

Company Details

The Wieland Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of semi-finished and special products in copper and copper alloys: strip, sheet, tube, rod, wire, sections and special products. There are four divisions (Rolled Products, Extruded/Drawn Products, Tubes, Slide Bearings) within the Wieland Group, with more than 5,500 employees worldwide and more than 4,000 in Germany. Revenues in 2001/2002 were more than €1.2 billion.

Location

- HQ Ulm, Deutschland

Industry

- Production, Manufacturer of semi-finished goods from copper

Business Challenges

- Establish competitive advantage in quality of product portfolio to sustain worldwide market leadership
- Improve levels of customer service
- Establish Service Leadership initiative

Solution Overview

- B2B integration of business processes (order processes)
- Seamless connection to customers, suppliers and subsidiaries

"SeeBeyond allows us to offer our customers an improved service. This is right in line with our strict focus on quality here at the Wieland Group." **Stefan Zach**, Project Manager Integration Solutions, Wieland-Werke AG

Business Challenges

As a worldwide manufacturer of semi-finished goods made from copper and copper alloy, Wieland faces industry wide pressure on an international level to reduce both operating costs and market pricing. At the same time, there is growing competition from lower priced suppliers from the Far East who in turn are beginning to catch up with Wieland in terms of quality.

In order to maintain its leadership as far as the quality of its products is concerned, and to secure its position as global market leader, the Wieland group has set the additional target of establishing and developing the concept of "Service Leadership" to give it a lasting competitive advantage. Wieland hopes to achieve this by bringing manufacturing closer to its customers and by continually enhancing its range of services.

Going hand in hand with the development of its Service Leadership drive is the growing importance of the task facing Wieland's IT division to connect to the business processes of customers, suppliers and group subsidiaries via an integration platform that is comprehensive, open and universal in its architecture and is flexible enough to be adapted to the ever-changing market needs.

Solution Overview

Wieland chose to set up an enterprise integration infrastructure leveraging SeeBeyond's eGate Integrator platform. SeeBeyond was chosen over its competitors due to its ability to offer the best value-for-money, as well as its clear leadership from a technology perspective, demonstrating a powerful capacity for B2B and A2A integration. The icing on the cake was SeeBeyond's elnsight Business Process Manager solution, allowing Wieland to model and manage business processes across the extended enterprise.

The first B2B project has been in operation at Wieland's subsidiary in France since October 2003. The following four core business processes between the group headquarters and its French subsidiary now run automatically via the SeeBeyond platform: receipt of orders, acknowledgement of orders, cancellations and inspection and acceptance of goods certificates, which are sent to customers as part of the quality control procedure. Wieland France orders products from three of the four divisions in the parent company. It is anticipated that it will process some 13,000 orders annually via the integration platform.

What makes the integration solution so special is that it builds on and leverages existing business processes and, most importantly, existing systems. To make this possible, 14 interfaces were created as a means of calling up the data connected to the process concerned from a given system, such as e-mail, areas of responsibility, confirmations, etc. The platform automatically selects and uses the system best suited to serve as the information provider. The absence of a separate data management system means that Wieland does not have to worry about operating an additional data administration system. Another advantage is the fact that the entire B2B workflow can be controlled using SeeBeyond, making it possible to monitor all integrations centrally from one source.

Business Benefits

The strategic advantages gained by Wieland with the SeeBeyond solution are primarily of a qualitative nature. These include a higher degree of customer loyalty, the development of service leadership throughout the sector together with the ability to respond more quickly to changes in the market, as the integration platform is flexible, adaptable and upgradeable.

Furthermore, the automation of processes results in considerable timesavings, as data no longer needs to be entered manually.

In summary, the following benefits distinguish SeeBeyond's integration solution: its high degree of resilience, its flexibility as a distributed architecture, its extensive number of integration adapters and its simple graphic user interface.

Plans for the Future

With the B2B integration of its UK subsidiary deployed in January 2004 along with that of a customer in Germany in April 2004, the Wieland group will have completed the first leg of its goal: it will have created a widespread and diversified basis for all future B2B projects.

From April 2004 onwards, Wieland plans in the first instance to take the top 10 customers from each of the group's four divisions and connect them to Wieland via the SeeBeyond integration platform, offering an improved level of service and tailored consultancy services.

"It is our goal to get to the stage where customers can send contracts to us in whatever format they like. With SeeBeyond, we are purchasing the freedom to shape things as we want to in the future. We are already equipped to deal with all the common business processes that B2B should be able to handle and are now able to respond quickly to customer requests." **Stefan Zach**, Project Manager Integration Solutions, Wieland-Werke AG

Business Benefits

- Improved customer service
- Higher degree of customer loyalty
- Process acceleration
- Improved response times

Technology Profile Integrations

- B2B:
- Archiving of B2B-messages in Easy-Archive
 - Email-based updates on news, events via Lotus Notes
 - Establishing responsibilities in SAP/HR
 - Processing of B2B messages in SAP/SD

A2A:

- Specific applications with a centralised SAP-System
- Connections of various back-office applications within the same department

SeeBeyond Components

- eGate™ Integrator
- elnsight™ Business Process Manager

Hardware OS

- AIX / RS 6000