

Microlights fully automate their processes using DDM

CSI talk to Dan King, Head of Product Development at Microlights about how DDM has helped them move away from a paper system to one that is fully electronic. Founded in 1984, Microlights specialise in designing and supplying state of the art lighting, specifically for the retail environment. With manufacturing and design in the UK, and international sales and distribution locations in Spain, France, Dubai and Lebanon, Microlights needed a solution that would provide them with a truly global approach to data management and product lifecycle management.

The Challenge: What are the main challenges you face?

Our constant investment in development inevitably leads to vast amounts of product components and project data, all of which must be managed and communicated in a controlled manner. With over 80 employees we need a robust system, sophisticated enough to deal with the amount of data we produce and with the ability to evolve with our changing needs and priorities, whilst being simple to implement and use.

Our main challenges were to collect and utilise engineering CAD data as well as data on projects, costings and communication. With the amount of information produced, quick and easy search for products and components was imperative, as was the ability to get immediate results from searches and consolidate data. We wanted to aid production by ensuring that other office departments (production, sales,) were able to gain immediate information on projects, both from a purchasing and a project management view. As a global organisation we had to ensure that any chosen solution would provide real time access to information at any time.

The Solution: Why did you choose DDM?

DDM had a viable solution that could bolt on very easily to our existing software CAD solution, Autodesk Inventor. We found it easy to install and implement and it was very easy to train staff.

DDM enabled us to have all of our data in one place, accessed easily by our engineers irrespective of where in the world they are based. DDM also enables us to keep a tight reign on our projects, and with controlled access means that we can easily oversee the design projects from a management point of view.

The Results: What results have and developments have you made since implementing DDM?

We struggled for several years, with a paper system until we implemented DDM. Data management has become second nature now, everything is stored and completed in DDM. A phased rollout through the organisation has seen it easily taken up by all of our engineers, stores and production units. We have now utilised the out of the box part numbering functionality within DDM, eliminating



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Dan King

Head of Product Development

“DDM is easy to use, easy to learn and teach and means that everything is stored in the same place by different engineers.”

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duplication by issuing numbers at the point of save.

We were able to configure DDM easily and without huge overhead costs sometimes associated with these types of requirements.

We have integrated our archaic way of completing change requests, moving from a full paper process to a complete electronic/paperless ECR process. DDM controls all of this and it works extremely well.

The Outlook – Where you go next?

Having worked with DDM for several years now, it has become an integral part of our production process and, as said before has become second nature with our engineers, production and stores departments. We have recently introduced Workflow for our projects which in typical DDM fashion was quick and easy to implement, and will further help us refine our existing workflow for even greater improvements in efficiency. Our next step is to automatically push out and import the Bill of Materials created in DDM to our MRP system. We still feel that more departments can utilise the power of DDM, but due to the amount of varying systems we have, it will take us time to roll it out to the whole company. Watch this space!

About DDM

DDM is an easy to use, multi-CAD PDM solution for Solid Edge®, IronCAD®, SolidWorks®, Creo Parametric®, AutoCAD® and Inventor®. Providing full lifecycle management and revision control of parts, models, drawings and office documents. DDM ensures that the right information is delivered to the right people at the right time.

DDM is a scalable system that grows in line with your needs. At a basic level it can be used as a file vault with simple access controls ensuring data integrity. At an advanced level it can satisfy the needs of a global multi-site organisation with document, project and process management. DDM provides a complete electronic audit trail of change and release history, helping you meet your compliance obligations.

The DDM philosophy is focused on delivering a solution to have you productive within hours, without the expensive and lengthy implementation times normally associated with PDM installations. Cost of ownership is minimised through low on-going maintenance, centralised backup and simple fast upgrades.

About CSI

CSI develop and market DDM to SME businesses globally. With over 20 resellers worldwide, we provide you with professional and local service enabling you to achieve your goals without fuss. With over 20 years' experience in the industry, we pride ourselves on our strong customer focus, professional global support, in-depth product knowledge and quick solution implementation.

For more information visit www.csi-europe.com



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For more information contact us now:

CSI Ltd

Tel: +44 (0)1635 551553

Email: info@csi-europe.com