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Siemens automates the on-demand production of complex technical documentation on disk and hard copy

Automating processes is critical in the modern production environment. Productivity is improved, workflows run more smoothly and operations can be more tightly controlled and managed. This is especially relevant to the order-related production workflows where the provision of all of the relevant product components like hardware and software, plus the technical documentation, must be coordinated and completed together.

High quality technical documentation is a key part of the products and solutions supplied by the Siemens Industry Automation Systems Engineering business unit. On-demand production of specially tailored, highly detailed documentation on disk and hard copy is simplified by a new system that integrates Rimage disk publishing technology with the organization's SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Based in Fürth, Germany, the *Industrial Automation Systems Engineering division* of Siemens AG produces a range of industrial automation systems (SIMATIC) and industrial power supply systems (SITOP, SINVERT), as well as providing industrial control equipment, specialist training and other services

For all system components, solutions and services, Siemens supplies its customers with product specific service kits with licenses, drivers and relevant software. All of this detailed documentation is provided as multiple copies of both a hard copy manual and a set of digital CDs.

The administration and production of these product and order-related accessory kits was very time intensive and difficult to control. The key challenge was synchronizing the production processes for the printing of the manuals and the CDs. This was not easy to achieve because these production processes were run on completely separate systems, even though the end product service kit includes a printed handbook and CD with exactly the same content.

Siemens identified the need for an automated solution that could support the production processes in parallel for analogue as well as digital output onto a CD. A further issue was the large number of different service kits was pushing the existing production process to its limit.



As Horst Friedsam, Head of On-Demand Services / Printmedien / Software at Siemens AG explained: “We wanted to send all the technical documents in one go and packaged into a single service kit but we didn’t have the right solution for this. Our challenges were clear. The processes managed through our SAP ERP from the production through to the final dispatch of the product and relevant service kit needed to be optimised and coordinated.”

The tailored solution

Siemens chose OEM GmbH and Rimage Europe GmbH, the leading provider of professional CD/DVD production systems, to develop a solution that seamlessly connected the production processes for paper documentation and for digital disks with the rest of the order processing.

“We have had good working relationships with both companies and benefited from how both companies have already implemented a large number of very successful projects together”, says Friedsam.

OEM had already developed a connection between SAP and Rimage systems to enable a fully automated CD production process. This solution was refined and tailored to meet the specific requirements of Siemens.

“Rimage and OEM put together a beta version initially and the testing phase began shortly afterwards”, explained Friedsam.

The solution is called MemPhiS, an XML based system for managing modular production control and consists of different modules which allow tailoring to different processes, communication, documentation type and administration. Through an interface, the automated order import from the SAP ERP is controlled. Data is then outputted through Rimage’s CD production system and a paper printer. For the management and control of the actual production processes, OEM developed dedicated software called OrderControl. This software controls the structure of the data and feeds this information back via an order number to separate the data stream for paper print and digital production on the Rimage disc publishing system.

MemPhiS in action

Every order is received automatically from the SAP system listed in an order check file and checked to ensure all details are complete to produce the correct service kit documentation for that specific Siemens product. The check file includes customer details, product data, quantity, delivery dates and details as well as the file structure details for the CD and hard copy production processes.



The user can also input production details manually – information that is automatically added to the check file. When the production process is started, there is a final quality check. Once the order is processed and completed, CDs are packaged and dispatched and the order is recorded as completed.

Mission accomplished

Implementation of the MemPhiS has transformed the production processes for the on-demand services team at Siemens AG. Technical documentation CDs are produced on demand with relevant product-specific data in virtually in no time and with very little waste.

“The number of kits rejected on quality grounds has dramatically dropped and we don’t need to keep materials in store. We are currently looking at saving up to 50% of the time previously spent on this production process. The combination of Rimage CD production systems with the software by OEM has completely met our requirements,” says Friedsam.

About Rimage

Rimage Corporation (www.rimage.com) is the world's leading provider of optical media publishing systems, which are used by enterprises and governmental organisations to produce CD, DVD and Blu-Ray discs with customized digital content, on-demand. Rimage systems, which handle high to low optical media production volumes, integrate robotics, software and surface label printers into a complete publishing solution. In Europe, Rimage focuses on key markets and applications including medical imaging, financial institutions, broadcast, IT, manufacturing and government where its entry level to high end publishing systems solve specific challenges in archiving and digital production and create new opportunities in customer service, marketing and retailing. Founded in 1978, Rimage is listed on NASDAQ and reported \$109m revenues (2007)

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