ITS
Innovative Technical Solutions

PROJECT PROFILE

⬡ PEER SOFTWARE SOLUTION

PeerLink®

⬡ CUSTOMER'S PLATFORM

Windows Server

⬡ LOCATIONS

Germany, France, India & USA

⬡ INDUSTRY

Engineering Services, Aerospace

⬡ CHALLENGES BEFORE PEERLINK

WAN friendly file collaboration solution for engineering design files without having to invest in a complex and potentially costly PDM platform.

⬡ KEY BENEFITS THROUGH PEERLINK

Prevented file version conflicts thanks to its internal file locking feature that was compatible with CATIA and other popular design programs, as well as file types like Word, Excel and PowerPoint

THE CHALLENGE

Coordinating and supporting teams working on complex projects is always a challenge for IT departments, but those challenges magnify when project teams are spread across multiple continents and time zones.

"We believe strongly in the philosophy of thinking globally and acting locally," stated Rudolf Kalkert, President and CEO of ITS GmbH, a global engineering services provider to the aerospace industry. "With design facilities located in key markets around the world we can serve customers in their local markets, and we are also able to leverage engineering talent in those respective regions potentially for all of our customers," continued Kalkert.

With offices in Germany, France, India and the U.S., the ITS Group is able to distribute project workload to best-of-breed specialists in multiple offices. This created a challenge when it came to sharing and editing large CATIA designs popular in the aerospace industry, and corresponding documentation across multiple offices, a practice known as file or CAD collaboration.

As these designs are typically large, up to several gigabytes, they were too bulky to email back and forth. So the IT department setup FTP servers for the project teams to utilize for downloading files when they need them and uploading files when they are finished editing them. This proved both too slow and risky as unpredictable WAN connections could slow and timeout file transfers, and the lack of version control and synchronization capability caused recently changed files on local servers to be overwritten

when files were downloaded and unzipped from the central FTP server. This caused lost productivity and extra support overhead for the IT department, particularly when restoring backup data.

To help improve WAN performance, especially for FTP transfers and CIFS access to file servers, ITS implemented WAN optimization hardware from Riverbed. Even though this could prevent bandwidth bottlenecks and improve overall throughput, the solution was not effective for file collaboration due to the large file sizes and their dynamic nature.

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As the company continued to evaluate file collaboration solutions, they discovered that in general they were too slow, had costly storage requirements, were too complex for users, or required a potentially costly and time-consuming transition from file-based collaboration to a PDM system like ENOVIA SmarTeam.

"Through additional research of file collaboration and PDM solutions, ITS discovered PeerLink from Peer Software. Peer was well known for their synchronization and replication technology, and PeerLink seemed like a great fit for their needs as it was designed from the ground up to support file collaboration across multiple branch offices connected by a WAN.

According to Christof Schmidt, IT Manager at ITS GmbH, "PeerLink is exactly what we needed for our file collaboration infrastructure. Today our teams collaborate with over 10 gigabytes of file changes per day and PeerLink makes that possible while enabling all of us to be more productive."

KEY FEATURES

○ Easy to install & intuitive GUI

○ The software worked in the background and was nearly transparent to end-users

○ Provided remote users with fast local access to up-to-date shared project files.

○ Byte-level replication minimized impacts on WAN performance

○ Prevented file version conflicts thanks to its internal file locking feature that was compatible with CATIA and other popular design programs, as well as file types like Word, Excel and PowerPoint

ABOUT US

Peer Software develops data management solutions addressing the unique challenges related to data backup, replication and collaboration in a WAN environment since 1993.

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