



## Digital project documentation for efficient cross-company collaboration

Case study: Siemens

### Industry insights

Projects in the field of plant, equipment, and mechanical engineering require documents to be worked on jointly and shared between the internal project team and external partners such as suppliers, site coordinators, and customers. Workflows like document approval need to be documented in order to ensure adherence with compliance guidelines. Records management beyond company boundaries usually entails considerable effort for the internal project team. This lends particular importance to the issues of data security, traceability, and cross-company processes.

### Use case

Siemens supplies its customers with integrated and turnkey fossil-fuel power plant solutions including gas or steam turbine power plants.



“Coordination and approval processes with our external partners, such as suppliers and end customers, were significantly accelerated. The integration into the Siemens infrastructure, especially SAP Plant PDM, was rapidly achieved.”

Harald Hümmer  
Head of System Quality  
Siemens Gas and Power GmbH & Co. KG

The amount of effort involved in project management and in organising the required information and paperwork for the documentation of the plants is enormous.

At Siemens, SAP Plant PDM serves as the document management tool for managing technical customer documentation. In the past, Siemens employees provided documents on a download server and then informed their business partners by e-mail. Feedback and approvals from the supplier or customer were then sent back by e-mail and had to be entered manually into SAP Plant PDM. The high administrative effort involved prompted Siemens to implement a cloud-based solution for project documentation.

### Automatic linking with SAP Plant PDM, rapid implementation, and certified security

The objective was to move document management processes into the cloud in a way that would allow SAP Plant PDM to provide documents completely automatically and external feedback or approvals to be synchronized back again — either from a stationary workstation or from a mobile device (iOS and Android). In addition, comprehensive versioning was required to ensure full transparency and traceability for all processing steps.

Fabasoft Approve created a tailor-made project documentation solution for Siemens based on Approve on Fabasoft PROCECO. Approval processes were modelled in the newly created “Siemens Cloud Collaboration”. Siemens employees can continue to work in SAP Plant PDM just as they always have, which led to a high level of acceptance for the solution. Communication with end customers and suppliers now takes place in “project rooms” in the cloud-based project documentation. The project rooms are protected areas assigned to the corresponding project and accessible only by the authorised internal and external users. “Thanks to the ease of modelling provided by the Fabasoft Approve product, SAP integration was achieved within just a few days”, says Harald Hümmer, who was impressed by the speed of the Fabasoft Approve implementation. Fabasoft Approve was able to dispel the internal IT department’s concerns regarding IT security by securing a comprehensive certification package for its cloud platform.

### The advantages of digital project documentation

The customised solution for Siemens was developed within the Solutions business segment as part of the EPC project in close development cooperation between Siemens and Fabasoft Approve. “Siemens Cloud Collaboration” offers a high degree of automation, a consistent level of information for all users, as well as transparent, efficient, and timely process handling. “This enabled us to significantly increase productivity in project management. The increase in quality in terms of transparency towards our customers and suppliers is also dramatically noticeable”, Hümmer adds.

The cloud solution’s ease of use results in a high level of acceptance among all users. Process participants can access the latest versions of drawings, diagrams, and plans with just a few clicks. The “Time Travel” function provides full traceability: The status of an entire project including all modifications and approvals that occurred in the past can be viewed any time.

### Additional user potential: Dynamic documentation

Digital project documentation makes it possible for the end customer to continue using the technical documentation even after the project has been completed. Previously, the documentation was handed over upon completion of the project, which meant that it was “frozen” at that stage. With Fabasoft Approve’s cloud-based project documentation, documents, updates, and revisions can be continually entered and incorporated so that project documentation is always up to date.

### About Siemens

For more than 170 years, Siemens has been synonymous with technical performance, innovation, quality, reliability, and internationality. The focus of the company’s business activities is on electrification, automation, and digitalisation.  
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