CASE STUDY

Fueling Creativity:
How Kyocera Unimerco Developed a Unique PLM Solution Using Aras Innovator
COMPANY BACKGROUND

Headquarters: Herning, Denmark
Industry: Industrial precision cutting tools

Kyocera Unimerco specializes in the development of high-quality precision cutting tools for metalworking, woodworking, and composite materials. The company needs to have complete visibility and traceability in their product data. Version control is a significant and complex task for a company like Kyocera Unimerco. Designing and manufacturing a tool is a complex and meticulous process. A tool can be described in several versions before being handed over as a final product to a customer.

CHALLENGES

- Inefficiency in keeping history of changes
- Long review process for product design requirements
- Errors in documentation collaboration and control processes

IMPROVEMENTS

- Improved efficiency of all product-related processes
- Improved access to different databases and modules for all stakeholders
- Simplification of manageability by customization and modification of the software

BENEFITS

The internal IT team configured Aras Innovator to better support version control, traceability, and change management. Today, Aras Innovator is used across the company’s tooling division (approx. 220 users), primarily located in Denmark and production companies in UK, US, and Lithuania.
An outdated IT system is in many ways like an old car. They are less efficient, reliable, or safer to operate than newer models. Tasks take much longer to complete, causing delays and reducing productivity. Both require more maintenance and repairs. But despite the reasons you are putting off retiring your old car or IT system, there will come a time when it is necessary.

Insufficient performance drove Kyocera Unimerco to retire its existing PDM system and look for a new solution. The Danish-Japanese company developed its own system based on the Oracle 4 platform back in 1995. After decades in operation, it became clear that the system could no longer efficiently support the company’s PLM needs.

“Our previous solution was already 10 years past its end-of-life stage. No one could maintain it anymore or fix the growing list of bugs, so we really needed to find a new solution,” says Claus Skallerup, IT Director at Kyocera Unimerco.

Kyocera Unimerco provides its customers with high-quality precision cutting tools for metalworking, woodworking, and composite materials. It is vital to have complete visibility and traceability in their product data. Version control is a significant and complex task for a company like Kyocera Unimerco. Designing and manufacturing a tool is a complex and meticulous process. A tool can be described in several versions before being handed over as a final product to a customer.

Tracking and tracing the journey from receiving a piece of raw material until it leaves the assembly line as part of a finished product is vital for everyone. As the old system could no longer support this process, the need for a modern PLM platform drove Claus Skallerup and his team to look for a new PLM solution. After researching and selecting several software vendors, the team chose Aras Innovator as their next PLM solution.

“What we like about Aras is the flexible and configurable platform. It is more than just an enterprise application. Innovator is open and flexible, enabling companies like ourselves to configure it to match our needs. That was the main reason why we chose Aras. There is a dedicated community where the culture is welcoming, and everybody is genuinely interested in contributing to making Innovator even better. It was the right choice for us. And 5 years later, we are still very pleased with Innovator. In every way. It has been a good and interesting journey for us so far,” says Claus Skallerup.
SELF-BUILD SOLUTIONS PART OF THE DNA

With no previous Aras knowledge, Claus and his team built the standard Innovator version specifically to their needs. Proving once again they could build a solution from the bottom up, the team configured Innovator to better support version control, traceability, and change management. Today, Aras Innovator is used across the company’s tooling division (approx. 220 users), primarily located in Denmark and production companies in UK, US, and Lithuania.

“Maybe it is part of the Unimerco-DNA. We did not know anything about the Innovator core platform when we started. Still, I sent one of my developers to an Aras Innovator training course at the headquarters in Andover, Massachusetts, and went from there. Later, we assigned an Aras developer company in Michigan to help us move all functionality from our old platform into Innovator,” says Claus Skallerup.

What impressed Claus Skallerup the most about Aras Innovator was its flexibility and configuration, allowing them to almost build anything inside it. In addition to the desktop application, the team has developed an app named “Aras Light.” It is a small application that fetches data from Innovator that enables the sales team to retrieve product information like RFPs, customer requirements, and other statistics while on the road.

Aras Innovator was a stable and flexible platform that allowed Kyocera Unimerco to configure it to match their needs. Like many other manufacturing companies, Kyocera Unimerco is undergoing a digital transformation of its business processes and supporting tools. Within a couple of years, the vision is to expand the use of Innovator to better enable the Digital Twin.

“We are very impressed by the performance. There are almost no errors. We may see 1-2 errors a month, which our internal developer handles, so it is an extremely stable platform. But the best thing about Aras is the ability to create whatever you can imagine. It is totally configurable. And that is the entire value of the platform. It is easy to configure and build new functionality. If you can imagine it, you can build it,” says Claus Skallerup.
Aras provides the most powerful low-code platform with applications to design, build, and operate complex products. It’s technology enables the rapid delivery of flexible, upgradeable solutions that build business resilience. Aras’ platform and product lifecycle management applications connect users in all disciplines and functions to critical product data and processes across the lifecycle and throughout the extended supply chain. Airbus, Audi, DENSO, Honda, Kawasaki, Microsoft, Mitsubishi, and Nissan are using the platform to manage complex change and traceability. Visit www.aras.com to learn more and follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.