Case Study: SDMO, France

PARTS-PUBLISHER Parts Catalogues

Docware GmbH, Fuerth
Illustrated Spare Parts Catalogues on CD

After-sales service and product support are becoming increasingly important as a means of differentiation from competitors. The professional management of product data and information is absolutely essential to ensure that after-sales service and the spare parts business run smoothly and efficiently. The key to professional expertise and customer-oriented service is having the right information to hand whenever and wherever it is needed. Information management in after-sales, service and spare parts departments can be optimised through the use of electronic service and spare parts catalogues.

SDMO in Brest (France) is one example of a company which has optimised the quality and availability of its service information using an electronic spare parts catalogue system. Founded back in 1966, this generating sets and power engines manufacturing company has a workforce of around 640 employees and recorded a turnover of 347 Mio €uro in 2005.

Farewell to printed catalogues

In the past, customers and employees from the after-sales service department of SDMO obtained the information they needed for spare parts orders, repairs and maintenance work from bulky and complex paper catalogues. They had to wade through hundreds of pages in order to find the spare parts they required. Long search times, queries and incorrect orders were often unavoidable.

In order to make the provision of spare parts information more effective and optimise the quality and availability of information relating to after-sales service and spare parts, SDMO introduced an electronic spare parts catalogue system based on the PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogue software from Docware.

Selecting the catalogue software

Before launching an appropriate system, SDMO analysed the spare parts catalogue software offered by various suppliers. PARTS-PUBLISHER combines the advantages of a standard software package with the option of individual customisation. This was actually one of the main reasons why SDMO opted for the software from the German company Docware. The software’s modular structure, a large number of configuration options which can be used without extensive programming knowledge, and the open system architecture allow the software to be adapted to individual needs. As the most commonly used standard software package for electronic spare parts catalogues in Europe, PARTS-PUBLISHER also offers maximum security of investment for the future. Its other advantages include the functionality and user-friendly interface of the electronic catalogues.
Spare parts catalogues on CD

By introducing the PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogue system from Docware, SDMO has optimised the provision, identification and availability of service and spare parts information for both customers and staff. In addition to printed catalogues, spare parts catalogues on CD-ROM complete with an integrated ordering function are now primarily used in this area.

All information linked

All information relating to after-sales service and spare parts of SDMO generators and pumps, from parts list data, photos and drawings through to descriptive documentation (operating manuals, datasheets, etc.), are combined on one CD and are interlinked. With just a few mouse clicks, the customer can now not only obtain parts numbers, parts names, details of volumes and ordering units, but also the assembly manuals and maintenance instructions which were previously documented in a separate folder.

High-speed access

The interlinking of all related data makes it quick and easy to access all the information needed for maintenance or service applications or when buying spare parts. The CDs can be used on any PC or laptop featuring a Windows operating system. No installation is required. Just insert the CD and all the necessary data will appear in a matter of seconds.

Simple identification

The spare parts that are required and any related information can be quickly and easily located with the spare parts catalogue CDs because the electronic catalogue features numerous search mechanisms for efficient identification of the correct spare part. For example, if you know the name or number of the part that you need, you can use this information to find the relevant spare part. Just enter the corresponding term or spare part number in the search screen and the part you require will be displayed both in the parts list and in the drawing within a few seconds. Another simple method comes into play if the customer or service department employee does not know the precise name and order number of the required part. The electronic catalogue allows a known spare part to be identified visually using photos or technical drawings. With just a mouse click, you can jump directly from the photo or overview drawing of the generator or pump to the detailed views. Areas of drawings which are of particular interest can be enlarged and viewed in more detail with the continuously variable zoom function. An overview window displayed in parallel to the close-up image shows which part of the system the detailed view is referring to, so that users do not lose their way in large drawings.
The zoom function and flexible navigation within the drawing allow spare parts to be found quickly using their appearance and position in the system. All the necessary ordering data can be displayed in the parts list by clicking on the relevant item numbers in the drawings.

The sophisticated and reliable search options provided by the electronic catalogue have made it possible to greatly reduce search times, incorrect orders and queries by phone for the process of procuring spare parts.
Simple ordering process

Each catalogue CD features an ordering function. Orders can be initiated directly from the CD and sent by e-mail. Customers who do not have an Internet connection or prefer not to place orders in this way can print out the order form generated by the electronic catalogue and then send their order to SDMO by fax. Both methods avoid the transfer errors previously experienced on occasions when using paper catalogues and when having to write out the part or assembly numbers by hand. The number of incorrect orders has fallen sharply, and the company has managed to speed up the entire procurement process for spare parts.

Cheaper creation of catalogues

Firstly, the use of PARTS-PUBLISHER CD catalogues has improved the quality and presentation of the service and spare parts data, thus enabling spare parts to be found more easily. Secondly, by using this catalogue software, SDMO has been able to optimise the processes involved in the production of its service and spare parts catalogues, thereby saving money.

Click for catalogues

PARTS-PUBLISHER has largely automated the provision of service and spare parts catalogues at SDMO. The catalogues can be produced with just a few mouse clicks. The catalogue software works according to the single-source method. This means that the catalogues produced for all media (paper, CD, Internet) - SDMO has to date used CD and paper catalogues - are produced from the very same data source, i.e. the PARTS-PUBLISHER catalogue database. The data therefore no longer have to be processed several times for publication on different media. Redundancies are a thing of the past.

This catalogue software offers a wide range of configuration options. The type and size of the images used for the catalogue and catalogue data can be adapted as required with no need for programming. Once catalogue templates have been produced, they can be filled continuously with new data.

Conclusion

By using PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogue software, SDMO has not only optimised the processes involved in producing service and spare parts catalogues. Electronic catalogues, which contain links to all service and spare parts data and feature numerous search functions, also enhance the presentation and quality of the data and optimise the way in which the necessary spare parts and associated information are found. Shorter search times, simplified ordering mechanisms and fewer incorrect orders mean shorter downtimes for defective devices, cost savings and happy, loyal customers.
To further improve the clarity of the spare parts catalogues and the information they contain, SDMO is planning to integrate 3-D images and animated graphics in its spare parts catalogues.

"PARTS-PUBLISHER has greatly increased the productivity of our documentation department. The catalogues produced using this software have also greatly enhanced the quality of the information we hold on our spare parts." Pierre Laurent, Head of Training and Technical Documentation, SDMO

**PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogue software**

PARTS-PUBLISHER is a standard software package for the professional management and optimised provision of service and spare parts information. It can be individually configured and has a modular structure. The database-supported software can be used to produce and update spare parts catalogues, service information systems and spare parts shops for printing on paper, burning to CD or publishing on the Internet. To this end, the software uses an optimised and automated single-source method (all data from one source). PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogues allow service and spare parts information to be provided in a user-friendly way and to be accessed at any time. All information on spare parts and service is available at a glance, from diagrams, order numbers and prices through to repair and maintenance instructions. The required spare parts and any associated information can be found quickly and ordered directly from the catalogue system without any manual data transfer.

**In short**

**The problem**
- Time-consuming and expensive processes for the creation and the updating of spare parts catalogues
- Complex and time-consuming processes for the ordering of spare parts
- High wrong part return costs

**The requirements**
- Process optimisation and automation of catalogue creation
- Improvement in the quality and presentation of spare parts information
- Simplification of the spare parts ordering process
- Reduction of errors in identification and ordering of spare parts

**The solution**
PARTS-PUBLISHER spare parts catalogue software from Docware GmbH, Fuerth, Germany