

TOP TO BOTTOM

we know

they know

END TO END

SEZ cleans up with integrated solutions from SAP and IBM Business Consulting Services

Headquartered in Villach, Austria, SEZ AG (www.sez.com) is a leading supplier of wet wafer surface preparation equipment for the global semiconductor manufacturing industry. SEZ's products are used for cleaning and preparing silicon or gallium arsenide wafers for microchip production.

SEZ operates development, manufacturing, sales, marketing and service organizations in Europe, Asia and North America, and has been listed on the Swiss Stock Exchange since 1996.

SEZ had grown rapidly by utilising industry trends and gaining market share, a high-growth strategy that was straining the company's IT infrastructure. With Group companies opened in Europe, North America, Japan and Asia-Pacific, the Company needed its own, uniform standards for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), and its own set of software tools. Different IT systems used at different locations made it necessary for SEZ to maintain numerous interfaces between otherwise incompatible IT systems.

Hannes Sandtner, SAP Project Manager for SEZ, explains: "We had

multiple accounting, billing and payment systems in different locations, and there was no real connection between them. Since we were growing rapidly, we felt that the situation might become difficult to support in the future. We therefore aimed to implement a single solution across all divisions and geographies, in order to remain flexible and to be able to support growth from the IT side."

Following a detailed review of the major ERP vendors, SEZ determined that SAP could provide a solution that would meet all of the regulatory requirements in each of its global locations.

Hannes Sandtner adds, "Our goal was very ambitious: to have SAP software implemented across the entire business within one year. It was therefore vitally important to find the right implementation partner. IBM Business Consulting Services achieved the best results at a competitive price."

Passing the test

SEZ carried out a stringent evaluation of several systems integrator companies, and selected IBM to implement its planned SAP R/3

Overview

■ The Challenge

Support rapid corporate growth by integrating information from different operating units; build an IT infrastructure capable of growing with the business while reducing total costs; improve speed of financial reporting and facilitate closer collaboration between different geographies; complete the change within one year

■ The Solution

Industry: Electronics

Applications: SAP R/3

Services: IBM Business Consulting Services

■ The Benefits

Reduced total cost of ownership of IT infrastructure; enhanced ability to manage growth; best-practice implementation delivered at competitive price; single information source delivers consistent data throughout the organization; greater business insight



software. The criteria for the successful evaluation included the speed of deployment and the performance of the prototype solution. Other key factors were the response of the team to unexpected problems, the geographic coverage offered, and the availability of the prototyping team for the real implementation.

Says Hannes Sandtner, "It was clear that IBM Business Consulting Services had extensive experience of SAP R/3 software, so we were confident that they could deliver a best-practice solution within the required timeframe."

Clear satisfaction

IBM Business Consulting Services worked closely with SEZ to define the project, and provided assistance from data migration through to rollout. This included developing course material and running training sessions for SEZ's employees.

IBM Business Consulting Services also played a key role in the solution, assisting with the installation of the SAP R/3 4.6C software on SEZ's hardware platform. In the near future, the company plans to upgrade to mySAP Enterprise.

"The IBM team proved to be very flexible, and their high level of competence in installing SAP helped to make the project a great success," says Hannes Sandtner. "Despite our extremely tight deadlines, they managed to get everything up and running with no problems at all. IBM was present on our Executive Steering committee, and we found them very easy to work with at every level.

"It tends to be bad experiences that are easiest to remember – so when I say that I cannot make a single negative comment about IBM's work, you can understand how satisfied we are."

"It was clear that the IBM Business Consulting Services had extensive experience of SAP R/3 software."

Hannes Sandtner
SAP Project Manager, SEZ AG

End-to-end benefits

The new SAP software solution, which was rolled out in phases across SEZ's global operations, has 420 named users and covers almost every aspect of business management and reporting.

Specifically, the SAP implementation at SEZ includes functionality for accounting, controlling, asset management, payroll, travel management, materials management, sales, customer field service, purchasing and production.

For example, the new solution has accelerated financial reporting at SEZ. "However, the main advantage is the standardization of processes across all corporate locations – which has improved communications and collaboration, and enables senior management to view business performance more easily."

The replacement of numerous independent software tools with a single, integrated system has led to a significant reduction in total cost of ownership. Similarly, the elimination of multiple hand-coded interfaces between systems has simplified the IT landscape at SEZ, and put the company in a better position to handle future growth scenarios.

Employees in every location now have access to a consistent set of business management and reporting tools, enabling them to work more faster and efficiently. Likewise, the consolidation of multiple independent data stores to

a single system has boosted data quality and is now driving improved stock management.

Hannes Sandtner concludes, "The SAP software solution from IBM has really enhanced working practices at SEZ. We have a clearer view of processes and customers across all our different operations, and our employees spend less time on routine administrative tasks."



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