Enhancing Quality and Compliance Processes With a Global, Unified System

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Filtronic is a leading designer and manufacturer of radio frequency (RF), microwave, and mmWave technologies that transmit, receive, and condition radio signals for a range of challenging applications including telecommunications infrastructure, aerospace and defense, space, test and measurement, and critical communications. In the specialized field of RF technology, a leader and problem-solver like Filtronic must constantly look beyond the horizon and push boundaries to get their clients to market faster. Meeting challenging technological needs by developing repeatable, reliable, and compliant components and subsystems is critical to maintain their competitive edge.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

As a global company with operations in the U.K. and U.S., Filtronic struggled with an internally developed product development tool. Tracking, maintaining, and releasing products was slow and inefficient. Filtronic had design, manufacturing, and quality silos that made it difficult for teams to see the interconnectedness of products,

AT A GLANCE

Mission
Create value for clients through technology leadership

Best Thing About Arena
Connected product and quality information

Bottom-Line Impact
Empowers Filtronic’s global team to deliver innovative products faster

Key Benefits
- Cut engineering change cycle time by 50%
- Enable collaboration across global teams
- Speed quality resolution by 50%
- Meet customer compliance requirements
- Stay ahead of competition and drive continuous innovation
We selected Arena PLM to bring our global teams together. It's a very visible system that benefits all of our projects and is an integral part of our business processes.

—Richard Rushton, Quality Environmental Health and Safety Manager, Filtronic

THE SOLUTION

Arena enables Filtronic's dispersed teams to design, produce, and deliver innovative products quickly while tracking compliance.

To be a truly global, one-stop manufacturing shop, Filtronic needed to reduce complexity and better control product design and supporting documentation in a single, unified platform. They selected Arena's cloud-based PLM solution to streamline their complex product development processes and speed time to market in a highly competitive industry.

Arena enables Filtronic to control the complete product record and make it accessible anytime and anywhere. Speed is critical and Rushton said, "If you’re slow—you’re already too late when you sell in fast-moving markets like telecom." In China, the U.K., and the U.S., Filtronic employees are collaborating in real time with Arena to control and manage all drawings, procedures, and product documentation. Having revision-controlled information in one system gives all impacted teams a structured approach to manage parts, documents, and the entire product record effectively.

KEY BENEFITS

Arena has been an integral part of Filtronic’s business systems for many years and is used throughout the company. “With Arena, Filtronic can pull all the design, manufacturing, and quality information into a single, unified product record,” said Rushton.

After adopting Arena PLM, Filtronic’s teams were able to easily track requirements, revisions, quality, and compliance. This provided complete visibility of their critical product and quality processes. Arena simplified issue tracking with related corrective actions which reduced time to resolution by 50% and increased customer satisfaction. “Our customers expect high-quality parts and quick responses, and Arena allows us to immediately take action on any issue with a part, which sustains that reputation,” noted Rushton.

Design, engineering, and production teams collaborate to improve quality and compliance processes.

With Filtronic’s highly technical work, communication platforms are critical for quality. The improved data integrity and accuracy from controlling information in Arena helps Filtronic achieve substantial time savings. Additional time savings are realized because teams from any location can now access the right information easily and speed review and approvals for engineering changes—which are linked directly to the affected components, subassemblies, and
documents in a multilevel bill of materials (BOM). This BOM is the heart of the product record and the best way to see the entire product design from top to bottom while enabling reuse of components and avoiding the creation and release of duplicate components. "With enhanced global collaboration and improved engineering change management processes, it now takes us about half the time to implement an engineering change," stated Rushton.

In addition, when the pandemic hit, Arena enabled Filtronic’s teams to continue to work effectively from remote locations to keep their product development and launch processes on schedule.

Finally, with the complete product record managed in one system, Arena can link quality records directly to the affected component or assembly to provide added visibility and control. This product-centric approach simplifies quality issue resolution and regulatory compliance enabling Filtronic to create a solid, connected framework for all quality activities. "One of the biggest benefits is the interconnectedness of the Arena system," said Rushton. "A process audit can connect to associated procedures, documents, and a resulting corrective action report (CAR), so our teams get increased traceability and can easily click from one record to another. This saves our teams significant time during audit preparation and reduces the potential for human error because team members don’t have to rely solely on their memory or search for disconnected and related documents."

**INNOVATION NEVER SLEEPS**

Filtronic’s business is about advancing communication. Arena supports this effort with a simpler way to bring people, products, and processes together into a single cloud system.

Innovation never sleeps and Filtronic is continuing to find ways to improve their business processes and products to satisfy evolving customer requirements. With the Arena foundation now in place, Filtronic plans to connect additional systems using Arena’s application programming interface (API) to drive upstream and downstream processes. With Arena, Filtronic is positioned to make technological and business process advances to help them innovate faster in ever-changing market conditions.

"With enhanced global collaboration and improved engineering change management processes, it now takes us about half the time to implement an engineering change."

—Richard Rushton, Quality Environmental Health and Safety Manager, Filtronic