



CAWE PLACES INNOVATION AT THE HEART OF ITS OPERATIONS WITH LECTRA

To interlink internal operations and contract manufacturers across three countries, Cawe lays a foundation for future growth with the unlimited configurability and simplified collaboration of Kubix Link PLM, which offers much more than a conventional PLM solution.

Workwear manufacturer Cawe forms part of business services group Rentokil. Initial, the group's workwear rental company, established a supply chain division to achieve vertical growth in Europe. To serve the needs of its workwear business, the group placed Cawe in charge of coordinating outsourced garment production. Cawe's France-based design office today oversees both technical development of workwear designs and outsourced production in North Africa and Eastern Europe. The company serves the needs of its internal customer—Initial France—as well as external customers in manufacturing, uniform rental, the professional salon industry and distribution.

An expansive network supporting a major player in workwear

Relying on an expansive network of contractors on two continents, Cawe runs a highly structured operation that produces 20,000 to 25,000 pieces per week in 5-week cycles with tight turnarounds. Close management of contractor workloads is made possible through daily contact by telephone and e-mail. A custom-developed ERP system and barcode supply chain management enable the company to track material deliveries and production turnaround in real time.

"We collaborate closely with our outsourcing network because continuous turn-out of twenty to twenty-five thousand garments every week must necessarily conform to a rigorous workflow," notes Marc Ackermann, Head of Operations, Cawe. "Increasingly, we are extending our system functionality to the contract manufacturers, thereby integrating their business processes into our operations."

Design office and business network transformation

Building on the strengths of three thriving core activities—workwear design, outsourced production and internal and external sales—as well as its tight-knit network of internationally based contractors, Cawe turned to Lectra to modernize design office processes and streamline the company's business practices.



Ackermann personally took on the responsibility of assessing the technical requirements of the design office together with Lectra experts.

The overall objective of the Cawe business solution implementation project is greater efficiency through automation, smoother communication and seamless collaboration. "I don't find it acceptable for projects to be time-consuming—not because they require deep thinking, but rather because the IT system requires so much copy-pasting," notes Ackermann. "My objective is to reduce the time it takes to perform tasks from days to hours, and from weeks to a matter of days."

Customization of existing designs is one activity in particular that Ackermann seeks to expedite and optimize. "In our workwear business, we have collections that remain unchanged for a long time," continues Ackermann.



“Often, development requests are actually variations, adaptations of existing models. Our aim would be to execute quickly enough to turn something out in an hour or two. We aim to be very fast and responsive, so that communication with the customer can be just as fast.”



A new, consumer-centric approach to enterprise technology

For Ackermann, the ubiquity of digital experiences is raising the bar on employees' expectations of business solutions. Their experience with technology as consumers is shaping their perception of technology experiences at work.

“The people who use business solutions every day don't necessarily think about it. They're used to it because it's a part of their workplace.”

Marc Ackermann,
Managing Director, Cawe

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This means users no longer accept the stark contrast between user-friendly, efficient hardware and software for personal use and archaic software and solutions in their work environment.

Aware of these changing expectations, Ackermann made a point of ensuring that Kubix Link PLM would satisfy user needs. “The people who use business solutions every day don't necessarily think about it. They're used to it because it's a part of their workplace,” observes Ackermann. “Everything around us is becoming high-tech. Why shouldn't our workplace tools evolve, too? Clearly, we want to stay ahead of the game. The only way to do that is by meeting the challenge head-on.”

To help Cawe remain in the lead, Kubix Link's user-centered design incorporates familiar functionalities also found in popular search engines and social media platforms. Its intuitive interface was conceived to respond the way users expect it to work.

Channeling the momentum of Lectra's drive to R&D excellence

Another chief motivating factor in Cawe's decision to implement Kubix Link was Lectra's firm commitment to innovation. In July 2019, Ackermann visited Lectra's research and development campus in Cestas, France near Bordeaux for a presentation of its most advanced enterprise systems for the textiles industry.



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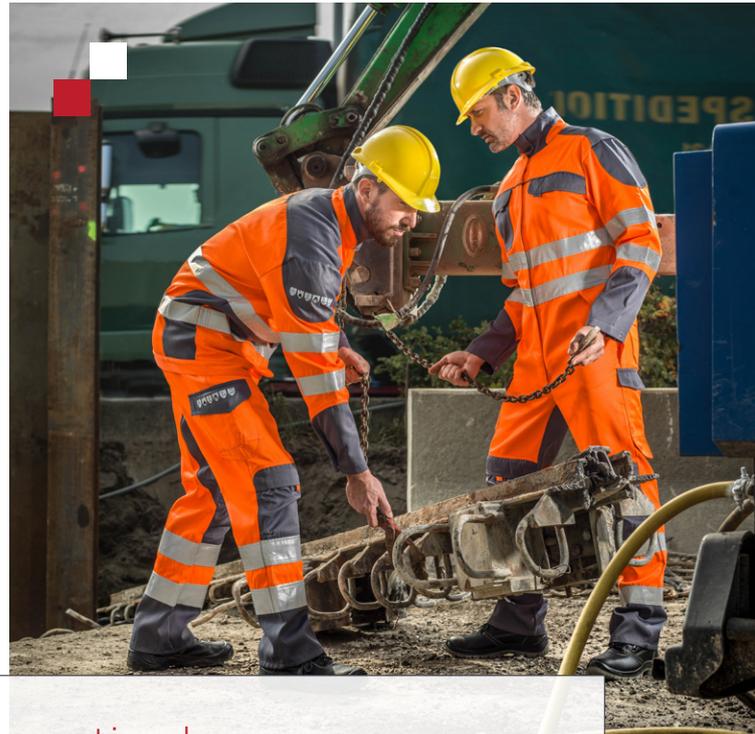


“Visiting Lectra's R&D center in Bordeaux has also opened new avenues,” recalls Ackermann. “It's the inspiration of other ideas I'm trying to push. We're thinking about ways to extend the design office. It's a positive momentum. That doesn't mean it's going to make things easier. But I'm interested in the momentum. That's what motivated me. There's an overall drive to update practices, systems, organization. And that's what got me interested.”

By the end of 2019, Lectra's R&D headcount was 368, with R&D expenditures totaling €31.8 million, or 11.4% of revenue.

Changing the way Cawe does business

Lectra listened closely to Cawe to determine the design office's precise needs. One activity in particular that required optimization was the creation of technical packets. Once implemented, Kubix Link will allow Cawe to automate many of the tasks involved in generating PDF documents with multiple contributors. It will also facilitate file-sharing and communication by centralizing data on a single platform. Deployment of the finalized solution is slated for June 2020. The customer's ultimate goal is ease of use and efficiency in the design office's day-to-day operations, minimizing time spent on repetitive tasks and shifting focus to more value-added work.



“It’s imperative because you have to work faster and smarter, and that’s precisely what Kubix Link allows us to do. It’s also an opportunity to challenge oneself and revise practices, processes, methods.”

Marc Ackermann,
Managing Director, Cawe

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“So far, we’ve made a lot of progress,” says Ackermann. “The adaptability of the solution just goes to show that Lectra has more than one trick in its bag. They’re capable of making development changes once the project is underway.”

For Ackermann, Cawe’s large-scale Kubix Link configuration project affords the company an opportunity to rethink the way the business operates, as well as the way its employees collaborate. “It’s the kind of project that allows you to redefine processes, because it compels you to rethink the way you work, by requiring you to save files and rename them.”

By streamlining Cawe's value chain, Lectra is helping the company to improve customer responsiveness with the ability to understand and swiftly respond to changing production conditions. "We're really going to use it to serve the needs of our design office—patternmaking, tech packs and project development follow-up," summarizes Ackermann. "Flexibility, consistent data and real-time data processing all make the solution extremely effective."



ABOUT KUBIX LINK

Lectra's process-oriented cloud platform Kubix Link serves as the foundation that binds communication and interaction across the organization. It puts essential data and information at the fingertips of internal and external stakeholders in real time for smoother, more streamlined collaboration. With the guidance of Lectra's experts, customers can benefit from virtually unlimited configuration of Kubix Link's PLM, PIM and DAM capabilities to implement a solution that mirrors their business model.

DISCOVER KUBIX LINK'S ECOSYSTEM OF PLM, PIM, DAM AND MORE

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—E-GUIDE: "Missed Opportunity: **How to Avoid 4 Common PLM Implementation Regrets**"

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