



## SCHÜCO INTERNATIONAL

### OPTIMIZED PROCUREMENT AND STREAMLINED DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

#### QUICK FACTS

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**Kurt Trautmann**, Director IT Management, Schüco International KG

#### Company

- Name: Schüco International KG
- Location: Bielefeld, Germany
- Industry: Industrial machinery and components – building sector
- Products and services: Aluminum, steel, and vinyl systems for windows, doors, curtaining walls, and solar systems
- Revenue: €2 billion
- Employees: 5,000
- Web site: [www.schueco.com](http://www.schueco.com)
- Implementation partner: bdf consultants GmbH

#### Challenges and Opportunities

- Replace legacy systems with an integrated, comprehensive solution
- Incorporate suppliers into the product lifecycle
- Automate and digitize procurement processes
- Streamline document management

#### Objectives

- Save time and increase efficiency in procurement processes and document management
- Enable automatic creation of bills of materials

#### SAP® Solutions and Services

SAP® Product Lifecycle Management application

#### Implementation Highlights

- Excellent collaboration between Schüco and bdf consultants
- All project goals achieved
- Initiative completed within slated time frame
- High user acceptance

#### Why SAP

- Long-standing relationship with SAP
- Best-fit solution for the challenge
- Extensive existing SAP software-based landscape

#### Benefits

- Greater transparency across procurement processes
- Faster, more efficient processes
- Time taken to complete sourcing process cut from 2 days to 1 hour
- Data entry and processing time cut from 4 hours to 10 minutes
- No license fee for the solution
- Complete automation

#### Existing Environment

SAP ERP application

#### Third-Party Integration

- Database: DB2
- Hardware: IBM
- Operating system: AIX

**SCHÜCO**

When it comes to sourcing components to build complex systems, efficient processes and hassle-free communications with suppliers are key. That's why Germany-based Schüco International KG (Schüco) decided to breathe new life into its procurement, document management, and supplier collaboration processes. Leveraging the SAP® Product Lifecycle Management (SAP PLM) application, the company digitized and automated its procurement processes and associated tasks. The result? Greater efficiency, improved transparency, and faster, better results.

Founded in Bielefeld, Germany, in 1951, Schüco started out as a manufacturer of aluminum storefronts and facades. Over the years, the company evolved to become a global market leader in innovative construction systems. Schüco delivers state-of-the-art window, door, and facade technology, as well as advanced solar solutions and consulting services to architects, planners, and investors. The organization is strongly committed to reducing the impact of humans on the environment and offers energy-efficient, ecofriendly systems that fulfill user requirements while helping reduce carbon emissions. Schüco works with 12,000 partner companies in over 75 countries. With a workforce of 5,000, it recently posted revenues of €2 billion.

### Maximizing Efficiency

To provide high-quality products and services to its customers, Schüco requires a reliable IT infrastructure. Since 1999, the company has largely relied on software from SAP for this purpose. The company is gradually working toward its goal of consolidating all systems on a

single platform. "We want to streamline processes and boost efficiency across the enterprise. A sophisticated, integrated IT backbone is the key to achieving this," explains Kurt Trautmann, director of IT management at Schüco.

As part of this aim, Schüco has launched an ambitious long-term project to optimize product lifecycle management by implementing SAP PLM. This powerful software provides full support for all product-related business processes – from the initial idea, through manufacturing, to after-sales service. The motivation behind the project was to drive business growth and enable faster development of higher-quality products.

Within the scope of this initiative, Trautmann and his team decided to concentrate on two key aspects of the product lifecycle: procurement and document management. By enabling the digitization and electronic transmission of important documentation, Schüco hoped to streamline and accelerate procurement processes and shorten lead times.

### SAP Software – A Clear Winner

Given that Schüco and SAP have a long-standing business relationship, the company was eager to deploy an SAP solution to meet this challenge. But to be 100% sure that they were making the right choice, Trautmann and his coworkers evaluated offerings from several competitors. The verdict: "There was no real contest. SAP was the only vendor on the market that could meet our complex requirements."

After hearing about the company's plans, professionals from SAP Consulting suggested that Schüco team up with bdf consultants GmbH. "We were keen to follow up on this recommendation and were impressed with the expertise bdf consultants could offer," explains Trautmann.

Headquartered in Düsseldorf, bdf consultants has extensive experience with SAP products. With its focus on planning, implementation, and optimization of IT environments, combined with expertise in supply chain and product lifecycle management, bdf consultants was the ideal implementation partner for Schüco.



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## A Solution to Fit the Bill

After evaluating Schüco's needs, bdf consultants proposed introducing its document control center. This package comprises standard SAP PLM functionality for lifecycle data management and lifecycle process support, plus consulting expertise from bdf consultants.

The document control center includes comprehensive support for product definition and design, idea management, creation of virtual material masters, document management, CAD integration, and supplier collaboration. It helps companies improve procurement processes by enabling the secure, digital transmission of complex technical drawings and product specifications and the automatic creation of bills of materials. This allows suppliers to access an at-a-glance view of the components that will be required for a particular project. They can automatically compare requirements with their inventory – and ensure timely delivery to Schüco.

## A Strong Team

Representatives from Schüco and bdf consultants set out a detailed road map

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Stephan Manegold, Manager, Business Applications, Schüco International KG

and defined a timeline for the project. “Completion was slated for one year after kickoff. And thanks to the excellent support from bdf consultants, all deadlines were met,” explains Stephan Manegold,

manager of business applications at Schüco. bdf consultants employed a standard implementation methodology comprising design, development, implementation, and test phases. “It was a successful approach and the entire project ran without a hitch,” confirms Manegold.

The implementation partner was responsible for the lion's share of tasks but Schüco's own IT people were on hand to describe company-specific needs. “bdf consultants are experts in the field of product lifecycle management so we were very glad to have them on board,” remarks Manegold. “What's more, our teams worked very well together – the collaboration was efficient.”

## Total Transparency, Faster Processes

Since the solution went live, Schüco has seen great improvements in its procurement and document-management processes. “We can work more productively and a great deal faster,” explains Manegold. “In the past, we had to print technical drawings and mail hard copies to suppliers. Now, we can send them digitally – quickly and securely, and with push-button simplicity.”

The document control center has replaced slow manual tasks with smooth, automated processes, saving Schüco valuable time and reducing the scope for errors. What's more, suppliers are more tightly

integrated into Schüco's business processes, giving them a clearer view of material requirements and improving collaboration.

Thanks to the new solution, Schüco has cut the time it takes to complete the process of sending requests to multiple suppliers from two days to just one hour. “In addition, we've reduced the time it takes to enter and process associated data from four hours to a mere ten minutes,” adds a satisfied Manegold.

Another plus for Schüco was the high user acceptance. “We adopted a train-the-trainer approach to skills transfer, which proved very successful. Our staff became accustomed to using the new software extremely quickly,” says Trautmann. “The document control center combines SAP technology with consulting and implementation expertise from bdf consultants. The solution has brought a host of benefits and meets our needs perfectly.”

## Future Plans

Trautmann and his team are now forging ahead with the larger SAP PLM implementation – again with the support of bdf consultants. The company's ongoing goal is to continue to streamline product lifecycle management and optimize its SAP software landscape. Going forward, Schüco would like to extend the solution to a greater number of suppliers. And the company is also considering establishing a collaboration portal to further enhance communications across the entire supply chain. “If possible, we would like to continue our successful partnership with bdf consultants and work with them on future engagements,” remarks Manegold.



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