

## HANSGROHE AG Faucet maker expands global variations with CATIA V5



*"CATIA V5 allows us to define a new way of designing our products for a more global market. Captured design know-how can now be repeated by any of our designers." Stefan Ginter, Manager for CAD/CAM implementation, HANSGROHE AG*

### Overview

#### ■ **The Challenge**

*Long design cycles inhibited the company's desire to expand its global reach through multiple product variations designed to suit customer tastes in different regions*

#### ■ **The Solution**

*CATIA V5 allows HANSGROHE AG to streamline its three-stage design process and multiple, manual iterations, into a single, automated and integrated process*

#### ■ **The Benefit**

*HANSGROHE AG can now design many more product variations and versions in the same time with its existing staff.*

#### **Targeting more markets with experienced staff**

From its founding in 1901 in the Black Forest of Germany, HANSGROHE AG has grown into one of the world's leading makers of elegant, high-performance plumbing fixtures, including sleek designs for the kitchen and bath.

With more than 2,300 employees and 2002 sales of €360 million, HANSGROHE AG's brands rank high on consumer wish lists throughout Europe, Asia and the United States. To accelerate its growth, however,

the company planned to offer substantially more variations and versions of its products to appeal to more buyers in even more geographic areas.

The company's complex, three-stage design process, however, required multiple iterations between the design of the internal mechanics, the external aesthetic body style, and the mould for casting the complete product. Each iteration was time consuming with a high risk of costly error. Without significant change in its processes, any significant increase in product variations would be impossible.

"Our business objective is to expand globally," said Stefan Ginter, manager for CAD/CAM implementation at HANSGROHE AG. "We want to cover a broader market with more products by keeping or increasing quality and managing cost. Therefore, we want to keep our current team of experts for extending our product portfolio for a more global market approach. CATIA V5 allows us to gain the needed productivity."

### CATIA V5 streamlines the process

HANSGROHE AG is a long-standing CATIA user. Upgrading to the newest version, CATIA V5, would allow HANSGROHE to integrate multiple design steps into a single process by automating the various iterations. These new capabilities are hallmarks of the design approach built into the new CATIA V5 software. CATIA V5 also could be fully integrated with HANSGROHE's SAP system, further streamlining and integrating processes such as purchasing of parts.

The newly defined process flow in CATIA V5 begins with the internal mechanical design and the external surface design. Logical relations are controlled, and rule checks ensure that designs are consistent with the company's internal best practices and manufacturing constraints. If HANSGROHE designers choose to, they can instruct the system to automatically create the mould geometry, incorporating the company's proprietary knowledge about product shrinkage factors that come into play as the moulded product cools.

"CATIA V5 offers a lot of capabilities to simulate the complex shrinkage behaviour of cast products," Ginter said. "We are now able to capture our internal know-how to create the product right the first time."

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### Manual process becomes automatic

CATIA V5 allows HANSGROHE AG to start with an existing design and modify it for a different market in far less time than previously possible by following the local rules and boundaries. The designer merely indicates the changes that must be made. CATIA V5, programmed with all of the relationships and constraints that relate one part to another, automatically adjusts all aspects of the design. It also alerts designers if their choices are outside the limits of manufacturability and suggests modifications.

For example, a designer may start with a rounded surface for a market that prefers a more angular look. The designer designates the shape of the new cross-section and the system adjusts all of the components to fit. If the knowledgware component of CATIA V5 indicates the resulting shapes are too thick to be manufactured, it suggests changes to slim the design.

"We can now design our product set with more efficiency," Ginter said. "That gives us the capability to define more product variants in the same time, which are adapted to the different requirements in the global market."

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