said Fredrik Albertson, general manager at Fläkt Woods GII Växjö. “By using M-Files to automate processes and implement strict workflow procedures on critical documents, we’ve radically reduced the number of manually introduced errors, resulting in higher quality products and improved profitability.”

About Fläkt Woods

Fläkt Woods is a leading global supplier of energy-efficient air solutions operating in both the air climate for buildings and air movement for the infrastructure and industry markets. Fläkt Woods currently employs more than 3,500 people in 30 countries. For more information about the company and its products, visit www.flaktwoods.com. ■