

CASE STUDY

AIRBUS CIMPA



AIRBUS-CIMPA continuously improves portfolio management with Planview

Planview Enterprise enables AIRBUS-CIMPA to manage resources and activities for a portfolio of several hundred projects. The system provides up-to-date management information dashboards to project and resource managers. In addition it supports the process of continuous improvement which is an integral part of CMMi.

The Environment

AIRBUS-CIMPA was formed in 1995 from the research centre of Aerospatiale and since 2003 has been a subsidiary of Airbus. It is a service company specialising in computer-integrated manufacturing and industrial data processing, based on the disciplines of PLM (Product Lifecycle Management). The organisation has experienced rapid growth, from 20 staff in 1995 to more than 550 at the end of 2006 and a sales turnover close to 75 M€, part of which comes from subsidiary companies Germany and Britain.

AIRBUS-CIMPA is involved in designing, supporting, advising on and developing software for computer aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) and PLM in a range sectors including: aeronautics, automotive, defence, energy, engineering, space and transport. In aeronautics, one of the company's specialist sectors of, the production cycle goes from concept through to the launch of a plane, including design, production and the creation of virtual models.

The Challenge

Each year AIRBUS-CIMPA undertakes several hundred the projects, the largest involving third party maintenance for CAD/CAM tools and AIRBUS information systems. In addition, the company is committed to CMMi (Capability Maturity Model Integration). It is already certified to Level 2, with an objective to reach Level 3 in 2007. The advance will bring with it improved control of fixed price software

projects, leading to an improvement in quality, a reduction in cost and better achievement of deadlines.

It was in this context that the organisation decided to acquire a Project Portfolio Management system.

"For software development, we had a real need for a tool across our various platforms in Paris and Toulouse operating as thin clients across the Internet," explains Gérald Bidault, of DSI d' AIRBUS-CIMPA.

A single tool for all group projects, not a departmental tool, was essential to manage "critical" projects. The tool would be required to act equally well for activity planning as well as for the overall control of projects. In addition, the company wished to be able to monitor its maintenance projects in terms of both time and resource utilisation.

"We wanted to improve our control of projects, to control the delivery times and the utilisation of the resources",

Gérald Bidault, Information Systems:
AIRBUS-CIMPA

The Implementation

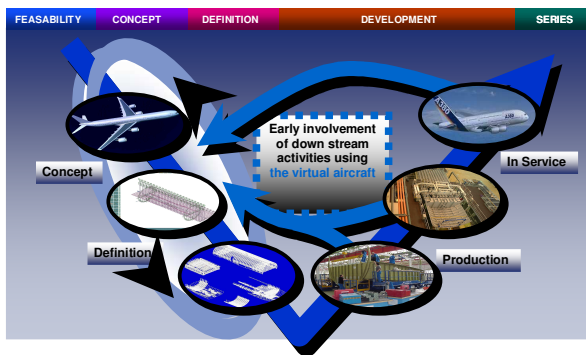
After researching available solutions during 2002/3, AIRBUS-CIMPA selected Planview Enterprise, which was the best match to their requirements. Planview was initially used by 80 staff involved in system maintenance, the main area of operation AIRBUS-CIMPA. Today, Planview is used by all 650 operational staff, including 250 sub-contractors and 80 Project Managers involved in 400 fixed-price contracts a year.

To facilitate staff adoption of the new tool, working groups from the various departments involved were created.

" The control of such radical change is essential to gain acceptance of the solution. Overall, it is necessary to

understand not only the requirements of operational staff, but also those of the specialist skills that need to be brought together", emphasises Gérald Bidault. "We started with planning and time reporting so that we could understand the capabilities of the system progressively. Planview Enterprise is very complete in terms of its capabilities: it is necessary to implement it progressively, so that one can understand its full capabilities."

Planview has also been integrated with corporate information systems such as CRM and Finance. For example, when a new customer contract is accepted in the CRM system, a project is generated automatically in Planview. Information is then captured via the Planview timesheets which are interfaced with the accounts system in order to create invoices.



Development cycle

The Results

After only 6 months valuable results were realised and after a year, operations staff were routinely using the system, capturing all of their activities in Planview Enterprise. Prior to this, information was collected manually by a dedicated member of staff with the attendant risks of errors and a consequential extra work that this creates.

The status of all activities is collected in Planview to give a consolidated view within the application. This improves project control by highlighting possible delays in the project portfolio and the impact on strategic initiatives.

These benefits are particularly important in fixed price contracts: it is necessary to take into account the large number being delivered progressively, which makes resource control very complicated. When a new project is created, templates defined in Planview are used to automatically create tasks and resource budgets appropriate to the client requirements. Resource managers and project leaders need only validate the data. A process which is assisted by standard workflows held within the system. In addition, all the data collected is consolidated and presented via dashboards to project directors, operations directors and resource managers.

The Outlook

In association with Planview consultants, AIRBUS-CIMPA continues to develop its portfolio management processes by integrating reporting, project control, risk management and the approach to CMMi. In particular Planview is assisting in achieving Level 3 certification using the Enterprise Portfolio Management module which focuses on future projects with a range of control measures, performance indicators, review of portfolios and risks tracking.

"Planview Enterprise is used to support continuous process improvement", comments, comments Gérald Bidault. "The Planview consultancy team has helped us in the overall approach we are taking and in the definition of Key Performance Indicators (KPI)."

Conclusion

Planview is a key tool in the Information Systems Department. Four years after implementation it is in daily use by operational staff and, at the touch of a button, it gives management staff access to tailored information about the status of all projects.

The use of Planview has extended beyond its original scope – the management of projects and resources. The Finance, Purchasing and the Information Systems Departments use it and benefit from the analysis of information provided by Planview.

For companies considering acquiring portfolio management software, Gerald Bidault advises.

"Define and consolidate users' needs before and after the purchase; demonstrate how the product meets their present and anticipated needs as well as how it will support the capacity to reach a higher level of maturity"