Philips Lighting

Leading lighting manufacturer streamlines service delivery and strengthens its competitive advantage with the Adobe® Flash® Platform, including Adobe Flex® and Adobe AIR®

Philips Lighting
www.lighting.philips.com

PHILIPS
sense *and* simplicity

Industry
Manufacturing

Challenges
• Create a single point of access for data from various enterprise systems
• Streamline proposal and sales cycle to maximize sales opportunities

Solution
• Rich Internet application (RIA)
• Data aggregation and presentation—cost modeling
Philips Lighting used the Adobe Flash Platform to create a RIA to improve access to product data and streamline the sales quoting process.

Results
• Provided online and offline access to product data in real time
• Created a single access point to product information in various databases
• Recaptured missed sales opportunities
• Standardized sales quoting process for greater productivity

Systems At A Glance
• Adobe Flash Platform including:
  • Adobe Flex
  • Adobe Flex Builder
  • Adobe AIR

One company, One solution

Through timely and useful innovation, Philips Lighting has been on a mission to enhance people's lives with lighting. Seeking to strengthen its message and the company, Philips launched the Towards One Philips (TOP) project a few years ago to improve coordination among various company departments and to solidify a singular, unified company image. The program's emphasis on collaboration was intended to drive cost savings, client-oriented thinking, innovation, and cooperation through a series of small projects that would each move the company closer to its goals slowly, but surely.

One project in particular, the TCOne initiative, emphasizes standardization of cost calculations. Philips Lighting's IT department recognized that the organization used myriad disparate programs such as individual spreadsheets and databases to facilitate the quoting, ordering, and consulting practices for sales managers. The company's leadership saw an opportunity for substantial improvement by leveraging the Adobe Flash Platform, including Adobe Flex and AIR, to improve visibility and access to critical business information.

Roman Stahlberg, global senior business process manager with Philips Lighting's commercial sector, believed that the company could effectively utilize the Adobe solution's integrative properties to create an efficient, intuitive user interface for its SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) and customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

The resulting rich Internet application (RIA) enables users to dynamically manage and manipulate large quantities of information such as sales figures, cost models, and order histories in real time through the interface created with Adobe Flex Builder", while the Adobe AIR application enables users to leverage the application on their laptop computers, online or offline.

"With Adobe Flex and AIR we can seamlessly link to the information in our SAP systems and deliver the data in real time to the desktop for easy online and offline access. The rich functionality of the two applications and the ease with which we can access our information made the decision an easy one," says Stahlberg.

Recapturing missed opportunities

In the past, submitting proposals for new business was daunting and inefficient. Information such as product specifications, inventory levels, prices, and legal standards was dispersed across a variety of SAP modules, leaving the salesperson to manually gather the data using a spreadsheet in order to build a proper proposal. The nature of the process often resulted in missed business opportunities, as sales personnel were unable to provide immediate quotes or quickly make changes to existing quotes.

"A salesperson who cannot provide an immediate answer is missing an opportunity," states Jan Thijs, business project manager for the TCOne program. "We do not just want to sell mere products; we want to sell a service. Our customers need to be able to understand the value of our solution to make the best possible decision."

Philips developed the TCOne tool on the Adobe Flash Platform to provide immediate, dynamic access to product information in the company's database. A RIA built in Adobe Flex and delivered to the desktop via Adobe AIR, the TCOne tool lets salespeople create and edit quotes in real time.
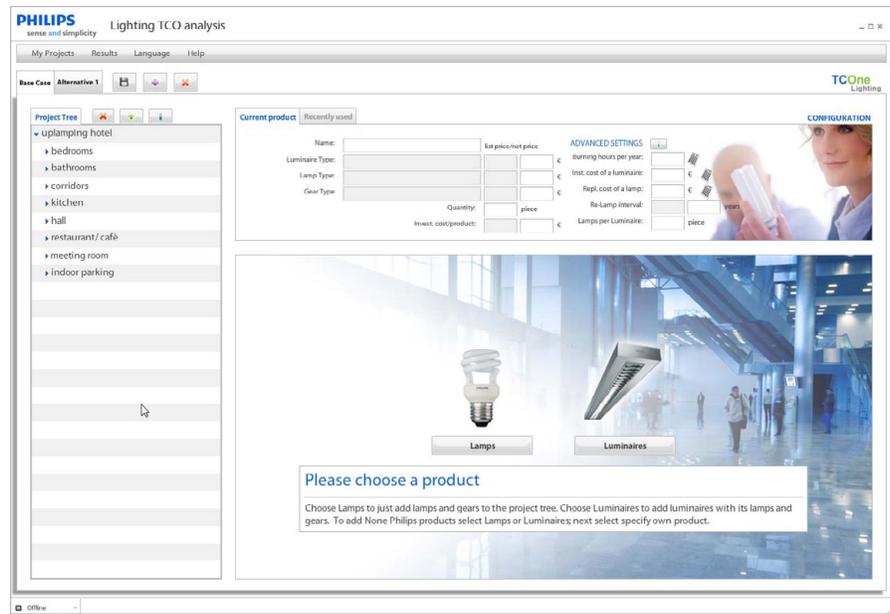
"With Adobe Flex and AIR, we can create a scalable, intuitive system that actually knows where to source the appropriate data and a convenient way to display the information. We've found a solution that reduces costs, boosts productivity, and is extremely appealing to our customers and our employees."

Roman Stahlberg,
Global senior business process manager-Commercial,
Philips Lighting

With the dynamic RIA built in Adobe Flex and delivered to the desktop via AIR, salespeople have a direct and dynamic link to the data stored in SAP systems, enabling them to create and edit quotes in real time and capitalize on new sales opportunities.

Dynamic access to information

Today, government regulations require that contractors provide estimated energy consumption statements for commercial projects. Builders trying to meet these regulations or to show off their eco-friendly practices need to have on hand accurate measurements of energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions for specific design components. As their products contribute significantly to the overall energy efficiency of a building project, Philips Lighting finds immediate access to such data to be business-critical.

Working with Apollogic, a local systems integrator, Philips developed the TCOne tool on the Adobe Flash Platform to provide immediate, dynamic access to the vast amounts of information in the company's database. "With so much product information already in storage, it's important for us to be able to quickly access the data to recommend an appropriate solution that fits within the environmental guidelines of the project and also within the customer's cost limits," says Thijs.

The Adobe powered program enables Philips Lighting sales managers to retrieve data from the various SAP modules to efficiently create a cost analysis of a lighting system, complete with the energy consumption ratings. Leveraging the agility of the solution, the sales manager can easily swap particular components of a lighting system at the customer's request to address cost and environmental concerns.

For example, the rich interface allows a sales manager to create an overview of a lighting system and instantly generate expressive, detailed graphs to demonstrate the total cost of the system, the initial required investment, the energy consumption ratings, and the cost of maintenance. At any time, the sales manager can make adjustments to the proposed system, which are recorded and processed in real time to generate an updated proposal.

"Our sales managers now have an excellent tool to demonstrate our value proposition. With the dynamic quoting capabilities, we can show our customer—an architect, a building owner, anyone— that we aren't just selling a product. We're providing a valuable service by helping them optimize their solution to meet their requirements," states Thijs.

Using the TCOne tool, sales managers can efficiently create an analysis of a lighting system, complete with detailed graphs that demonstrate the total cost of the system, the initial required investment, the energy consumption ratings, and the cost of maintenance. Using the Adobe Flash Platform, Philips successfully eliminated the hassles associated with aggregating massive amounts of data from disparate sources to deliver superior value-added service.
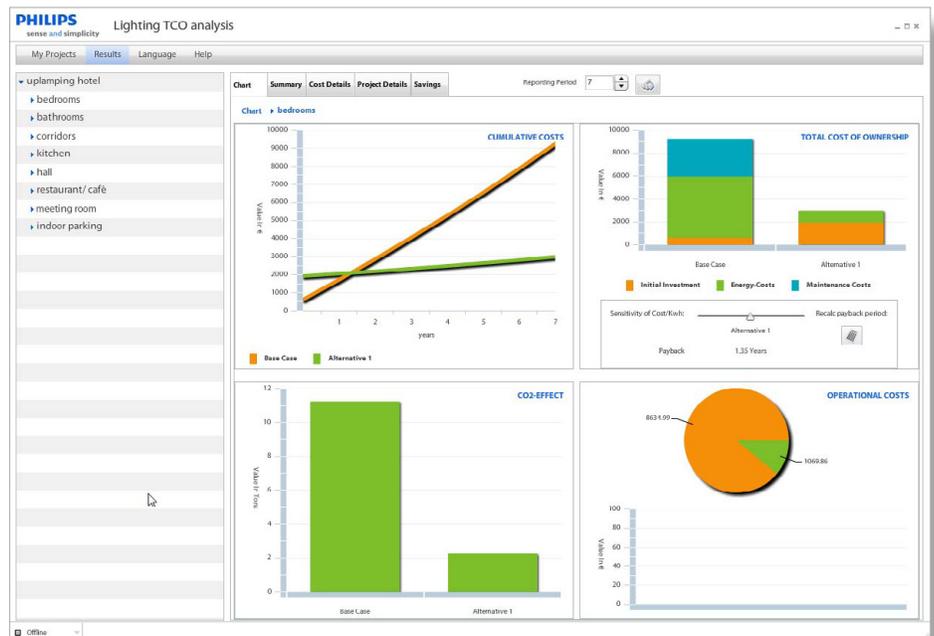
In addition to the dynamic, real-time data access the program provides, Philips employees leverage the tool to help customers devise cost-effective, sensible maintenance plans. The plans are critical to Philips' clients controlling their costs and running their businesses seamlessly. "We have all the data in our system to develop an optimal replacement plan to keep their business running efficiently. With TCOne, maintenance managers have real-time visibility into their current inventories and can plan for timely replacements of products reaching end-of-life status," states Thijs.

Customer experience comes first
Philips Lighting selected the Adobe Flash Platform for its flexibility and easy integration. Utilizing the Adobe platform, the company successfully eliminated the hassles associated with aggregating massive amounts of data from disparate sources to deliver superior value-added service.

The feature-rich Adobe solution is well received by employees and customers alike. Customers are reaping the benefits from sales managers' new-found ability to delivery timely, customized proposals that meet each customer's specific needs. The clearly defined, detailed reports enable customers to make informed decisions about their projects, maximizing the return on their investments. Employees, meanwhile, rave about the reliable access and availability of critical data that enables them to do their jobs more efficiently and to take advantage of new sales opportunities that were previously missed.

With the successful launch in Europe, Philips plans to release similar tools in Asia and North America to employees and clients. "With Adobe Flex and AIR, we can create a scalable, intuitive application that actually knows where to source the appropriate data and a convenient way to display the information," says Stahlberg. "We found a solution that reduces costs, boosts productivity, and is extremely appealing to our customers and our employees."

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