



Total Software Management System

Major Manufacturing Software Vendor Uses Roundtable to Attract and Support Large Customers

QAD Poland

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QAD Poland - Customer Success Story

QAD Poland Gains the Roundtable Edge

QAD Poland, a subsidiary of QAD, Inc. established in 1996, uses the Roundtable TSMS, software configuration management tool for Progress-based systems, to efficiently track and manage customizations for more than 70 European customers. Many of these customers have multiple sites spanning numerous countries, not to mention multiple databases requiring complex support needs.

QAD Poland receives QAD's base product, MFG/PRO, from US headquarters, makes the necessary modifications for the European market, then performs additional customizations for each customer. The 75-employee company is frequently asked to make customizations on a site-by-site basis, considerably multiplying the number of customizations it has to manage. To serve customers more efficiently and effectively, QAD Poland turned to the Roundtable configuration management solution.

"Progress software products are central to the MFG/PRO solution," says Kamil Skudlarski, Support and Development Manager at QAD Poland. "The flexibility of the Progress 4GL language makes it easy for QAD Poland to develop custom versions of QAD products. And Roundtable's seamless integration with the

Progress development environment and its delivery of rich functionality takes that effort a step further. The Roundtable Total Software Management System provides the management tools necessary for tracking and controlling changes during our frequent update cycle. By using Roundtable as the configuration management solution for tracking the unique development changes made by our team, we are free to focus on what we are here for – increasing customer satisfaction and maintaining a more frequent release schedule."

The Challenge

The development team, led by Skudlarski, is made up of nine people, including two managers, two analysts, three programmers, one person dedicated to first line customer support, and one to deployment. This small team supports and maintains more than 70 customers.

The typical customer has multiple enterprise solutions that must be integrated with MFG/PRO and other QAD products in order to sustain their operational processes. Managing a large customer base with individual customizations and integrations presents a challenge to both development and support resources. Managing the development and support workload with an increasing number of customers and no increase in QAD Poland resources would not



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be possible without the aid of Roundtable.

The demands on Skudlarski's team are intense. Updates are done on-site to further extend the resources of the department. With a solution such as Roundtable, the deployment is simple and intuitive and can dramatically reduce the time spent on the delivery and installation process.

"Prior to the Roundtable installation, we had some critical challenges in upgrading our customers," Skudlarski says. "The process was not clear or standardized since each deployment was different and therefore time consuming. Although frequent upgrades provided our customers with new functionality, those upgrades were becoming costly and harder to implement."

Since our customers often have huge databases, the upgrade process must be secure, consistent and complete every time. It must adhere to a firm set of standards and cannot depend solely on the experience or ability of the programmer doing the installation or upgrade. With Roundtable, QAD Poland's clients can now install their own releases, allowing QAD Poland to focus on adding customer value.

"In many cases we are still doing the installation ourselves," Skudlarski says. "When Roundtable procedures are installed underneath the customer's update, Roundtable's management tools make the update more reliable and of a higher quality. Enhancements are delivered faster and are transparent to the end user. These aspects are critical to the ultimate satisfaction of our customer."

Without the Roundtable Total Software Management System, QAD Poland would have had trouble simply maintaining current solutions, much less be able to take on new business. The support demands of an ever-increasing customer base were becoming burdensome and negatively impacting the company's capacity for growth.

The Roundtable Solution

"With the development and deployment challenges QAD Poland faced, we required much more than a simple version control tool," Skudlarski states. "We needed a tool to help control the costs of an intensive development life cycle, which is critical for delivering a global enterprise IT solution. We needed a tool that would allow us to effectively manage resources, measure and track the system changes and automate the deployment of applications. Roundtable has succeed in this role."

QAD Poland depends on Roundtable to shorten the development cycle, increase the deployment schedule, improve the reliability of the data and track the customized applications their customers' solutions require.

Roundtable Total Software Management System is geared to the Progress developer. A process-oriented software configuration management tool, it promotes team development for large, complex client/server development projects. The robust solution is innovative, easy to use, and seamlessly integrated with Progress.

QAD Poland tracks and monitors the modifications made to the base

product from QAD Corporate. In an instant, Roundtable can update the entire team when a piece is modified. Roundtable protects the customer code developed specifically for each client, saving valuable time by delivering updates that are reliable and available. Roundtable's open API has enabled QAD Poland to track tasks specific to their customers.

Benefits of Roundtable

"Adding the technological strengths of Roundtable to our development and deployment process has taken QAD Poland to a higher level by simplifying management, controlling the development process and allowing us to surpass our competitors when it comes to the frequency of releases," Skudlarski says. "Our Roundtable implementation certainly has contributed to our ability to attract larger customers and it has increased our productivity, responsiveness, and reliability. It has made the process more cost-efficient, allowing us to focus on meeting business demands rather than on the technology."

Roundtable's tight integration with Progress gives the developers the ability to take advantage of a robust software configuration management tool, providing immediate and comprehensive insight into the myriad of modifications made during custom development. Roundtable deploys systems and updates, reducing the time, cost, errors and management of development projects.

"Without Roundtable and the control, standards and process it puts in place, we would not be able to deliver the same level of service to our customers," Skudlarski says. "Our customers require customization



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which adds a competitive advantage to a packaged solution. We deliver, maintain and support that solution more effectively and efficiently as a result of Roundtable."

Return on Investment

"At the end of the day, we can serve our customers better, provide more frequent updates, deliver new functionality to our clients and do it all with the existing manpower and resources available to us in our department," Skudlarski says. "As these demands increase, the Roundtable Total Management System continues to deliver. That's not just a cost savings solution. It's a customer enhancement solution."

The Bottom Line

QAD maintains its leadership position in this industry by delivering a targeted, unique solution that is technologically more advanced than of its competitors. The combination of QAD technology and Roundtable dramatically helps both QAD Poland and its customers achieve a competitive advantage in today's complex business environment.

QAD Background

Founded in 1979, QAD is a leading provider of enterprise and extended supply-chain management software to multinational companies of all sizes, with special focus on the mid-market. QAD is based in Carpinteria in Santa Barbara County, USA, and is Progress' largest Application Provider. QAD software helps speed business processes for more than 300,000 licensed users at over 4,600 licensed sites in more than 80 countries. Considered a leading provider of e-business solutions for manufacturing and distribution companies, QAD's industry-specific applications deliver the functionality necessary to run today's corporate enterprise by leveraging mission-critical information.

QAD's MFG/PRO software is a comprehensive, open architected, Internet-enabled enterprise solution that has set new standards for functionality, rapid implementation and ease of use. Available in 26 languages and able to support multiple currencies, QAD software provides comprehensive, fully integrated solutions that target the needs of automotive, consumer products, electronics, food and beverage, industrial products, and medical companies. MFG/PRO supports centralized, client/server and thin-client configurations and is ideal for distributed operations.



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