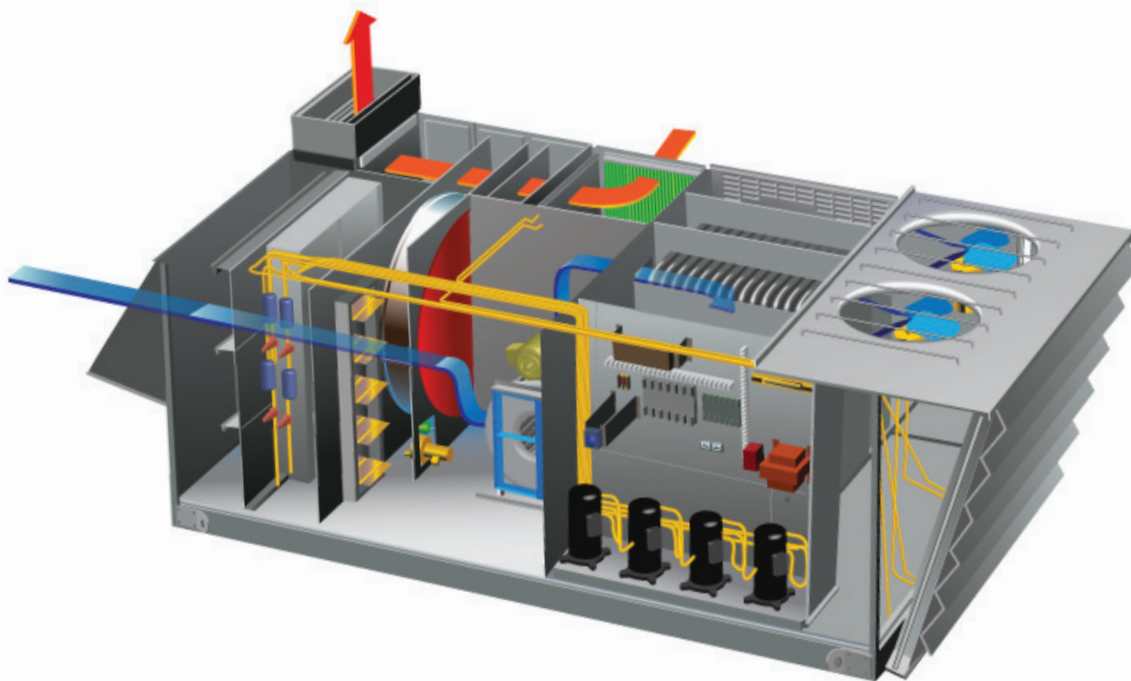


Munters Corporation

CONNECTING A GLOBAL DEHUMIDIFICATION BUSINESS WITH SOLIDWORKS ENTERPRISE PDM



By implementing SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software across its global organization, Munters streamlines the development of its dehumidification and climate control systems.

CHALLENGE:

Integrate design groups on three continents to improve collaboration, increase efficiency, and streamline global product development.

SOLUTION:

Implement SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software to establish one large, interconnected organization and standardize product development on a global scale.

RESULTS:

- Streamlined global development processes
- Increased design reuse worldwide
- Reduced design check-in errors by 25 percent
- Realized more efficient resource utilization

Munters Corporation is the world leader in dehumidification, providing energy-efficient air treatment solutions and restoration services based on expertise in humidity and climate control technologies. Until 2007, the company's Dehumidification Division developed products through separate design groups for each market. To create a more streamlined global enterprise, management of the Dehumidification Division decided to evaluate the potential for using a product data management (PDM) system to connect design groups based in Sweden, China, and three locations in the United States – Massachusetts, Texas, and Virginia.

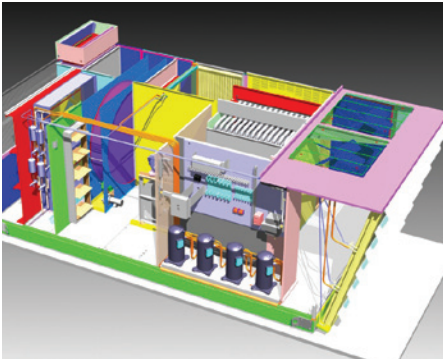
"We were charged with first confirming that a PDM system would increase efficiency, result in greater design reuse, and improve resource utilization, and secondly with choosing the best PDM solution to meet our needs," explains Monty Yates, a designer at the Munters facility in Texas, who served on the selection committee. Yates had also been part of the team that selected SolidWorks® CAD software as the official Munters design package in the late 1990s.

"We needed a solution that would allow us to combine all of our engineering teams into one large, interconnected group. In addition, we wanted to be able to share designs, standardize portions of our products globally, and build products wherever it made sense," Yates notes.

After investigating available PDM solutions during a six-month evaluation process, Munters chose SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software because it is easy to use, requires minimal training, uses open source code, and supports design configurations. The company also appreciated that the software is supported by SolidWorks reseller CAPINC, and is backed by the corporate strength of Dassault Systèmes.

“If a product that used to be made only in Europe is now going to enter the US market, we can access the same data and follow the same workflow for production.”

Monty Yates, Designer



Using SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software, Munters has increased design reuse, improved product quality, and enjoyed higher levels of productivity.

Linking global product development via PDM

Transforming several separate, autonomous product development groups into a single global organization requires a PDM system that provides tight revision control, consistent design information, and reliable replicating functionality. With SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software, the system replicates data daily from each of the five locations to the primary SQL Server™ vault in Massachusetts, providing designers anywhere in the world with access to the most current product design information.

“Before we implemented our PDM system, each group had a different approach for describing and tracking parts,” Yates recalls. “In Texas, we used an Excel spreadsheet. But even here, people had their own methods for describing parts, which really got in the way of finding and reusing the most current design information. We are now PDM-driven, which means everyone must select from the same set of description parameters for a part and use the same global part-numbering system. This makes all of our design data more uniform and easier to locate using our PDM system’s search capabilities.”

Collaboration drives quality, improves efficiency

By implementing SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software, Munters has increased design reuse, improved product quality, and enjoyed higher levels of productivity. The company has compressed its development cycles, reduced design check-in errors by 25 percent, and streamlined communications among designers, engineers, and manufacturing personnel.

Yates explains, “With PDM, we have instituted a formal workflow – with the same management approvals required before a product is released to manufacturing – on a global scale. If a product that used to be made only in Europe is now going to enter the US market, we can access the same data and follow the same workflow for production.”

Manufacturing personnel, who frequently iterated with engineers over paper 2D drawings, can now use the SolidWorks Enterprise PDM Viewer to access, view, and rotate models to acquire basic information. “We still get questions from time to time, but not nearly as many because the shop can get the basic details from the model using our PDM system,” Yates adds.

Maximizing resource utilization for greater flexibility

One of the more important benefits Munters has realized from the implementation of SolidWorks Enterprise PDM software is the flexibility afforded by an interconnected global product development organization. For example, shipping charges are lower to the West Coast of the United States from Texas than from Massachusetts or Virginia. With a global PDM system, Munters has transferred some of its West Coast orders to its Texas facility. Similarly, the company can transfer work from one overloaded facility to another plant that is running under capacity because of the flexibility of its PDM system.

To realize even greater automation and efficiency, Munters also plans to tie its SolidWorks Enterprise PDM system into its Glovia Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software.



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