



Case Study

MAN Creates Custom Workplaces with CPQ

Today, mobility, flexibility and autonomy are all requirements of the modern workplace. Normally, when we think of 'workplace', we naturally think a typical office - desks, screens and watercoolers. However, for the millions of workers that sit behind the wheel workplace refers to the front cabin where the cockpit can be defined as the actual workstation.

"Our truck cockpit configurator is a [...] state-of-the-art solution that allows us to save between 70% and 80% of the engineering resources that were previously needed."

—Marc Witte, MAN Truck & Bus SE

By defining a truck's cockpit as a workplace, one tends to focus on worker wellbeing and job satisfaction. As a leading European manufacturer, MAN Truck & Bus (MAN hereafter) took this concept of the workplace to high-gear. They have developed a workplace configurator with the use of interactive visualization technologies.

Modular driver workstations (i.e. cockpits) can be customized in many ways, however, being driver-centric is a key feature of the MAN configurator. This means that the configuration is done in a way that ensures the driver's point is at the core while also ensuring the limited space is maximized. In other words, the configurator is 100% customer-focused.

Before a visual configurator: a manual process

To meet the needs of the client we had a very manual process in place:

- First, engineering teams will sit with the customer to discuss what switches and functionalities they needed.
- Then a rough sketch was created, and the individual positions captured in a CAD drawing tool.
- Once an initial mockup was created, they would once again discuss with the customer to see if any further changes were needed.

Almost always, the customer would suggest

additional changes, which would require the engineers to return to steps 2-3 until the customer was satisfied.

This iteration process was a lot more complex than it sounds, explains Marc Witte, who as Team Leader Engineering MAN is responsible for the cockpit configurator. "If a switch was to be repositioned, then its data must also be stored in an Excel spreadsheet along with all the functional parameters. These would be put in check with all other switches to assess whether that switch could be placed in the desired position."

Getting to grips with all options

To be able to efficiently handle the extensive configuration options and be able to respond to the customer faster, MAN decided to digitalize their customization processes. Like any good engineer, they had established some concrete parameters of what they wanted in a configurator:

- To be able to configure an entire cockpit with 3D visualization in real-time
- All options should be available
- The entire configuration should take "just a few mouse clicks"
- The outcome had to be error-free



- Automatically Generate all 2D CAD drawings and Bill of Materials required

In search of a solution that could help them meet those self-imposed goals, MAN found what they were looking for at Tacton – a provider that specialized in software solutions for Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) for large manufacturers.

"What convinced us early on was Tacton's know-how in visual configuration and their industry expertise. In Tacton we found a partner for developing our vision for a cockpit configurator", explains Marc Witte.

Configuration was done with the Customer

"The value of Visual configuration, in this case for driver workstations, comes from the real-time interaction. We were quite familiar with MAN's specific challenges, such as the question of how diverse the demands of each customer were from each other. No two customers were alike, and the combinations possible made each configuration unique", explains Christina Morgan, Senior Project Manager at Tacton

As MAN's started to see just how powerful Tacton's configuration and visualization tools were, they understood that the way they interacted with customers would also change for the better. Configuration, therefore, became a lot more customer-focused.

Comfort functions ensure error-free configuration

This new way of configuring resulted in the launch of a web-based configuration solution that can be accessed by our team from any web-browser. This web version of the configurator offered a lighter version of the configurator, allowing non-technical personnel to carry out a basic configuration using drag-and-drop functionality.

The web configurator came with many User Experience (UX) development such as the highlighting of errors with colors and indicating valid alternatives. Users can also store their FAQs that they can access later.

The future-oriented solution also for our global workforce The result of the visual configuration was a HUGE success for MAN. As Marc Witte explains: "Not only is our driver station configurator a modern solution that allowed us to save between 70% and 80% of engineering resources that were previously needed but also gives our customers a realistic graphical rendering of our products - which of course is great for our brand."

Currently, the engineers in Ankara, Turkey, and Poznan, Poland use the tool. Using the configurator was so intuitive that other business areas such as sales or customer service can easily work with it, explains Marc Witte.

No matter what the driver's workplace of the future will look like, MAN is set to configure it.

About Tacton

Tacton is a leading SaaS company trusted by global manufacturers. Tacton Trusted Configuration simplifies sales for manufacturers of complex products. Tacton's Configure, Price, Quote software is named a Visionary by Gartner in the Magic Quadrant for CPQ Application Suites and is recognized for its advanced product configuration and visualization capabilities. Tacton's founders pioneered computer-based product configuration which today powers Tacton CPQ and CAD Design Automation. Since 1998, Tacton is trusted by global customers such as ABB, Daimler, MAN, Scania, Siemens, Xylem, and Yaskawa. It is co-headquartered in Chicago and Stockholm, with regional offices in Karlsruhe, Warsaw, and Tokyo.