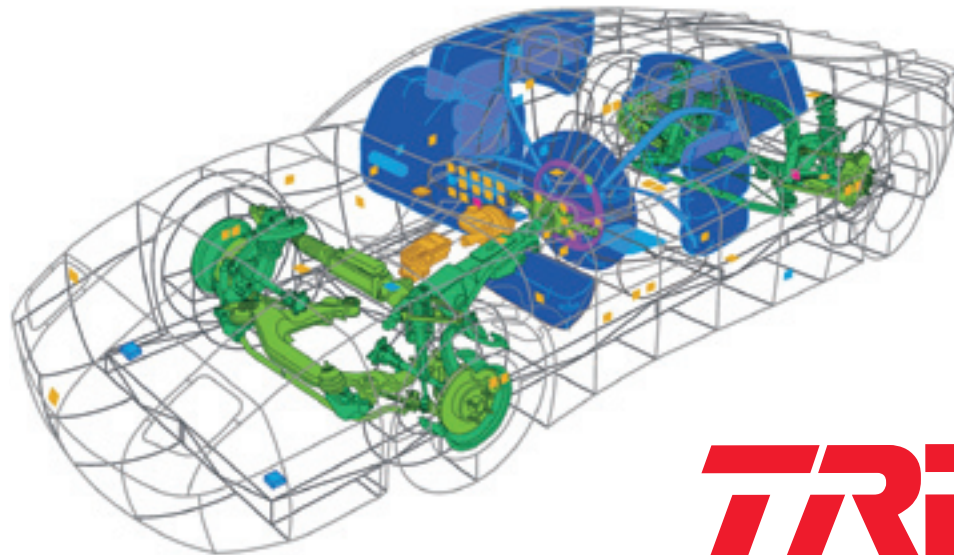




**Automotive
Agent**

Your Key to Integration

Success Story TRW • issue 12/2006



Assessing own performance from a customer angle

TRW automates Quality Reporting with iPoint-systems' Automotive Agent

TRW Automotive is a global player in the automotive supply market. The company is dedicated to close cooperation with its customers in designing and manufacturing products. To reach its own high quality standards TRW has to be able to access and process quality data quickly. iPoint-systems' Automotive Agent now automatically retrieves required data and makes them available wherever and whenever TRW needs them.

Given that the structure, navigation and features differed considerably from portal to portal this effort was extremely time-consuming. As useful as industry-wide standards would be they have not yet been established. Even retrieving the data didn't mean that the job was done for TRW: after data had been retrieved they still had to be input into the company's own system, and this was generally a manual process.

TRW's wide product range and extremely large customer base made this task quite a challenge in the past. Automotive manufacturers (OEMs) post information required for Quality Reporting on special internet portals which suppliers have to log-on to. Several TRW staff had to collect the required information from different portals for several hours every week.

TRW decided that this way to work was no longer sustainable: "Retrieving quality data had become a real time and resources drain. And on top of that, data still had to be fed into our systems. We had to find a way to automate these processes as far as possible", notes Karl Lindenberg, TRW Automotive Director Customer Quality.

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TRW found the solution to its problems at Reutlingen-based iPoint-systems gmbh. The company is specialized in developing standard software for e-business integration and had the ideal solution for TRW: the "Automotive Agent" automatically visits specific OEM portals at regular intervals and independently tracks down defined quality data. These data are immediately uploaded to TRW, i.e. it extracts and converts the data and then integrates them into the respective system. The Agent is managed by so-called Missions which define exactly which data can be retrieved from which portal, when they are to be retrieved and how they are to be integrated into TRW's systems.

The starting shot for the project sounded at the end of 2005. Within only three months a team comprising TRW staff from the central IT department in Koblenz, the central quality department in Neuwied and iPoint staff had created a test version. After another three months the system went live for the first customer portals at TRW in conjunction with the BI software Web-Focus. Since then Automotive Agent has been scanning OEM portals twice a day for new information and storing it on the TRW server. In a separate step newly retrieved data are cross-checked for compatibility and harmonised with special software and are stored in a standard format on another server.

Depending on access rights WebFocus users can select different reports (global, regional or local) and define individual reports. The results are presented in diagrams or tables as required, which means that figures no longer have to be processed to enable a visual presentation. If the structure of a portal changes and Automotive Agent is unable to find required data the Agent automatically posts an alert. Necessary adjustments to respective missions are swiftly implemented by iPoint-systems online as agreed in a service contract.



Karl Lindenberg

"We would never have thought that data transmission from customer portals would be this efficient thanks to the iPoint solution. Now we can see

our own quality and performance from our customers' angle. Tasks which used to be incredibly time-consuming have now dropped off our radar", comments Lindenberg. As a result of the positive experience in the first year TRW intends to expand the solution to other customer portals to enhance its internal quality reporting.

- > Latest figures can be quickly retrieved and are available for meetings, without having to be processed for visual presentation.
- > Information is supplied to individual TRW plants; staff is no longer required to painstakingly navigate customer portals to import data for internal processing.
- > Quality results and trends in global business can be presented and compared online, without having to be processed manually.

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- AC Solutions
- amotIQ
- BTC
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- Fraunhofer Institut
- IBM
- IBS
- Infor
- Mieschke Hofmann & Partner
- Oracle
- SAP
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references:

- Arvin Meritor Inc.
- Automotive Lighting
- BEHR
- BERU
- Bosch
- Continental Teves
- DENSO AUTOMOTIVE
- ElringKlinger
- Emhart Automotiv Tucker
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