

Continental AG

Micro Focus® UCMDB delivers transparency across software and infrastructure components.

Overview

To move quickly on new opportunities, Continental AG needs to encourage collaboration between departments, share information and roll-out process best practice. Universal CMDB software provides a single source of data across the business, delivering transparency and consistency.

Challenge

Continental AG is a German industrial powerhouse. It has 178,000 employees in 49 countries and reported sales of €33.3 billion for 2013. The business is split into two divisions: automotive and rubber. Although the latter is arguably the most high profile, making high-quality tires under the Continental brand for manufacturers worldwide, it is the €20 billion automotive division where the most opportunity lies, it being well placed to capitalize on four megatrends

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STEPHAN DIETZ

Service Asset and Configuration Management
Continental

within the automotive sector: safety, environment, information and affordability.

To do so Continental needs a consistent and agile IT infrastructure. To move quickly on new opportunities, the business needs to encourage collaboration between departments, share information and roll-out best practice processes.

Continental has a two-tier IT infrastructure. Each division has its own local IT teams, attending to day-to-day IT issues. There is also a corporate IT team, working across the organization. Within this 350-strong department there is a specialist team focused on quality and processes.

“We have a group of 30 employees looking at service management, including six process owners,” says Stephan Dietz, process owner service asset and configuration management, Continental. “But it is a big challenge to establish best practice globally. There are many cultural differences, in addition it can be difficult to physically visit every location.” The company wanted to transform IT delivery, integrating a service orientated approach to IT.

“We’re developing a service culture,” says Dietz, “but we’re not there yet. Senior management understands that we need a service approach



At a Glance

■ Industry

Automotive

■ Location

Hanover, Germany

■ Challenge

Undertake a global IT-wide configuration management project to provide insight into the IT infrastructure and its service dependencies as a basis for all ITSM processes.

■ Products and Services

Configuration Management System

■ Results

- + Provided a single source of reliable data across IT, ensuring a repository of information for service design and service modelling
- + Improved visibility and transparency of service assets (hardware/software) and their relationships to delivered services

“We’re in a much better position to do risk assessments. We now have a clear picture of the impact a change might have across the business, or how a particular business service may be affected. Micro Focus Universal CMDB really helps us with incident and change management.”

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Process Owner Service Asset and Configuration Management
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to get the most out of collaboration and supplier management. For instance, outsourcing can only work with service orientated thinking.”

To achieve this Dietz and his team embarked on a configuration management process in late 2011. The aim was to deliver complete transparency across software and infrastructure components, along with associated relationships and dependencies.

Solution

“We decided a long time ago we were going to work closely with Micro Focus,” says Dietz. “We already have Micro Focus Service Manager and Asset Manager, so it was logical to review Universal CMDB as a candidate for configuration management. As expected, all the solutions are closely integrated.”

Continental appointed an internal manager to oversee the implementation, but Dietz admits the support from Micro Focus Partner Materna, was key. “Materna understands our organization. They have a relationship with us, they know our culture, and know how to work effectively with the team.”

To begin, the configuration project focused on three business critical applications: messaging, CEOS (a purchasing and ordering process) and core (a tire R&D application).

“We developed a prototype against these three applications, showed the benefits to the business, then rolled out to the global organization,”

says Dietz. “The priority was usability before completeness.”

Results

The Universal CMDB roll-out was completed in mid-2013. “It’s nice now to have one consolidated source for all data,” says Dietz. “Data is the hub of IT. All information is now federated.”

The next phase is to extract more meaning from the data. “This is a key feature of configuration management. Previously we had to do manual modelling—with Micro Focus Universal CMDB this can be automated. This will allow us to create clear guidelines on how objects are related, to be transparent and to share best practices,” comments Dietz.

Universal CMDB is also helping Continental develop a coherent software strategy and engage Micro Focus on data modelling.

“We’re in a much better position to do risk assessments,” says Dietz. “We now have a clear picture of how any change might impact across the business, how a particular tool might respond or how a business service may be affected. Universal CMDB really supports incident and change management.”

The result is a business more engaged with IT. “For the first time we’re seeing business units coming to us, demanding more from IT,” says Dietz. “They expect to see IT infrastructure delivered as a service.”