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>
> STEPHEN MARTIN,
> SAP SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR
> BMW MANUFACTURING CORP.

BMW'S SPARTANBURG, S.C. PLANT FOSTERS EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

BMW Manufacturing Corp., based in Spartanburg, S.C., manufactures Z3 roadsters. In 1997, there were 122,467 roadsters built at this facility, which is the newest of BMW's five auto factories. There are more than 2,000 associates working at this plant, which represents a $1 billion investment. The facility is designed to focus on quality and create an easy exchange of information by placing all manufacturing processes under one roof. The Z3 roadster is a particularly popular vehicle, and an expansion under way will enable the manufacture of 400 cars per day. This $200 million dollar expansion will add more than 700,000 square feet to the existing 1.2 million square feet.

The plant design in Spartanburg facilitates a smooth flow of information, parts and knowledge through the body, paint, assembly, quality and logistics areas. Visual communication among process, quality and support functions emphasizes BMW's team-focused organizational approach.

iXOS-ARCHIVE Chosen to Streamline Processes

BMW is continuously searching for more streamlined and efficient methods to run its business. They are well known for careful planning and precision. At their Spartanburg facility, they wanted to cut down on paper processing and filing storage, enable faster data access and ensure optimum system performance. They chose iXOS-ARCHIVE™ as their imaging and archiving solution for the SAP™ R/3™ system, because of its seamless integration and breadth of functionality.

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BMW utilizes iXOS-ARCHIVE to image and store each of the six-page inspection cards that follows every Z3 roadster through the production process. Prior to iXOS implementation, if anyone wanted to see a particular inspection card, they had to physically remove it from a stored file. Stephen Martin, the SAP System Administrator, observed, "iXOS-ARCHIVE will enable us to retain and quickly retrieve any of the inspection cards of the roadsters that we have built."

Optimum system performance is necessary to maintain the high-quality standards demanded at BMW. So, iXOS-ARCHIVE is utilized to keep the system at its top running performance. The sheer volume of data in a plant such as BMW Manufacturing Corp. puts quite a load on the R/3 system. With the archiving functionality of the iXOS product suite, the BMW team doesn't have to worry about slowed down performance.

"It required practically no implementation. We've seen dramatic improvements in our materials documents' response time since we started data archiving with iXOS," Martin commented. As a result, BMW is planning to archive SD, FI, and CO data to ensure optimum system performance.

BMW's accounts payable department also utilizes iXOS-ARCHIVE by imaging all their invoices. In the past, they processed original invoice documents and then physically stored them by vendor. If there was a question on an individual invoice, accounts payable staff had to manually pull it from the stored files. With the iXOS-ARCHIVE implementation, this process has been greatly simplified. The imaged invoices are readily accessible simply by pulling the document up on the screen. Problem invoices and request for goods' receipts are routed via SAP Workflow rather than slow inter-office mail. Invoice issues that were taking an accounts payable clerk 4-5 days to

resolve, are now only taking 1-2 days. Clearly, iXOS-ARCHIVE has improved vendor relations as well as employee productivity. In addition, data security has been enabled through iXOS — when internal or external auditors need to audit, they simply retrieve data online.

"iXOS has really saved us a lot of time. We don't have to file and we no longer have to rely on the archaic inter-office mail system. Also, we used to keep our invoices in a separate storage building for safe-keeping. Now, after four weeks, the original documents are destroyed. Costs have been reduced because we don't have to pay for storage space. iXOS has really helped streamline our department's processes," said Stephanie Moss, Accounts Payable Supervisor at BMW.

Future Uses of iXOS Software, Inc.

BMW plans to utilize the archiving functionality of iXOS-ARCHIVE for sales documents eventually. Steve Martin added, "We've seen how archiving data can really keep our system from slowing down. As the volume of data increases across operations, we're going to be

archiving data in every module — sales, finance, control, etc. It makes sense; to protect your investment, archive your data."

Part of BMW Manufacturing Corp.'s vision statement is "to be an agile, efficient and flexible BMW plant" — with iXOS-ARCHIVE, that vision is being realized.

■ For More Information

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