

## Successful cooperation between Eurocopter and Ovidius Graphic management with ICN-Toolbox

In the aerospace industry huge amounts of manuals are created whose physical weight comes close to that of an aircraft. At Eurocopter Germany in Donauwörth, 4,000 different graphics are used to describe each helicopter type manufactured by the company. To help technical writers handle this amount of data with ease a functional data management tool is necessary, which can be integrated into the workflows of the documentation department.

### Eurocopter Germany

The Eurocopter Group, which was formed in 1992 by a merger of the helicopter divisions of German Daimler Chrysler Aerospace (DASA) and French Aerospatiale Matra is a 100% subsidiary of the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) - the second largest aerospace and defence company in the world. The headquarters of Eurocopter are in Marignane in the South of France. The German headquarters are in Donauwörth where Eurocopter employs 3,800 people. Other facility sites are Ottobrunn near Munich and Kassel, in Germany, La Courneuve in France and Cuatro Vientos in Spain.



NH90 - © Eurocopter

Today Eurocopter looks back on 12 years of success having secured once again its unrivalled position as the world's leading manufacturer of civil helicopters. In the military sector the French-German company is only surpassed by its rival Boeing, which benefits from the huge defence budget of the US government. More than 9,130 helicopters are currently in service with over 2,350 customers in 134 countries worldwide. In 2003, Eurocopter and its 10,000 employees realised a turnover of 2.61 billion euros.

The success of Eurocopter in the military sector is partly due to the famous two models Tiger and NH90. A civil helicopter that is widely known in Germany is BK 117, which even turns up in a German action TV show.

### S1000D in technical documentation

In a European company standardised workflows in technical documentation are crucial for a successful cooperation between the different facility sites. For those parts which are manufactured by external partners and suppliers, specifications are required. The huge amount of data necessary for creating a complete manual needs to be managed efficiently to avoid mistakes.

The standardisation of technical documentation is promoted by ASD/AIA, the European umbrella organisation for the aerospace industry. The specification ASD/AIA S1000D defines the entire documentation process and is widely used in the industry while the standard ATA iSpec 2200 is used in civil aviation. At Eurocopter both standards are deployed in technical documentation.

### About Ovidius

Ovidius is based in Berlin, Germany, and specialises in XML and SGML software solutions for creating, managing, and publishing of technical and scientific information. We help companies with complex documentation requirements, e.g. automotive, mechanical engineering, software "manufacturers", aviation and defence, medical engineering and IT companies.

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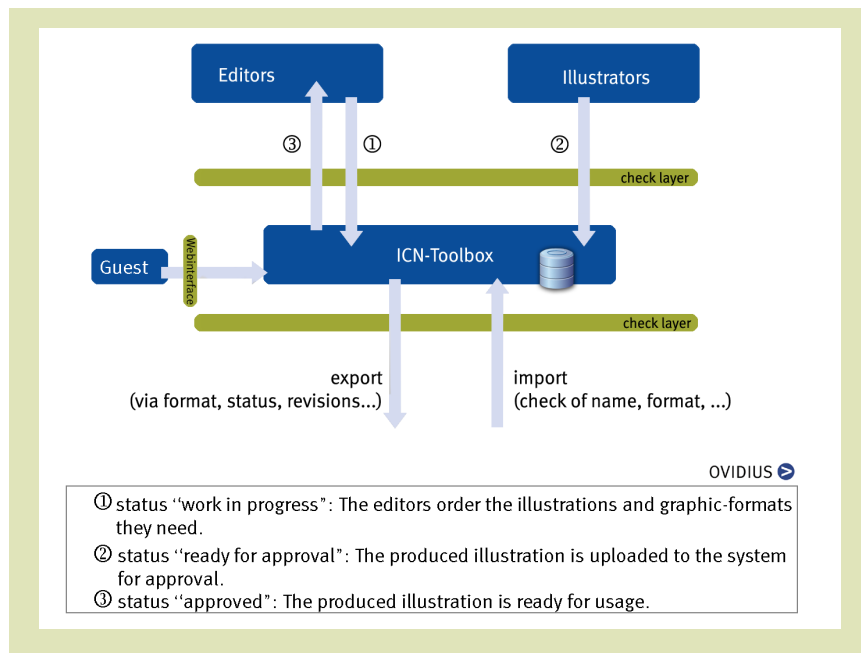
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## Implementing an approval mechanism for graphics

“With an increasing number of models the amount of graphics we have to handle has risen considerably“ says Manfred Röthinger, head of Technical Support Services at Eurocopter. „For each model almost 4,000 graphics are created and subsequently embedded in our technical content. As the documents are published in print and electronic formats our technical writers have to deal with a vast number of different graphic formats. This meant a lot of conversion work for the illustrators and took time away from their main task, which is creating high-quality graphics“ Manfred Röthinger explains the difficulties of the workflow.

The most pressing problem, however, were ad-hoc changes of the graphics. Graphics could be modified without having a system in place to track changes. “At this time, we were not able to make sure that only graphics with the status ‘approved‘ can be published“ explains Röthinger. As there was no defined workflow and mechanism for assigning unique names to each graphic within the project, Eurocopter’s internal processes became ever more complicated and errors multiplied.

In order to improve quality Eurocopter envisaged to implement a graphic database which was to be used to manage graphics and define the workflow for illustrators and technical writers. “We had been thinking about using a database for quite a time but were too busy to undertake such a project. In summer 2003 we finally started to bring forward ideas of how to implement an automatic graphic management in our environment” explains Manfred Röthinger.



With ICN-Toolbox Eurocopter established a technical documentation workflow which has resulted in increased quality assurance.

## Setting requirements for software and service provider

When writing the specification for the graphic management software different viewpoints and requirements had to be taken into account. While technical writers and illustrators demanded a user-friendly software, the IT department required a system that could be easily integrated with the existing Content Management Suite (CMS database). The system should also be able to implement a predefined workflow and automate the interaction between all members of the documentation department.

“The service provider we were looking for also had to meet certain requirements. As the aerospace industry has to create technical documents according to the standards ASD/AIA and ATA, we were looking for an experienced service provider in this field“ says Walter Watzl, project manager at Eurocopter. “One of the main factors that influenced our decision in favour of Berlin-based Ovidius and their ICN-Toolbox for managing illustration control numbers (ICN) was Ovidius’ strong background in the S1000D and ATA specifications as well as their deep knowledge of publishing processes with XML/SGML.”

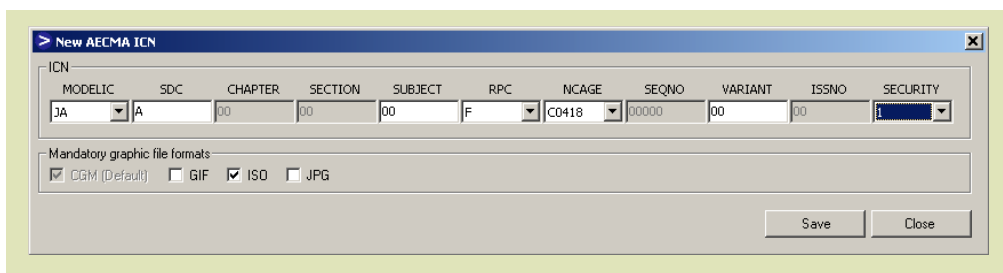
Ovidius is based in Berlin, Germany, and specialises in XML (Extensible Markup Language) and SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language) software solutions for creating, managing, and publishing of complex documents. ICN-Toolbox is a powerful and flexible solution for the management of graphics and illustrations based on the standards ATA iSpec 2200 and ASD/AIA S1000D. Similar solutions are already deployed successfully at the Eurocopter facility sites in Marignane.

## First practical experiences with ICN-Toolbox

“When specifying the requirements for the software we cooperated closely with Ovidius so that both sides could gain input which was used to improve the prototype” says Manfred Röthinger.

In order to smooth communication between customer and service provider Ovidius set up a secure website, which was used by Eurocopter to report bugs and customer requests. This reporting system proved very useful as Ovidius developers could quickly check the amount of work to be done and keep Eurocopter up to date with the latest developments and new versions.

In April the ICN-Toolbox beta version finally entered the testing phase. Some minor adjustments had to be made for joint projects such as the multi-role helicopter NH90. An example: To make cooperation between different Eurocopter facility sites easier each company had to be assigned a number space. Although this feature was not provided first – ICN-Toolbox initially started counting the graphics from number 1 onwards – number spaces could be implemented easily due to the flexible architecture of the tool. “In a major project these kinds of problems occur frequently” explains Walter Watzl. “However, thanks to the intensive support from Ovidius, all obstacles could be overcome extremely fast.”

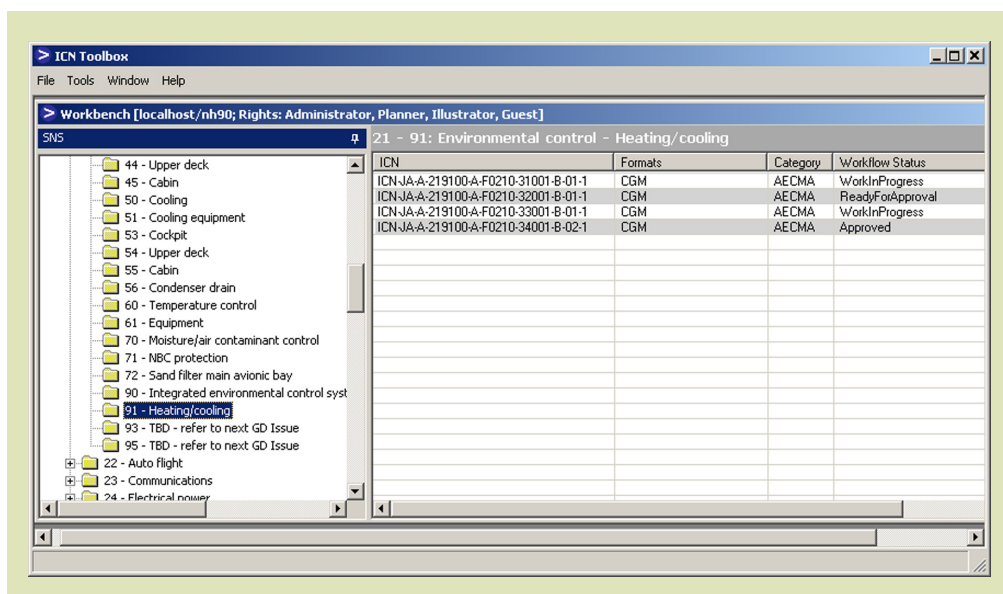


The template for creating new ICNs is easy to configure.

## Workflow management with ICN-Toolbox

“Before we started deploying ICN-Toolbox the processes for creating content and illustrations were inefficient and hardly structured. Files were stored on different network drives and the same number was assigned to various illustrations so that it became increasingly difficult for technical writers to keep track of the various graphics and graphic versions” says Walter Watzl.

With ICN-Toolbox Eurocopter can now make sure that each illustration number is unique within the system and that each process in content creation can be tracked. All relevant graphics are stored in the database and can be accessed easily by writers and illustrators. With the system controlling the handling of graphics automatically the quality could be improved considerably.



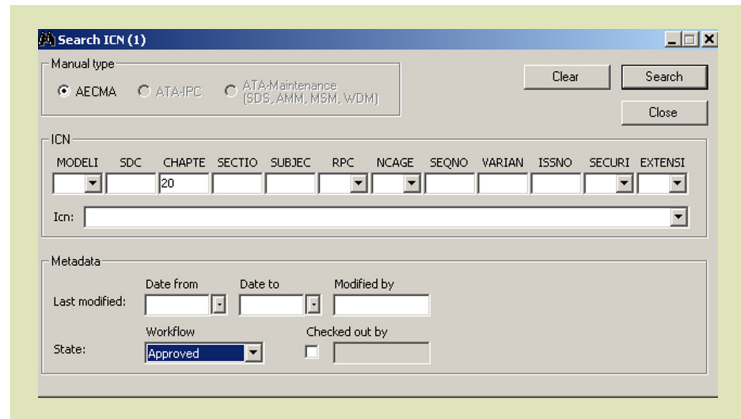
“At first our technical writers had some minor difficulties adapting to ICN-Toolbox. However, usability, workflow control and easy handling of ICN-Toolbox soon convinced everybody involved in technical documentation” says Walter Watzl.

ICN-Toolbox offers complex functionality via an intuitive user interface.

## Providing access to different user groups

After the successful implementation of ICN-Toolbox in the military sector Eurocopter is already planning on deploying the tool in the documentation departments responsible for civil helicopters. “To extend our quality and efficiency gains we could achieve with ICN-Toolbox we are now discussing the implementation of this powerful tool in our civil sector” Manfred Röthinger explains Eurocopter’s plans for the future.

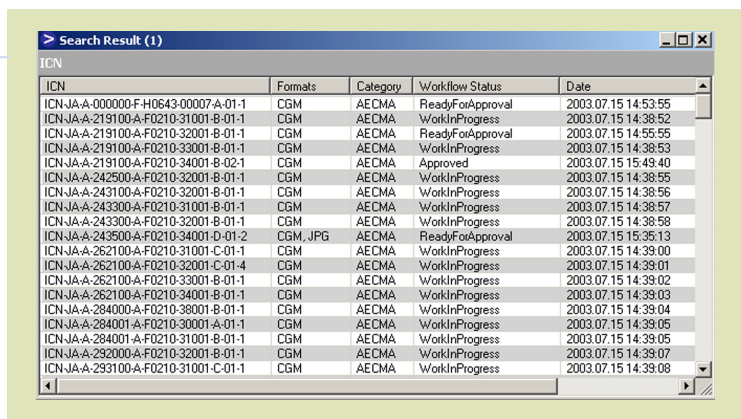
“But we will also continue improving the ICN-Toolbox already used in the military sector. For instance, we are planning on implementing a Web-based database access for our internal pilot training centre with limited user rights for Eurocopter pilots so that other user groups can benefit from this powerful tool” explains Manfred Röthinger.



The advanced search mechanism enables the user to find graphics quickly.

## About Eurocopter

The Eurocopter Group, which was founded in 1992, is now a French-German-Spanish company and a 100% subsidiary of EADS - one of the leading aerospace and defence companies in the world. At the present time the Eurocopter Group employs some 13,500 people. In 2005, Eurocopter secured its position as the world’s No. 1 with a turnover of 3.2 billion euros and orders for 401 new helicopters, while leading the way once again in the civil and parapublic sector with a share of 52%. Overall, the Group’s products account for 30% of the total world helicopter fleet. Its strong worldwide position is ensured by 16 subsidiaries on five continents, along with a dense network of distributors, certified agents and maintenance centres. More than 9,500 helicopters are currently in service with over 2,500 customers in 139 countries. Eurocopter is the world’s leading helicopter manufacturer and offers the largest range of civil and military helicopters worldwide.



ICN	Formats	Category	Workflow Status	Date
ICN-JA-A-000000-F0643-00007-A-01-1	CGM	AECMA	ReadyForApproval	2003.07.15 14:53:55
ICN-JA-A-219100-A-F0210-31001-B-01-1	CGM	AECMA	WorkInProgress	2003.07.15 14:38:52
ICN-JA-A-219100-A-F0210-32001-B-01-1	CGM	AECMA	ReadyForApproval	2003.07.15 14:55:55
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ICN-JA-A-219100-A-F0210-34001-B-02-1	CGM	AECMA	Approved	2003.07.15 15:49:40
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ICN-JA-A-293100-A-F0210-31001-C-01-1	CGM	AECMA	WorkInProgress	2003.07.15 14:39:08

The working status of graphics is shown in the search results.

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