efcom

Solutions Business Manager (SBM) drives efficiency and transparency in key customer requirement and development processes.

Overview

Perfectly adapted to internal processes and structures, the efcom range of software solutions cover the requirements of complex factoring concepts. These solutions allow for the control of high volumes of receivables and provide data for the strategic and operational management of a company.

Challenge

As one of efcom's own client's eloquently puts it: "In the factoring industry: time is money" and efcom is dedicated to the timely delivery of solutions which are customized to its individual clients and support efficient process management. It is important therefore that efcom's own software development processes are equally robust. This was not always the case, as Mr

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FLORIAN HINSE
Assistant Director
efcom

Florian Hinse, Assistant Director at efcom, explains: "Our software development process was not very sophisticated. We weren't very good at following through the development cycle in the correct order and, although the key steps were obviously managed and some tooling help was available, the overall process was time-consuming and error-prone."

He added: "As the company and our customer base grew, we realized we needed support in this area. Because our products are customized we produce unique release notes for each clients, explaining the features of the add-on modules they have chosen. We would sometimes find these notes missing from the final release and we felt the overall software quality could be improved too. The solution was not to add more people to a manual process; we wanted a scalable, automated process to take us into the future."

Solution

With previous experience of Serena, efcom evaluated Solutions Business Manager (SBM), a leading process management platform for IT development and operations, designed to orchestrate and integrate processes across an organization. Through a number of in-depth workshops delivered by Micro Focus, efcom felt well-supported to implement SBM.

At a Glance

■ **Industry**
Software and Technology

■ **Location**
Germany

■ **Challenge**
Improve solution quality and customer satisfaction by replacing a time-consuming and error-prone manual software development process.

■ **Products and Services**
Micro Focus Solutions Business Manager

■ **Success Highlights**
+ Improved customer satisfaction through higher quality solutions
+ Full transparency promotes team collaboration
+ Real-time reporting supports decision-making
+ A flexible solution which can easily adapt to changing requirements

It took some time to convert all the development processes into automated SBM workflows, but once this was done, SBM started paying dividends. As Mr Hinse explains: "When clients request new features or bug fixes, this is analyzed via a workflow and the entire development tracking, testing, and delivery is managed through SBM."

Development processes are clearly displayed step-by-step, preventing any shortcuts to be made. Mr Hinse particularly likes the transparency SBM has given efcom: "We work with a central calendar to get a unified view into all the scheduling events across projects and everyone always knows what they're supposed to be doing. I personally don't have an IT or development background, but using the intuitive SBM Work Center interface is no problem at all for me and enables me to generate real-time reports I use for status meetings. The My Activity view and Dashboard features give a visual data view which we were missing when we had to use spreadsheets to gather and present the information."

The low-code/no-code developer utility, SBM Composer, is used by efcom to quickly map out work management processes and define supporting steps in the process. With strong integration options and rich decision capabilities, efcom can now more rapidly deliver new features to its customers.

SBM enables efcom to run software development workflows following a defined structure, so that current status is always clear and all relevant data is taken into account. With an ever-increasing number of customers and products to support, transparency was a key requirement for efcom.

Results

The efcom solutions are updated on a quarterly basis and every two years there is a major release. To support this release schedule without adding development staff, efcom now operate an SBM-powered integrated software development lifecycle which has automated key processes.

Mr Hinse comments: "Using SBM we have introduced a rigorous development process to manage our increasing workload. This ensures all steps are followed and risk is minimized which improves the solution quality we deliver to our customers. We wanted a flexible solution which could be easily adapted when requirements change, as they invariably do, and SBM has given us just that."

He concludes: "We now have full transparency and insight into our development processes. Our team members love how user-friendly SBM is and the visual reporting capabilities really help us in our day-to-day work. The latest SBM version has new features which we look forward to exploring. Micro Focus has been with us every step of the way and with their support we feel ready for the future."

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