

success stories



Precise, Reliable, Flexible: Satellite control with Engineering Base



Astrium, a 100% subsidiary of the globally leading aerospace company EADS, specializes in cosmonautics and space-based services. In Europe, the company employs about 11,000 staff members. The focus of the Ottobrunn division Astrium GmbH is among other things on satellite ground station antennae and large measuring systems for satellite antennae e.g. for telecommunication, earth observation, science and navigation. 15 test systems have already been installed worldwide. The measuring halls contain two huge reflectors weighing several tons with meticulously milled precision surfaces. To be able to measure the radiation over different solid angles, the antenna superstructures of the satellites are precisely aligned with the reflectors using a multi-axle positioning system.

■ Indispensable

For the electrical design of the highly complex drive technology and the sensory system as well as for the ground station antennae for satellite monitoring and control, Astrium now relies on Engineering Base (EB) from AUCOTEC. The object-oriented and database-driven E-CAE tool contains everything the aerospace specialists need.

The functional gaps of the software products tested before EB made it clear which functions were indispensable for Astrium needs: e.g. the function-oriented copying simply by drag & drop. The ease of learning and the intuitive handling, supported by familiar Microsoft tools such as Visio for the graphics, SQL server and VBA, were decisive criteria for the satellite professionals. With EB, distinctly more transparency and above all consistency of the design and documentation data is ensured.

■ From Spitsbergen to South Africa

An important business segment of Astrium is the maintenance of the ground station antennae. Regular upgrades demand absolute precision in the documentation and optimum preparations because these stations usually are located in remote places of the globe, e.g. Spitsbergen or South Africa. Even with the best of preparations, unexpected changes may be required locally. In this case it is essential to act quickly and flexibly. For this purpose EB is ideal, for even with simultaneous worldwide online access from the notebooks of several users one always gets an up-to-date status of the ongoing work.

