Osram

International lamp manufacturer depends on Plasmon solution to optimise their global web-based archive

Quick View

Organisation:
> Osram

Industry:
> Lighting Industry

Application:
> Company wide web-based archiving

Integrator:
> Ceyoniq Technology
> Siemens Business Services
> Mantis GmbH
> PoINT Software & Systems

Solution:
> Plasmon G238 library with UDO2 drives
> HP Jukebox PXM2
> ECM nscale software

ROI
> Enable corporate wide access to archived documents
> Improve customer service and sales process efficiency
> Reduce operating costs through storage optimisation

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Thomas Gottsauner
Project Manager
Osram

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OSRAM is one of the world's two leading lighting manufacturers. The company, whose headquarters are in Munich, has a strong international focus, and employs more than 41,000 people worldwide supplying customers in 150 countries through 48 production locations in 17 countries. OSRAM's general lighting division has the largest group turnover and is the leading global provider of car lights and LEDs for vehicles. The company is also a market leader in electronic ballast units for lamps and their opto-semiconductor business and special display lamps are recognised for their innovation in a rapidly growing market.

The Challenge

Engaged in a highly competitive market, OSRAM must constantly drive down operating costs and their data center operations are no exception. A new electronic archiving can help with this goal by consolidating their system resources which will help to secure the long-term success of the company. This can be achieved only through reduced processing times and increasing automation: in short, by optimising the processes. Manual intervention in the process must also be eliminated, in order to improve customer care.

As early as 1991, OSRAM created a management system with SAP R/2 so that documents such as invoices and credit notes can be stored and queried company-wide. After intensive market evaluation, OSRAM chose Arcis-Account, then a product of Siemens Nixdorf Informationssysteme AG. "At that time, Arcis was the only system that offered transaction processing in addition to pure document archiving, and it met our requirements with flying colors," says Project Manager Janusz Czembor.

This solution met with a very positive reception throughout the company, and more and more employees in the associated companies and subsidiaries wanted to access the archive. This led to hardware bottlenecks. A lack of disk space and processor capacity eventually made it impossible to meet corporate demand. A new solution was required!

The Solution

The most important requirement for the new solution was to retain, at all costs, the mapping of transactions and organizational structures that had been proven through the daily operations. A further long-term objective was to grant all subsidiaries and associated companies worldwide access to the central archive at minimal cost. This means that the new solution must be accessible across the web.

In the past, Arcis distinguished itself through performance and ease of use for document archiving and research. By expanding this functionality through a web based interface, more individuals and sales units are able to benefit from improved efficiencies. Approximately 2500 web clients across all sales units now have access to the central archive for document queries. These include order-management documents, delivery notes, invoices and customs declarations which are sorted by transaction and stored within the archive. The entire order management process is automatically handled within OSRAM's SAP environment.

Solution Configuration

The original archive server used an oracle database and was centrally located together with an HP optical library using earlier generation MO (Magneto Optical) media In order to meet the increasing storage capacity requirements, a new library was needed. OSRAM had already cooperated with HP for many years, and was very satisfied with the stability and longevity of MO technology. As a result of their past satisfaction, it was OSRAM's strong preference to continue using optical media for long-term archiving.

After talking with companies, OSRAM learned of Plasmon's latest generation UDO2 technology. OSRAM found that Plasmon's archiving solutions offered not only potential for exponential capacity growth, but also UDO2 media required less long-term maintenance. Additionally, Plasmon's cost-saving solution suited OSRAM perfectly. The longevity of the UDO2 media and Plasmon's long-term product support philosophy meant that OSRAM could operate their library for much longer than standard magnetic disk storage systems, lowering total cost of ownership and minimising risk. After a thorough onsite evaluation, the decision was made in favour of a Plasmon G238 library with UDO2 for a net capacity of approximately 14.2 TB.

"Our Plasmon archive provides the data life and upgrade path essential to retaining our records. With UDO we are confident that we can define retention periods longer than 10 years without constantly moving data to new media, and when we do choose to upgrade, it's a much less disruptive process. Deploying a Plasmon solution provides OSRAM with a very secure archive, while saving us money in operating costs and IT administration," Thomas Gottsauner explains.

To ensure the reliability of the system, the entire database of documents is mirrored multiple times on off-line Write Once (WORM) UDO2 media. This means that the authenticity of the documents is maintained and even in the unlikely event of a system or site failure, it is possible to react very quickly to ensure almost uninterrupted system availability.

"It's important that we retain multiple copies of all our archive data for disaster recovery, and our Plasmon archive allows us to do this very cost-effectively. Rather than deploy a second system, we chose to create duplicate UDO media sets and move them offsite for long-term storage. With a magnetic disk archive we would have been forced to install multiple RAID systems and back them up. The attributes of UDO make it an excellent match for our archive requirements," Gottsauner continues.

Experts from several companies supported OSRAM in the implementation of their second generation archive. There was very close cooperation with Siemens Business Services (SBS) and Ceyoniq Technology GmbH during migration. Plasmon and PoINT Software & Systems delivered a smooth integration of the new UDO2 library. "Our colleagues did an excellent job," says Gottsauner. "Cooperation with Mantis GmbH, who were responsible for the programming of the client, also went perfectly." "We succeeded in implementing the entire solution at a high level of sophistication with good results, and it was on schedule and within budget," System Manager Werner Latz confirms.

Results

The capabilities of Arcis document management and archive system are fully operational, and the commercial processes are mapped into a web client. A document archiving system corresponding to the original sales path was successfully created and OSRAM has achieved company-wide transparency for its sales processes. All key documents are archived through the system onto the Plasmon library, and the reduction in the use of paper in the overall process saves a tremendous amount of time, which the OSRAM employees can now use to more effectively address the needs of their customers. Questions can be answered directly over the telephone, because all information is quickly accessible thanks to the high capacity and reliability of the Plasmon archive. OSRAM's second generation archive meets their evolving business requirements in a cost-effective way, allowing them to maintain their competitive edge in a demanding market.

The Future

In future, the high-performance hardware from FSC, Hewlett Packard and Plasmon, and software from Ceyoniq Technology GmbH and Mantis GmbH, will allow additional document types to be incorporated, and more subsidiaries and associated companies to be integrated. The high capacity and expandability of the Plasmon G238 library, with UDO2, brings OSRAM the further benefit that old archives in distributed companies can now be consolidated in a central location, optimizing their storage resources. OSRAM expect an annual increase in archive capacity of 1.5TB, which their new Plasmon archive can cost-effectively support for years to come.

Plasmon offers the only enterprise-class active archive solution that ensures data permanence, authenticity, access, longevity and removability, at the low total cost of ownership that businesses demand.

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