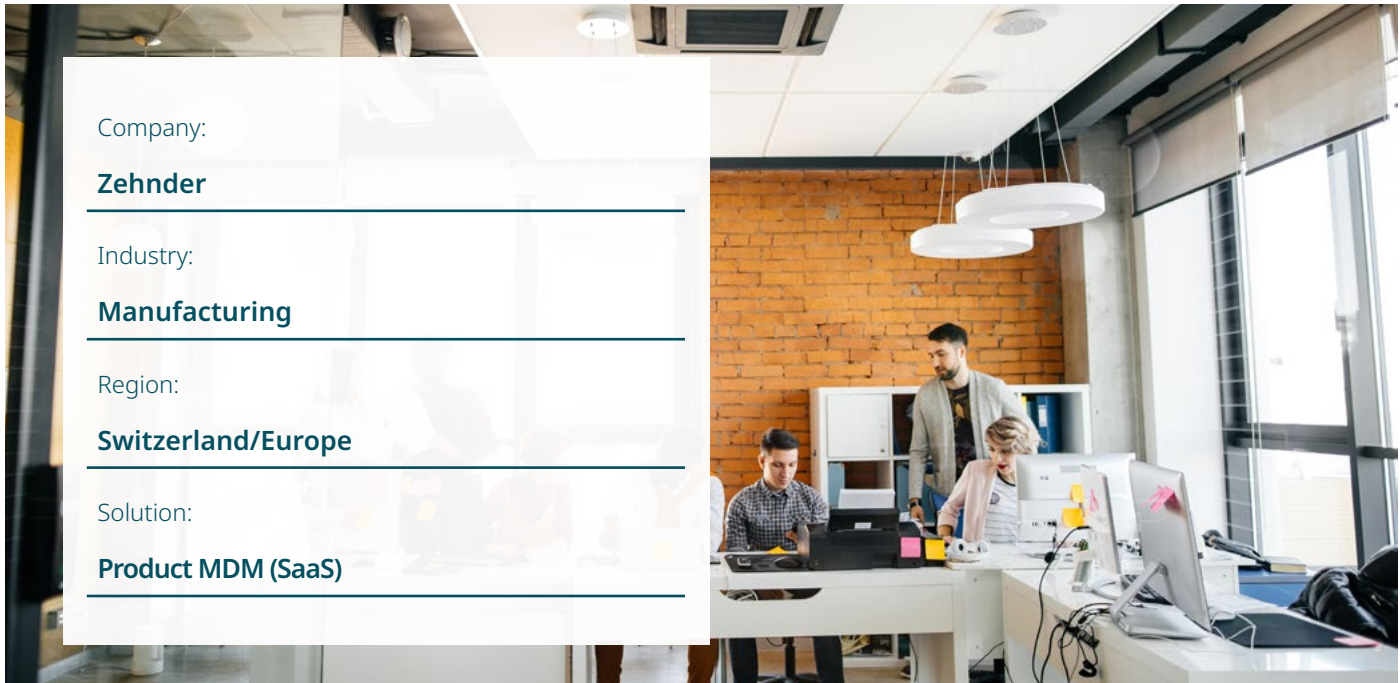


■ System Integration with MDM as the Backbone System Enhances Data Accuracy and Processes



Company:

Zehnder

Industry:

Manufacturing

Region:

Switzerland/Europe

Solution:

Product MDM (SaaS)

Executive Summary

Zehnder is a Swiss manufacturer specializing in indoor climate systems (comprising ventilation and radiators). The company counts around 4,000 employees and operates production plants across Europe, North America and China. Its products are accessible in over 70 countries.

Within Zehnder, approximately 20,000 material masters reside in their SAP system, accompanied by about 75 configured materials, each with several million configuration variants.

Since 2013, Zehnder has employed a Stibo Systems solution for managing product information, facilitating tasks such as website content updates and data sheet maintenance. Organic growth led to a fragmented data architecture, prompting a need to reconsider and overhaul the entire data management setup. The objective was to establish connections between disparate systems, enhancing overall operational efficiency.

The Business Impact

Faster and more reliable data delivery

By transitioning from a standalone, manually maintained system to a more integrated product information management (PIM) system, Zehnder has enhanced efficiency in handling product configurations, data updates and exports. The implementation of an integrated PIM system has allowed to streamline data processes, resulting in a reduction in the time required to deliver data to customers.

Concerning data accuracy and consistency, the integration of systems and optimization of processes have played a crucial role. A centralized PIM now serves as a single source of truth for product information, effectively minimizing errors and discrepancies. Adhering to PIM principles, the streamlined data exports have become faster and more reliable.

With improved connectivity as a key objective, the centralized PIM is built on an open master data management (MDM) platform, facilitating better integration among various tools and applications. This, in turn, allows for smoother data flows. The integrated solution has significantly heightened data visibility, making it easier to comprehend and troubleshoot data flows within the organization.

Challenge

Stand-alone PIM and manual processes

"We needed to reduce time to market. In a complex system landscape and with a growing number of data-consuming systems, maintaining data quality in a stand-alone system was not sustainable." - Oxana Vashchina, PIM Solutions Lead at Zehnder

A stand-alone PIM with an elaborate connection to CMS was hindering growth and efficiency.

Data maintenance was largely manual. Marketing organisations were making requests for information to be available on the website. In absence of clearly defined processes this could easily take a couple of days.

Attempts to connect existing systems revealed difficulties in aligning SAP and PIM data structures.

As far as delivery of datasets to the trading platforms, the arduous data preparation process extended over months, and some marketing teams resorted to local PIM systems, but SAP data manipulation remained manual. Extraction of SAP data could be spread over several weekends - because of the data preparation for configured items.

The introduction of new applications further highlighted the need for a comprehensive and more automated solution.

Solution

System integration with centralized master data management

Zehnder chose Stibo Systems' Master Data Management (MDM) to manage their product data more efficiently. The criteria for this choice included system flexibility without extensive programming, cloud offering, existing modules covering Zehnder's use cases, and the ability to support a small internal team.

Zehnder transitioned from the stand-alone PIM solution to an integrated system built on the MDM in 2021. The new system, that included a MongoDB adapter and other modules, facilitated connectivity to consuming systems, such as the website, allowing quick implementation and seamless data delivery. Update of SAP data (also for configured products) is now happening automatically, so that the data is available to the consumers at a press of a button.

As part of the system revamp, Zehnder migrated to Software as a Service (SaaS) to ensure continuous system performance, scalability and simplified core system administration. The advantages of continuous upgrades and quarterly releases include staying updated with the latest features, enhancements and cloud technologies.

In the near future, Zehnder is looking into enhancing the PIM-DAM (digital asset management) connection to streamline the structures between the two systems.

Results

Time and cost efficiency

Having centralized data in the open-platform MDM has significantly improved agility at Zehnder because data is enriched and delivered to various consuming systems much quicker and more securely. Benefits include better data quality, common understanding of data objects and increased transparency. The MDM project has enabled employees across departments to speak the same language.

The basic achievement is the establishment of a single source of truth with broad connectivity capabilities. This has resulted in:

- Time and cost efficiency through centralization
- Quicker time-to-market
- Faster onboarding of new products
- Preparation of data within shorter timeframes
- Easy access to product data for product managers

Regarding the question of what would have been the consequences of not implementing an MDM solution, Oxana Vashchina, PIM Solutions Lead at Zehnder, answered: "That was no option at all. The MDM is already one of the backbone systems, and its importance will only grow over time because the data needs are growing."

“ We decided for Stibo Systems because we needed system flexibility without having to program every feature; and it had to be operable by a small team. Therefore, a system with pre-configured modules that covered our use cases was of great value, as was the cloud offering”.

— Oxana Vashchina, Group IT PIM Solutions Lead, Zehnder Group International AG

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About Stibo Systems

Stibo Systems, the master data management company, is the trusted enabler of data transparency. Our solutions are the driving force behind forward-thinking companies around the world that have unlocked the strategic value of their master data. We empower them to improve the customer experience, drive innovation and growth and create an essential foundation for digital transformation. This gives them the transparency they require and desire – a single, accurate view of their master data – so they can make informed decisions and achieve goals of scale, scope and ambition. Stibo Systems is a privately held subsidiary of the Stibo A/S group, founded in 1794, and is headquartered in Aarhus, Denmark. More at stibosystems.com.