ACTIFY'S SPINFIRE PROFESSIONAL

STREAMLINES COMMUNICATIONS FOR ROJAC

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Rojac Tooling Technologies is a key engineering partner to some of the world's top automotive and aerospace brands. Established in 1969 and based in the UK, privately held Rojac employs 50 professionals who have extensive experience in the manufacture of mould tooling, jigs and fixtures, master models, patterns and prototypes. With customers ranging from Airbus and British Aerospace, to BMW and Rolls Royce, to Formula One racing teams, the company serves a wide range of customers, each with diverse, unique needs.

All projects undertaken by Rojac are subject to extensive planning. Rojac provides the experience, technical competence, and capabilities needed to manage large, complex projects. The company offers a complete set of tooling services, including concept design; CAD modeling; prototype and development of components; design advice; rapid development tooling; prototype tooling; production tooling; inspection, and manufacturing. Its key assets are its management ability, engineering resources and technical skills.

One of Rojac's core values is its ability to streamline the product design cycle to reduce the time from concept to finished product. To consistently deliver on its promise, Rojac must be able to respond quickly at critical junctures. This poses a difficult business and operational challenge because the company must serve a wide range of customers, many of whom use a variety of design technologies, require coordination of multiple outside suppliers, and involve individuals with varied technical skill sets from different organizations.

"Our customers are not only engineers, but also purchasing people who don't have access to high-end design systems, and often don't have expertise in using CATIA or other sophisticated design software. In addition, some projects require accessing files from highly specialized software such as Delcam's PowerMill," said Duncan Blakemore, Managing Director of Rojac Tooling Technologies. "Since there are always a large number of changes, and technical questions, it is imperative that we are all able to view and evaluate the files."

"We can and do use the design files outside of design, in purchasing and tooling. Yet, even when we are not part of the engineering process, it is critical to maintain the integrity of design drawing and view them as we would in a CAD system."

Complicating matters even further, there may be multiple file formats involved. Even on a single project Rojac's customers may use more than one design software package, whether CATIA V4 and V5, or I-DEAS, or other transfer formats such as IGES. While translating such files for use in a common system is possible, that process can dramatically slow down a project.

"In our environment it is very difficult for us to share CAD files seamlessly without using SpinFire Professional," Blakemore said "Before we began using SpinFire Pro, it was not uncommon for us to receive massive

files on a tape, by post, and be forced to translate them for use in a CAD system."

"Even with the Internet and email, it is not uncommon for us to have many iterations and versions with changes going back and forth, and it can be very time consuming and costly to access current designs," Blakemore said. "From the very beginning we achieved more than a 100 percent ROI from our investment in SpinFire, and did so within days of purchasing it."

"We began using SpinFire several years ago, and during that time, one of our greatest challenges was to tap into the power of the Internet. While email and other electronic file transfer methods offered great promise, the issue for us was how to maintain control and centralization, while also improving access," Blakemore added.

Responding to this challenge, Rojac set out to provide a centralized, online system where secure, accurate design drawings could be accessed, changed, reviewed, measured, and marked up. Eager to tap into the power of the Internet, Rojac began developing an online system capable of managing large projects. The result, the Online Project Management System (OPM), was used by Rojac and its clients to facilitate design reviews and changes across multiple organizations participating in the same project, and introduced after three years of development and testing. In designing

OPM, Rojac chose SpinFire Pro as a core element to enable the viewing of CAD files.

"Since all of our projects are now being managed online, we needed to give customers secure 24-hour access to detailed, resourced timing plans, CAD data, 2D and 3D drawings, and project documentation," said Blakemore. "Within OPM we have embedded SpinFire as our viewing software within a secure area. Using OPM any number of people can simultaneously review a design when needed."

In fact, OPM was so well received that Rojac was recently given the annual World Class Toolmaker Award from the GTMA, the UK's leading industry association for gauge, toolmakers and manufacturers. The GTMA World Class Awards are held annually to highlight the quality of UK manufacturing. The GTMA recognition is exceptionally hard to achieve. The GTMA provides a systematic and rigorous method for checking the performance of each of six key areas within a company: Management, Facilities, Procedures, Experience, Organization and Customer Service. Completing the assessment involves a comparison of current practice against benchmark standards.

For Rojac, OPM has been an exceptional tool for winning and keeping business, as well as one of its best-kept secrets -- but not for long. While the Online Project Management System (OPM) began as an internal tool for managing client projects, clients quickly began asking Rojac to offer OPM as a standalone project management service. As a result, Rojac has just introduced OPMcreator as a standalone offering, to provide fast, efficient, and secure delivery of design projects for any manufacturer or toolmaker. Clients can log-in at www.opmcreator.com and manage their projects from start to finish.

SpinFire Pro is a key technology cornerstone that enables OPMcreator to provide visualizations and design review within the system.

"With SpinFire we have a very powerful tool that saves us thousands and thousands of pounds, not only by reducing the number of seats we need to purchase of expensive CAD systems, but also by trimming days or weeks from of the time required to complete a project," Blakemore said. "It is so fast that it can handle virtually any file that you throw at it. We are very proud of the development we have done to make OPM so successful, but I would have to say that SpinFire and its capabilities have also played an important role in OPM's success."

ROJAC

Actify®

Actify, Inc.
60 Spear Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415.227.3800
Fax: 415.227.3802
sales@actify.com
www.actify.com