



Case Study

Industrial – Diagnostic Devices



RBR

Company

RBR Ltd.

Location

Ottawa, Canada

Industry

Industrial

Business Challenges

- Reduce long product development cycles
- Enable global deployment
- Meet challenging product launch deadlines

Solutions

Arena PLM BOMControl

Business Benefits

- Formalized more efficient product development processes
- Ensured globally dispersed teams worked from most current bill of material (BOM) version
- Provided a scalable economic product lifecycle management (PLM) solution

Why RBR Switched to Cloud PLM?

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Quarterbacked by a team of enthusiastic engineers and oceanographers, RBR is part of a micro niche industry that makes high-precision scientific instrumentation for oceanographic, freshwater, groundwater and cryospheric research. The Ottawa, Canada-based company's recent products include a versatile data buoy controller, laboratory salinometer and a mooring line modem.



RBR invests considerable effort into research and development, which is carried out in collaboration with customers to ensure that the instruments produced are precisely what the customer wants and can afford. "Our instruments are all built on a modular platform to permit rapid custom configuration," says Dr. Greg

Johnson, RBR president. "All of our new generation single, dual and multi-channel loggers are based on a new architecture that incorporates increased memory, more battery power and faster data download."

Johnson says the company's "high mix, low volume" built-to-order products can present a manufacturing challenge, especially since the products are deployed on all seven continents. According to Johnson, one of the more significant manufacturing hurdles impacting RBR is tracking revisions and form-fit function equivalence. "Calibration for us is a long, time consuming step," he says. "And so lead times can be awkward. Trying to make lots of different information systems talk to each other can be challenging."

“ We didn’t want to host anything ourselves. We wanted to be able to get at the information from anywhere, not just on certain computers in the office. My experience with in-house PLM solutions left me tired of on-premises PLM and choose a cloud based PLM solution.

— Dr. Greg Johnson, President, RBR Ltd.

To ensure quality standards and balancing inventory against lead times, Johnson realized the company needed to formalize its bill of materials (BOM) process.

"Arena is very economical and offers excellent pricing for small companies. We can scale as we need to," says Johnson. "We didn't want something with historical baggage of systems that were designed in the DOS days."

Another problem Johnson needed to address was the growing need for a coherent part numbering scheme. "We didn't have revision control for mechanical parts before, we only did it for electronic parts," he admits.



“Arena looked like a modern design done by people who understood how to build things in the cloud. Arena PLM BOMControl takes care of number creation, revision control, bill of materials and costing. Allowing my globally dispersed team to access the BOM anywhere was a big plus.”

— Dr. Greg Johnson, President, RBR Ltd.

SOLUTIONS

Because Arena PLM BOMControl was a cloud-based solution, it removed the infrastructure, IT concerns and frustrations associated with on-premise solutions. “Arena looked like a modern design done by people who understood how to build things in the cloud,” he says. “BOMControl takes care of number creation, revision control, bill of materials and costing. Allowing my globally dispersed team to access the BOM anywhere was a big plus.”

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— Dr. Greg Johnson, President, RBR Ltd.

Arena’s affordability was also attractive to Johnson, who in the past had been discouraged by the compulsory minimum seat count demanded by other PLM solutions. “Arena is very economical and offers excellent pricing for small companies,” says Johnson. “We can scale as we need to. We see that Arena supports much larger companies as well, which is great; we want to be able to scale as we need it and not be forced to pay just to get started.”

BUSINESS RESULTS



With Arena, Johnson was able to implement new processes quickly and easily. “We were able to get going in a couple of weeks, which was great. We wouldn’t have done it if it had been a multi-month project — that would have been a disaster.” Easy and quick implementation was a major benefit considering RBR’s competitive advantage over enterprise-sized companies, as was accelerated time to market. “Arena helps with the speed of innovation and ability to be agile,” says Johnson. “There are a couple of other manufacturers who are bigger than us, but they are not able to release new products very rapidly.”

“Because we have Arena, we can pull ideas together and make fully formed products in a short period of time and deliver them to market faster than our competition.”

— Dr. Greg Johnson, President, RBR Ltd.

NEXT STEPS

“Moving forward, Johnson is considering Arena PLM Demand, a solution that provides manufacturers with part visibility to calculate aggregated component needs for their entire product portfolio to better negotiate with their suppliers and contract manufacturers.”

Find out how Arena can help you achieve success and take your company from chaos to calm. Sign up for a demo at www.arenasolutions.com/plm-demo