



Global Engineering Firm Speeds Invoice Approval Process, Boosts Business Agility

Customer: Sandvik Group
Website: www.sandvik.com
Customer Size: 47,000
Country or Region: Sweden
Industry: Engineering

Customer Profile

Sandvik is a high-technology engineering group that offers advanced products based on its unique expertise in materials technology and extensive insight into customer processes.

Software and Services

- Duet Enterprise for Microsoft SharePoint and SAP Applications
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010

For more information about Duet Enterprise, go to:
www.microsoft.com/Duet
www.duet.com
www.sap.com/duetenterprise

“Microsoft and SAP have delivered exactly what they promised in Duet Enterprise. In just six weeks, we were able to optimize a key financial process by building on existing technology investments.”

Nevzat Ertan, Chief Architect, Sandvik Tooling

To more accurately assess opportunities for expansion, Sandvik Group needed to reduce the cycle times of core financial processes. By deploying Duet Enterprise, which exposes data from SAP applications in Microsoft SharePoint Server, Sandvik streamlined its invoice approval process, cutting time-to-completion in half. With a more efficient financial process workflow, the company can be more responsive to changing business needs.

Business Needs

Based in Sweden, Sandvik Group is a high-technology engineering firm. It provides tools for metalworking, machinery, and rock excavation, as well as stainless steel, special alloys, and resistance heating materials and process systems. Its operations consist of three major business areas: Tooling, Materials Technology, and Mining and Construction. Sandvik Group has 47,000 employees and its presence spans 130 countries.

Sandvik uses software from SAP to manage its enterprise resource planning (ERP) functions, including finance and accounting, sales and marketing, and operations. “We will depend heavily on

SAP,” says Ertan. “It will cover about 80 percent of our day-to-day business needs.”

To better connect its global workforce, the company also uses Microsoft SharePoint Server. Sandvik is in the process of upgrading to SharePoint Server 2010 to take advantage of content management capabilities, enterprise search, and the integration of social computing features. “We use SharePoint Server to help staff in different offices collaborate on bids, share expertise, and keep people updated about changes across our different business divisions,” says Nevzat Ertan, Chief Architect at Sandvik Tooling. “We see it as the ideal tool for collaboration.”



A number of employees, mostly concentrated in the company's finance and operations departments, rely on SAP data as part of their daily routine. However, most business users only need to log on to the system about once a week to complete transactional tasks, such as reviewing and processing invoices. Because these employees are less familiar with the features of the ERP system, they sometimes find it difficult to access the information they need to complete their tasks. This, in turn, slows down workflows and can hamper the efficiency of critical business functions, such as accounts payable management.

To improve business planning and responsiveness to changing markets, executives stressed the importance of achieving greater process efficiency. They searched for a software solution that would give users of the ERP system access to enterprise business data and processes from within an application optimized for collaboration. They needed a solution that was easy to deploy, and they wanted to minimize acquisition costs by reusing as much of their existing infrastructure as possible. "It quickly became clear to us that we needed a way to bridge SAP and SharePoint Server," says Ertan.

Solution

When Ertan and other Sandvik executives learned about Duet Enterprise for Microsoft SharePoint and SAP Applications in early 2010, they immediately sought to capitalize on the opportunity. Duet Enterprise, a solution jointly developed by Microsoft and SAP, provides interoperability between SAP business management applications and Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010. "We saw Duet Enterprise as a way to extend powerful SAP process functionality to business users

through an interface that they're already comfortable using," says Ertan.

After two weeks of testing in late 2010, Ertan initiated a pilot deployment of Duet Enterprise to a group of employees within the accounting department at its corporate headquarters. The project took a total of six weeks to complete. "Some people in the company thought there was no way we could pull off the implementation in such a short timeframe," says Ertan. "But the entire process went very smoothly and we were up and running right on schedule."

The company now uses Duet Enterprise to handle its invoice approval process. Through a dashboard interface in SharePoint Server, staff can quickly view the status and deadline dates for the invoices in their queue and click to view individual invoice files for processing. "We modified the screens to help users locate the information they need in as little time as possible," says Ertan. "And the Ribbon interface in SharePoint Server makes navigation to folders, lists, and workflows very easy."

Based on its success, Sandvik Tooling plans to deploy the solution to manage additional business processes. For example, the company will expand its use of Duet Enterprise to manage its Engineer to Order and Request for Quote processes. In the coming months, employees in the company's production unit will be able to enter price and delivery lead time information into SAP through a workflow interface in SharePoint Server 2010.

Benefits

By deploying Duet Enterprise, Sandvik has increased the efficiency of its invoice

approval process. This, in turn, has helped Sandvik streamline its procure-to-pay cycle, which means that executives can more accurately determine the availability of working capital for investment and growth.

Accelerates Time to Value

In deploying Duet Enterprise, Sandvik was able to capitalize on its existing installations of SAP ERP software and Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010. The company also relied largely on available skill sets to manage the implementation. This meant that Sandvik could quickly roll out the solution while holding down deployment costs. "Microsoft and SAP have delivered exactly what they promised in Duet Enterprise," says Ertan. "In just six weeks, we were able to optimize a key financial process by building on existing technology investments."

Increases Business Agility Through Greater Process Efficiency

Administrative staff in the company's accounting department can now access business data and processes from within SharePoint Server, which combines an intuitive interface with familiar document management, workflow, and collaboration tools. As a result, these employees can stay more productive and complete invoice approvals in less time. "Staff can now process approvals in a few clicks without even logging on to SAP," says Ertan. "Our employees are twice as fast now at performing this task through the use of Duet Enterprise. This means managers have greater visibility into the company's current financial picture, so they can make better-informed decisions."