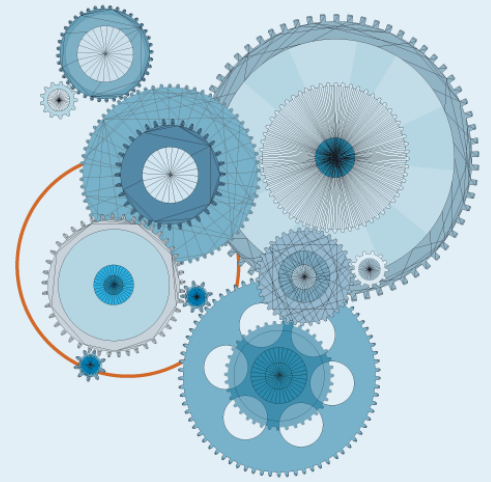


»By replacing several separate systems with one integrated, configurable solution, we can adapt to changing business needs more effectively.«

Manfred Eisele,
Director of Production, SPORT1



Broadcasting Company Cuts Costs by 15 Percent with Business Management Solution

Previously known as Deutsches SportFernsehen (DSF), TV channel SPORT1 broadcasts sports television programs in Germany, while www.sport1.de is one of the most popular online sports portals in the country. The systems the company used to manage its business needed to be updated because they had become expensive to maintain and didn't provide the consistent and up-to-date information required for accurate reporting. To do this, the company worked with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner S4M – Solutions for Media to implement a Microsoft Dynamics solution that would optimize business management across the organization, streamline workflows, improve business insight, and cut IT and labor costs by 15 percent.



Customer

Country or Region: Germany
Industry: Media and entertainment

Customer Profile

Germany-based SPORT1 broadcasts a popular sports television channel, while the sports portal – www.sport1.de – has 1.37 million unique users a month.

Business Situation

To support a growing business and improve efficiency, television channel SPORT1 needed to replace several separate business systems with an integrated solution.

Solution

In close collaboration with SPORT1, S4M – Solutions for Media developed the broadcast module Dynamics Media, a solution based on Microsoft Dynamics AX business management software.

Benefits

- Costs cut
- Decision-making improved
- Flexibility increased
- Growth encouraged

»These days, media companies need to be able to react quickly to changing audience preferences, while keeping costs down.«

Manfred Eisele,
Director of Production, SPORT1



Situation Previously known as Deutsches SportFernsehen (DSF), SPORT1 is a privately owned German television channel that has its headquarters in Ismaning, near Munich, and broadcasts sports programs. The website www.sport1.de is one of the most popular sports portals in Germany, with more than 26 million visits and 1.37 million unique users a month. On 11 April 2010, both companies were rebranded under the umbrella of SPORT1, as part of media company Constantin Medien. Technology is an important part of the company's strategy to maintain a competitive edge. Manfred Eisele, Director of Production at SPORT1, says: "These days, media companies need to be able to react quickly to changing audience preferences, while keeping costs down. Innovative organizations that make good use of technology can streamline operations and improve business insight, better serving both audiences and advertisers." SPORT1 used several solutions – some developed in-house, others supplied by small vendors – for program planning and scheduling, trailer planning, and rights management. However, these separate solutions were difficult to maintain and adapt to changing business needs. Instead of using different systems across departments, the company needed an integrated solution that would offer all the functionalities required to handle its core television business, but would also provide back-office functions such as financial accounting. Eisele and his team considered upgrading the existing systems but decided against the idea when they realized that several business processes needed to be restructured. Eisele says: "To increase efficiency and give us the option of expanding our business, offering services to other companies, we needed to consolidate our systems into one single solution. We looked for efficiency improvements and more flexibility to meet changing business needs – these things are only possible with a scalable, adaptable solution."

Solution The team prepared a list of requirements and carried out an analysis of systems on the market. After requesting proposals from various providers, it engaged Microsoft Gold Certified Partner S4M – Solutions for Media. "We needed to find a company with a thorough understanding of the media business," says Eisele. "In addition to being experts in the technology, S4M had vital industry knowledge and 14 years' experience in broadcast media." In close collaboration with SPORT1, S4M built a solution based on Microsoft Dynamics AX business management software. S4M chose Microsoft Dynamics AX to develop a proprietary product for media clients because its layered, extensible architecture made it easy to integrate broadcast-specific functionality such as program planning, while at the same time using the comprehensive enterprise resource planning (ERP) functionality of Microsoft Dynamics. Dr. Manfred Heinen, Chief Executive Officer at S4M, says: "In the past, broadcast business management systems were typically developed from the ground up, starting with the database management system. By building on Microsoft Dynamics AX, we took a radically different approach. Our development efforts were significantly reduced, allowing us to focus on areas where we add value as a specialized software vendor. We created an adaptable solution that can be configured to meet the individual needs of the customer."

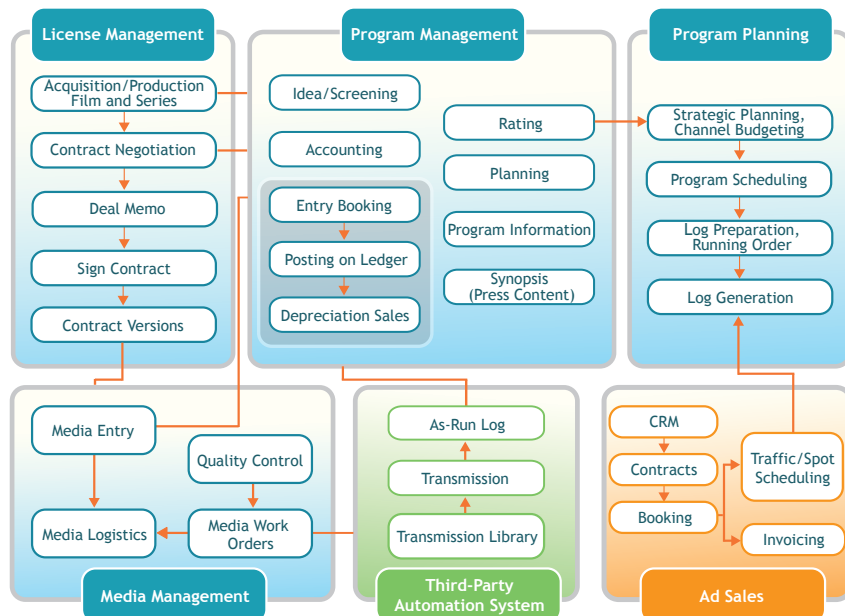
»We now have the flexibility to meet changing business needs, and the peace of mind that comes with a widely adopted solution that has a well-defined roadmap for the future.«

Manfred Eisele,
Director of Production, SPORT1

After migrating data to the new system, S4M and SPORT1 tested the functions and processes, briefed SPORT1 employees, and provided training to administrators, giving them the ability to make small changes themselves. When initial testing was complete, a six-week parallel operation was implemented with Dynamics Media shadowing the existing systems. Only six months after project sign-off, the solution went live at SPORT1, supporting business operations seven days a week, 24 hours a day. "We like to think of this as quite an achievement – implementing such a mission-critical system within just six months is only possible with a solid solution and effective collaboration between all parties," says Dr. Heinen.

The Broadcast edition of the Dynamics Media solution built by S4M includes the following modules:

- Licence Management – supports the licence procurement process and is used to capture and track the rights associated with a program.
- Program Planning – creates and manages program plans for multiple channels.
- Promotion Planning – provides functionality for inserting on-air promotions that can be invoked from within the Program Management, Media Management, and Program Planning modules.
- Trailer Planning – adds functionality for inserting program trailers.



- Secondary Event Management – allows the administration and planning of secondary events, used for inserting logos and banners. This is done through specific functions in the Program Planning module.
- Program Management – helps SPORT1 manage program items such as live events, documentaries, and reports.
- Media Management – manages the media content, in physical and digital format.

The solution interfaces with several other applications, including SPORT1 SAP ERP, its in-house advertising sales solution, and a press information system.

Benefits In addition to creating an integrated system that can be used by staff in all areas of the business, the Microsoft Dynamics AX solution offers the scalability and adaptability SPORT1 needs to accommodate future growth and requirements. Eisele says: "We now have the flexibility to meet changing business needs, and the peace of mind that comes with a widely adopted solution that has a well-defined roadmap for the future."

Labor and IT costs have been cut by 15 percent. Replacing the manual creation of program plans and verification of data with automated systems streamlines processes and saves resources. For example, the media management module keeps vital information on media within the system, so employees no longer need to manage additional data sources. The license management module highlights any usage restrictions early in the program planning process, and it alerts license managers about expiring rights. This avoids repetition of work and makes sure rights can be managed effectively. Also, program plans are automatically formatted using an easy-to-use graphical user interface, streamlining management and control.

Tools for inserting trailers and on-air promotions can be invoked from within the Program Planning module. Arne Anders, Director of Finance and Administration at SPORT1, summarizes the direct financial benefits: "By scaling our business with much-improved efficiency, we've cut labor and IT costs by 15 percent." Eisele adds: "With relatively little training, the solution has been adopted quickly by users. They like the consistent, intuitive interface of Microsoft Dynamics AX. We quickly saw the benefits of working with an integrated solution."

Reporting and Decision-making Are Improved

"With Microsoft Dynamics AX, data is now more complete and consistent than before. The end-to-end workflow support and consolidated database help users across departments keep better track

of the business. This gives us more accurate and up-to-date data for business reporting and operational analytics. With enhanced business insight, we can make more informed decisions," says Anders.

The system also provides the flexibility to allow for program changes at very short notice. "When changing the program plan, it is important to update all data associated with the change and maintain its consistency. With an integrated system such as Dynamics Media, this is much easier than with multiple systems that require manual re-entry of data," says Eisele.

System Can Adapt to Changing Business Needs

With its layered, open architecture and adaptable configuration options, Microsoft Dynamics supports the evolving business needs of SPORT1 by giving administrators the power to implement small changes themselves. "By replacing several separate systems with one integrated, configurable solution we can adapt to changing business needs more effectively," says Eisele.

Solution Will Grow with the Company The Microsoft Dynamics AX modular architecture gives SPORT1 the ability to add functions and data as the business develops. "Change is constant in broadcasting, so this is an important capability," says Eisele. SPORT1 has already started to manage a second channel with the solution, without adding staff. "This is an example of how we can scale our business while improving efficiency," says Anders. "And we have plans to expand even further. With Dynamics Media, we have an ERP solution that helps us take our business further."

Any questions? Contact us.

Your Contact

S4M – Solution for Media GmbH
Am Coloneum 3 | 50829 Köln | Phone: +49 221 28555-0
E-mail: info@s4m.com

As a global systems integrator, arvato systems implements tailored, industry-specific, and custom-developed solutions in addition to standard software. 1,700 dedicated employees work at the company's 25 sites throughout the world. Our customers appreciate the combination of extensive industry expertise, technological knowledge spanning all manufacturers, genuine partnership, and true entrepreneurial spirit. With our range of products and services, we help pave the way for your business success.