



## **BEL POWER SOLUTIONS**

### **Taking PLM to the next level**

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**Bluestar PLM's Microsoft Dynamics-based solution has transformed manufacturing-related operations at Bel Power Solutions**

Electronics manufacturer Bel Fuse has around 7,000 employees located on six of the seven continents and manufacturing sites all over the world. Bel Power Solutions, which provides power conversion devices, is one of the firm's three business groups.

As a result of several recent acquisitions, Bel Fuse had been trying to manage the multiple enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems it inherited. This made it incredibly difficult to carry out financial processes, so Bel addressed this with the implementation of a Microsoft ERP system.

Following the decision for a more modern and unified ERP system and the acquisition of power solutions provider Power One in 2014, Bel Power Solutions had inherited a product lifecycle management (PLM) system which it hoped would improve business organisation, enhance its proposition in a competitive market and continue its growth.

Unfortunately, there were many issues with this system. Firstly, the licensing fees were priced per user and had become too costly as the company grew. The system was also a standalone product outside of the ERP system, which made it extremely cumbersome to work with the two systems simultaneously, and so Bel Power Solutions felt there was room for improvement.

Throughout its transformation, Bel Power Solutions was having to stay on top of its vast quantity of products and manufacturing changes. With around 10,000 finished goods and between 300 and 3,000 components on the bill of materials for each, a PLM system that could effectively deal with these would improve the firm's integrity, enhance change management and route work to the right people to ensure a high level of product quality and communication between departments.

Bel Power Solutions decided to deploy a new PLM system from Microsoft partner and software provider Bluestar PLM.

***"Bluestar evolved its products to suit our needs and we helped to make the product stronger"***

*- Stefan Naude*  
Engineering Director at Bel Power Solutions.



*"We chose Bluestar because it is an engineering solution," said Stefan Naude, engineering director at Bel Power Solutions. "It could also integrate with computer-aided design (CAD), something that is extremely important for us as a manufacturer. Ultimately, it just blew the socks off the competitors as an engineering-focused solution to manage our parts, products and lifecycle management."*

Bluestar's offering connects engineers with the Microsoft Dynamics 365 platform so that all the data that engineers create during product design in the CAD system is collected in one place, giving users control over each engineering change and ensuring that all parties are aware of the changes in real time.

The company supported Bel Power Solutions as it implemented its Dynamics-based PLM solution and transitioned from its old system in two steps. After initially using Bluestar as a pass-through from the previous solution to Dynamics, Bel Power Solutions is now 85 per cent fully deployed with Bluestar. The new solution handles all the firm's change management and product documentation, with only the CAD integration left to complete. It also controls Bel Power Solutions' compliance management, something that is unique to Bluestar's offering.

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*"The compliance module allows us to gather information about the content of each item and pull it together to provide customers with reports on the content of products based on the Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive," said Naude. "This feature was created as a result of our partnership. Bluestar evolved its product to suit our needs and we helped to make the product stronger."*

According to Naude, the PLM transition has reaped many benefits. "The largest is that the PLM is inside our ERP systems. That allows us to access financial information on components and costs, and with regards to change management, it helps us understand the implication of inventory levels and purchase transactions instantly.

The technical engineering information also flows across systems which creates huge time savings as we don't have to go between them and tie them together with hand-written reports."

Bluestar's solution provides a holistic approach to business intelligence, as it interacts with the ERP system in both directions. Its basis in Dynamics has realised significant cost savings in terms of licensing, as the fees do not vary as the company grows. Bel Fuse plans to roll out Bluestar's PLM solution across the Bel Group in the coming years, which will have major effects on the business.



Naude believes that the implementation of a PLM in the other two thirds of Bel Fuse will create significant cost savings, something that he realised 10 years ago when Power Solutions implemented its first PLM. "It will also improve organisation, prevent mistakes and provide much better control over change management," said Naude. Before using a PLM, Power Solutions was trying to manage all these elements manually and consequently encountered constant problems with integrity, documentation and which version of a product model is the latest version. "It was ineffective, expensive and created extra work for everyone," he said. "The flexibility of Bluestar and Dynamics not only solves these issues, but it also allows each company to thrive, as the higher-level business processes can be tailored to its unique circumstances."

Once implemented across the whole of Bel Fuse, Bluestar's solution will be used at around 50 engineering locations. By 2025, Naude believes that the solution's integration with the firm's ERP system, its ease of navigation and how it helps to inform business decision-making will transform the future of Bel Fuse.

***"Bluestar will improve organisation, prevent mistakes and provide much better control over change management"***

*- Stefan Naude,*  
Engineering Director at *Bel Power Solutions*

**About Bel Power Solutions:**

For more information please visit :

[belfuse.com/power-solutions](http://belfuse.com/power-solutions)

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