

AgustaWestland

AgustaWestland cuts service response times from six weeks to six minutes—with the Micro Focus business process management (BPM) solution.



Overview

AgustaWestland, the Anglo-Italian helicopter company owned by Italy's Finmeccanica, is a total capability provider in the vertical lift market.

Its operations are spread globally across Europe, North America and the Asia/Pacific region. Despite a general economic down-turn, AgustaWestland revenues were EUR 3,480 million in 2009, up EUR 445 million (+15%) on the EUR 3,035 million reported the previous year.

The company delivers unrivalled mission capability to military and commercial operators around the world and has over 14,000 employees, 4,000 of which are in the UK.

Challenge

AgustaWestland has a long history of strong product development, historically centered on rotary-wing aircrafts. Over the years a

combination of solutions were developed to support the management of point issues and communication with customers and suppliers. These solutions could not meet expanding business requirements and the main challenges reported included:

- **Changing responsibility:** The company was rapidly growing its support organization taking on full responsibility for aircraft serviceability and aircraft availability for customers being charged per flying hour. On average, each repair was taking three weeks to contract and report on and then the response took a further three weeks. As the processes related to repair operations were unstructured and manual, changes to contracts made it difficult to respond to multiple service requests simultaneously.
- **Labor intensive:** When issues arose as part of the day to day flying activities, the company followed a number of manual process steps, including scoping and quoting each piece of work, which inevitably meant delays and prevented technical advice being passed to customers quickly.
- **Lack of visibility and control:** Manual activities made it hard to track the owners of active queries and the progress made on them.

"It was very powerful to be able to show the art of the possible within a week rather than having to wait three months to see a solution."

ROB GIDDINGS

ICT
AgustaWestland



At a Glance

- **Industry**
Manufacturing
- **Location**
Europe
- **Challenge**
The organization needed to replace its solution that supported the management of point issues and communication with customers and suppliers.
- **Products and Services**
Solutions Business Manager (SBM)
- **Success Highlights**
 - + Reduced service request response times—from six weeks to six minutes
 - + Gained user confidence by delivering a prototype in one week and an implemented solution in nine weeks
 - + Achieved process visibility and insights into bottlenecks
 - + Created a reusable solution for additional programs

"We've got a solution on time, to budget, that works."

TONY MATTRAVERS

Project Manager
AgustaWestland

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- **Funding:** Any change made to the existing method of working was always going to be a challenge as it would mean stepping outside of the corporate portfolio.
- **Constrained extensibility:** The existing way of working supported the Sea King and Merlin helicopter programs. The automated portion of this provided some efficiencies but cloning the technology for upcoming programs meant replicating the complete solution rather than being able to re-use components. It was initially estimated that 400 person hours would be required just to provide the same solution for one other program, with similar requirements for every other project that came on board.

Solution

AgustaWestland chose the Micro Focus BPM solution, Micro Focus Solutions Business Manager (SBM), to automate and streamline processes around its repair operations. SBM's ability to deliver reusable process-based solutions, detailed audit trails, and metrics to identify bottlenecks were huge benefits.

AgustaWestland was greatly impressed by the Micro Focus technical team during the initial qualification and planning stages. Preliminary architectural work was critical in ensuring that the project was kept tied together and that the end-state was considered while creating the design. Integration with existing systems was also important and SBM's ability to support this through a variety of means including web services was a vital part of the selection process.

Rapid Solution Prototyping Helps Gain Stakeholder Confidence

Phase One of the project covered the Lynx program at AgustaWestland and MoD sites in the UK. Phase Two includes the Apache, Merlin and Sea King programs, covering AW facilities in the UK, Italy, and USA.

The previous system had five processes per program. The design was evaluated and would have meant five new designs, but the use of SBM's sub-processes meant that the new design needed just two processes to be configured with sub-selections for each one. The initial work consisted of building two Micro Focus processes to manage Aircraft Parts and Publications. The configuration has been designed to grow to up to fifteen processes without any re-engineering.

Results

By automating the process with SBM, the time to respond to service requests was reduced from 6 weeks to 6 minutes. As soon as the "send" button is hit, it lands in an engineer's queue to begin work. In addition to helping identify bottlenecks, SBM provides reports on individual performance, helps zero in on causes for delays, identifies reasons for not being able to service a request, and surfaces trends in operations. If commitments are not being met, it is easy to produce the evidence.

Having one source of technical information makes it far more convenient to know where things are in the process, how long they have taken, and how contracts have performed. All responses and advice are now electronic.

All documents used in correspondence are stored in a central repository rather than being attached to emails. Information is automatically tagged with a unique reference number thereby making it easier to retrieve when responding to queries. Tony Mattravers, Project Manager, said "We've got a solution on time, to budget, that works."

The most important benefits to the business include being able to perform "what-if analyses" and spot bottlenecks before they become a problem.

AgustaWestland has also seen new benefits through capabilities that were previously unavailable. Multiple data sources are now integrated as part of the process; this has enabled proactive planning rather than merely looking at point solutions. When a requirement arrives, it is easy to identify what other data sources need to be joined up with it and what else might be useful to tackle together.

The solution has also been a benefit to the management of Service Level Agreements in place with customers, as prioritization and response times can now be easily tracked against pre-defined targets and deadlines.

Rob Giddings, AW ICT, says, "The relationship between AgustaWestland and Serena (now part of Micro Focus) team members has ensured that we have the knowledge to continue to support the solution internally and can adequately support the business. It is important for me that we've been able to do that so we can provide better service and support to the business."