

Club Car® Accelerates Global Customer Satisfaction by Delivering Quality Product Information with Arbortext®

Leading Maker of Golf Cars and Utility Vehicles Cuts Publishing Time by 25%, and Expects to Save \$500,000 in the Next Three Years Using PTC's Solutions

Club Car, Inc., Augusta, Georgia

Beginning in 1958, Club Car's product portfolio, which started with manufacturing golf cars, began to grow rapidly, and today includes a much broader selection of vehicles. The company also develops utility vehicles, including multi-passenger shuttles, as well as off-road and rough-terrain utility vehicles. Club Car is known throughout the industry for its commitment to high-quality products, outstanding customer satisfaction, and manufacturing top-rated golf cars and utility vehicles, year after year. For example, the company uses aluminum frames in its golf car products, a practice that both eliminates rust issues in coastal areas and greatly improves product lifespan and quality.

Club Car employs 1,100 people at its headquarters in Augusta, Georgia. Within the \$1.5 billion golf industry, Club Car is a leader in the golf car market. The company increasingly exports to other countries, and within a very competitive market, Club Car continues to grow each year by delivering innovative, superior products.

The Challenge: Reduce Publication Lifecycle and Costs; Improve Service to Global Markets

In recent years, a flat golf market and higher commodity prices have driven companies to innovate for less cost. Club Car is no exception; the company has been very successful in expanding its product offerings. At the same time, the company has grown its market share of international customers, which now account for a significant percentage of Club Car's sales, and going forward, the company is focused on expanding its global presence even more.

Rapid innovation and the increase in international customers combined to create a publishing challenge for Club Car; the company now publishes hundreds of technical manuals, marketing collateral, sales brochures and other publications each year, all of which need to be translated and published in multiple languages. Club Car's 'cut-and-paste' publishing solutions could not keep pace with its quickly changing products and increasing translation demands. Over 80% of the information in each manual could possibly be reused, yet every document had to be manually updated by the publication team, making 70% of resource utilization a non-value added activity. In addition, each new manual took more than a month to translate and reformat, making the process economically infeasible for full international markets.



Club Car's product portfolio started with manufacturing golf cars.

The Solution: Arbortext Product Information Delivery Software from PTC

Club Car needed a publishing solution that could keep pace with product development and expanding international markets. To meet this need, Club Car first established their publishing capabilities criteria, then evaluated industry vendors, and ultimately selected Arbortext, an enterprise publishing software solution that supports the entire enterprise publishing process from creation through delivery. Arbortext Publishing Engine automates the publishing of materials to multiple languages and formats without the need for manual reformatting or reflowing documents—an enormous time-saver. Publications can also be formatted for multiple media from the same template, so that printed and online materials are generated simultaneously. By eliminating manual reformatting done by an outside partner, Arbortext dramatically increased Club Car's efficiency—exactly what the company needed to reduce both the publishing lifecycle and the costs associated with it.

“Arbortext has transformed the way we publish documents and provide product information to our customers. We are much more efficient because of Arbortext. It was exactly what we needed to streamline our publishing process.”

– Jeff S. Kennedy, Manager, Engineering Information and Systems

The Results: Significant Savings, Flexible Future

With Arbortext in place, Club Car quickly saw cost and time savings in producing foreign language publications. Publication savings alone will be approximately \$92,000 per year, as the \$900 per title that previously went toward reformatting translated documents was entirely recouped for every document. Overall savings is projected to reach half-a-million dollars over the next three years.

Not only did Arbortext reduce hard costs, but the streamlined publishing process also created several 'soft' benefits, including faster time-to-market, more satisfied customers, and fewer mistakes. With Arbortext, the publishing lifecycle has been reduced by five days, or 25%. Over the next several years, the initial benefits of Arbortext will be followed by full content reuse and integration with PTC's Windchill® and Pro/ENGINEER® software, allowing for highly automated document creation, assembly, publishing and distribution. Arbortext is designed to expand with a client's needs: as Club Car grows, so will Arbortext.

Aligning Technical Publications with Product Quality

For Club Car, service manuals are a big part of its product package. Customers are typically dealers who buy fleets of cars or vehicles, and use the product manuals on a regular basis, accessing the documents online through a secure extranet. Customers, therefore, are experts in the product category; they expect timely updates and very accurate technical publications.

Although Club Car is renowned for its extremely high-quality products, in recent years the company struggled to provide customers with the most up-to-date manuals because of rapid engineering innovations.

Each year, Club Car was producing over 40 unique owners' manuals in English, along with 95 translated manuals. Each manual had to be manually copied and reformatted for even the slightest product changes. The repercussions of this inefficiency were clear: a backlog of 5,000 hours of work had accumulated as the publishing team struggled to keep pace with product development. With a future service strategy that included delivering custom, built-to-stock publications and an on-demand print solution for customers, Club Car needed a publishing process that was as innovative and effective as its product development.

Meeting a Global Need

The situation was especially acute for international publications. Club Car needed to publish technical publications in 17 languages, including Chinese, French, Norwegian and Dutch. With their current translation process, every document had to be disassembled and stored as unformatted text before being translated by an outside partner. After translation, the text had to be reformatted and flowed into a new document. The amount of work was staggering, and with its current publishing process, Club Car could not provide a full range of manuals to international customers. The potential for growth in the international market was significant; in order to increase global sales, Club Car needed to approach customers in each country with fully translated publications – proof that Club Car could meet their needs.

Club Car and PTC: A Natural Partnership

Club Car has worked with PTC since 2000, when the company bought its first seats of Pro/ENGINEER, PTC's leading 3D CAD (computer-aided design) software. Club Car has since added Pro/INTRALINK® (data management), Windchill (project management), Arbortext IsoDraw® (technical illustrations from CAD designs) and, most recently, Arbortext authoring and publishing tools to its software solutions. When Club Car began the process of choosing a publishing solution, Arbortext emerged as the preferred choice for two reasons: first, it met all publishing capabilities defined in the selection process, and second, it offered integration with PTC software already in use at Club Car.

Arbortext enabled Club Car to replace its traditional "copy-and-paste" publishing with a rich, automated XML-based solution. Arbortext automatically reuses information and applies changes across all media (print, Web, CD, etc.), eliminating time-consuming manual work. As the company deploys more and more of the capabilities of Arbortext, the publishing team will be able to focus purely on updating design content work. With Arbortext, Club Car can create an integrated system that tracks products from designs in Pro/ENGINEER to the final publications, and then through translation and international distribution.

Happy Customers Abroad, Significant Savings at Home

After implementing Arbortext, Club Car was able to provide its global customers with technical publications faster, at a significantly lower cost to the company. Customers overseas now have access to a premium brand and a high level of service, while Club Car has created a large channel for sales growth. In the future, Club Car will see an even greater improvement in publication lifecycle as content management becomes integrated with Arbortext.

Club Car has always paid close attention to the needs of its customers; with the help of Arbortext, the company will continue to provide the level of service that has contributed to its success for 50 years.

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