

Case Study

The Company

Schaeffler KG

Branch/Market

Automotive

Task

Support knowledge management in the task of integrating company knowledge efficiently into employee's daily work.

Solution

- Makes knowledge available in every application by a mouse click.
- Enables direct and simultaneous access to various sources of information, dictionaries and terminology glossaries
- Bridged between Schaeffler-Wiki and the worker's desktop

Benefits

- Faster and user-friendly access to reliable information
- Improved employee productivity via simple, uniform and fast access to information
- Dispenses with the need for different sources

"Our goal is to bring knowledge as close as possible to the employee so that it brings benefits fast."

Paul Seren, Head of the Schaeffler Group's knowledge management team.

Managing Knowledge for a Thousand Inventions a Year

The Schaeffler Group, headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Germany is one of the world's largest automotive industry suppliers. With 66,000 employees in 180 locations worldwide, the Schaeffler Group finished 2007 with 8.9 billion Euros in sales. All over the world, the Schaeffler Group's INA, FAG and LUK brands stand for the development and manufacture of rolling bearings, plain bearings and linear guides for machine building and engine components.



Main production facility at Herzogenaurach, Germany (Photo:Schaeffler Group)

Securing the Future by Innovation

The Schaeffler Group's engineers are constantly developing new and improved systems in close cooperation with its customers. The high expenditure on research and development is reflected in a large number of annual patent applications. The Group holds a total of more than 13,000 patents.

In an on going effort to secure the future, the Company's management is investing tremendously in developing and cultivating a knowledge management system. Workers have routinely received time and space to exchange knowledge and experience.

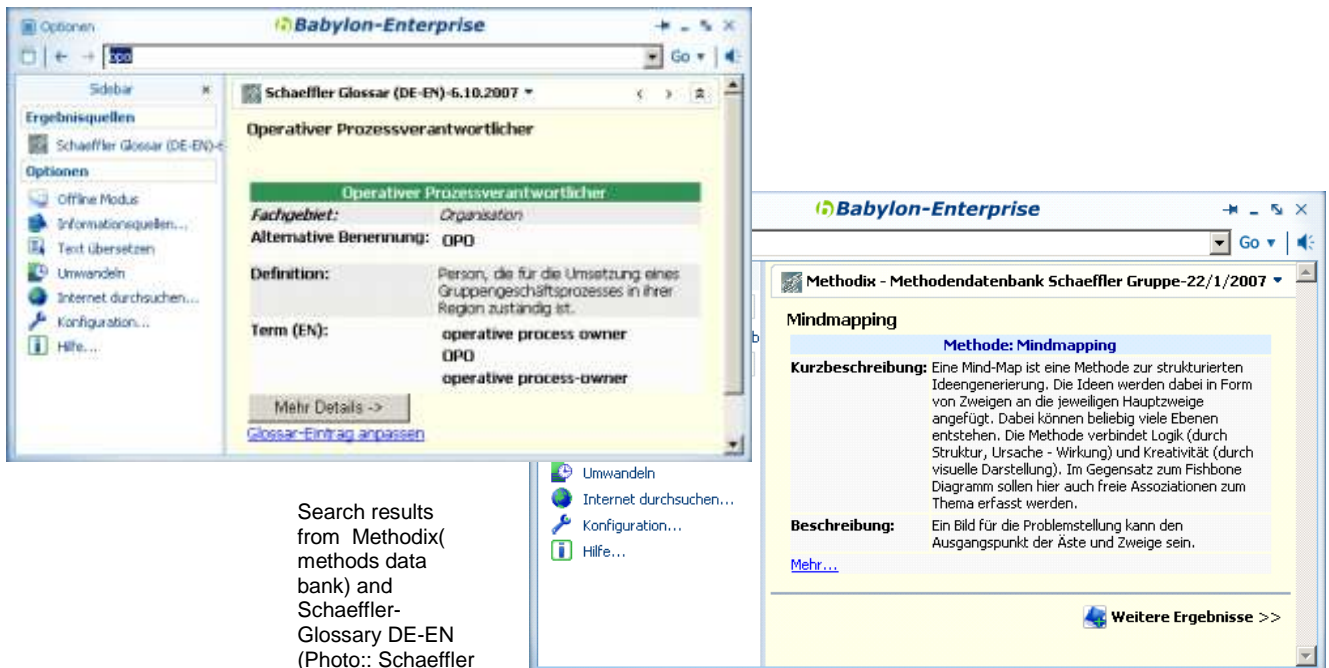
Knowledge Management: Practical Use is Required

A knowledge management framework has begun assembling in 2001 and its team has now grown to six. Apart from processing knowledge already formulated in writing within the Company, the team also identifies knowledge that until now existed only in the heads of employees, ensuring that it is structured, recorded and communicated. However, the knowledge-related work at Schaeffler will not just be restricted to filling data banks. "Our aim is to bring the knowledge as close as possible to the employees, so that it reaps fast gains," explains Paul Seren, head of the knowledge management team. "If, during the course of his daily work – and characteristically in an e-mail - an employee reads a new term, abbreviation or foreign word, he should find the explanation quickly, without changing from Outlook to another program, without having to reach for the bookshelf or even calling another colleague."

When Schaeffler's knowledge managers first encountered Babylon-Enterprise, they found that it already fulfilled many of their wishes. Babylon-Enterprise provides definitions, explanations and translations of search terms in fractions of a second, triggered by a simple mouse click on the unknown term on the screen. This is accomplished without any change or typing of words. The results are displayed in a pop-up window. Pictures and ongoing links may also be contained. The team could not find a similar, simple and convenient solution.

Faster Access to Company Knowledge

In addition to the out of the box reference sources like Wikipedia, the knowledge management team further implemented, in Babylon-Enterprise, knowledge sources available in the Company. These included an INA dictionary with 30,000 entries, a methods database and in particular, the current Schaeffler glossary with entries that are bindingly defined and checked content-wise throughout the Group. This glossary is managed by SDL (Trados) MultiTerm application and is transferred automatically to Babylon-Enterprise for easy referencing. The list of Schaeffler's worldwide employees is also available via Babylon-Enterprise, becoming one of the most popular implementation in the Group.



Search results from Methodix (methods data bank) and Schaeffler-Glossary DE-EN (Photo: Schaeffler Group)

Another interesting implementation was done with the Schaeffler-Wiki, making a bridge between this invaluable knowledge to the workers' desktops with a simple click of a mouse. The worker now gains fast access to new and changed entries and with a simple double-click on the definition window, the worker is redirected automatically to the full article in Schaeffler-Wiki.



In-house Schaeffler-Wiki (Photo: Schaeffler Group)

Don't Search-Find!

A survey of 1,000 Babylon users, answered by practically every second employee, showed employee satisfaction with the knowledge management tool: 81% of the users would recommend Babylon-Enterprise, about 90% describe their use of the tool as "medium" to "high". Employees see the fast and easy availability of translations and knowledge-base information as a major advantage. Many are no longer willing to work without it.

Babylon-Enterprise has played a major part in enabling employees of the Schaeffler Group to access structured, already available Schaeffler knowledge rapidly and efficiently. The fast and easy availability of reliable information has simplified the knowledge acquisition in the group. The significance of the solution will increase even more as soon as Schaeffler's knowledge management is internationalized. The knowledge management team at Schaeffler's headquarters plans to further expand the solution, turning it the leading practical information access solution for every worker who needs access to Schaeffler knowledge, on daily basis, for his work.

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