



„Our customers’ expectations
now always become reality“



W.l.r. Robbert van Ham **PRODUCT MANAGER**,
Vincent Liebe **SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER**,
Hans van Roosmalen **MODEL BUILDER**

‘Get it Right the First Time’ with 3D solution

ABOUT DATA CENTRE MANUFACTURER MINKELS

Minkels is a knowledge-driven producer and worldwide supplier of high-quality solutions for data centre infrastructure. The Minkels brand is part of the product portfolio of Legrand, a publicly traded company (NYSE Euronext Paris: LR) with worldwide sales in the low voltage installation, data network and data centre markets. Legrand operates in more than 180 countries and achieved worldwide revenues of 4.8 billion euros in 2015.

Minkels products stand out for their innovativeness and flexibility. Customers can always be assured that they will get the very latest data centre technology: modular solutions that respond to evolving, customer-specific business requirements.

Customers who have applied Sofon for years often take Sofon further than product configuration and quotation generation. They discover that Sofon offers them support, especially at those times when the market and their organization change. Minkels, a manufacturer and supplier of sustainable data center and service room solutions, is a good example. We talked to Vincent Liebe (Senior Product Manager), Robbert van Ham (Product Manager) and Hans van Roosmalen (Model Builder and Engineer).

FROM PRODUCTS TO COMPLETE SOLUTIONS

In 2006 Minkels made the shift from selling products to the sale of solutions. As Liebe explains, “More and more often we deliver complete solutions for data centers or server rooms. That is a challenge, as almost no room is the same. And all those separate systems – e.g. racks (server racks), coolers, electrical components, cable systems – need to fit into a room of fixed dimensions.”

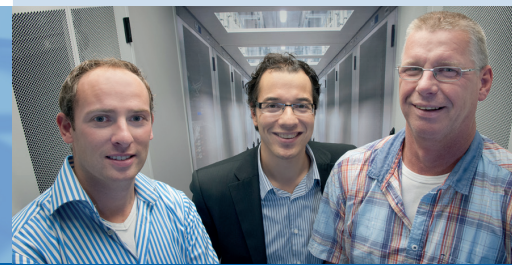
3D SOLUTION

For Minkels the 3D Sofon module turned out to be the solution. “With Sofon we can start the visual representation, bearing in mind the spatial limitations,” Van Roosmalen explains. “This spatial situation can then be used as a starting point for further configuration. That’s very handy because you have insight into the space, components, walk spaces... You can immediately tell if something fits. And you can no longer make errors. If you choose the wrong color, you can see that right away.” Liebe also sees the 3D representation as an addition to the quotation.

Liebe: “A picture still says more than a thousand words. The customer sees what he can expect. That prevents disappointments; always get it ‘Right the First Time.’”

DEALER CHANNEL

Another step that Minkels is taking is to extend their dealer channel. “About 1.5 years ago, Minkels became part of Legrand,” Liebe explains. “Legrand operates in 180 countries.



„Sofon has made the shift from selling products to selling solutions easier. We produce complete quotations.”

That gives the business a powerful boost globally. So, it becomes a challenge to organize dealer activities well. At the moment we are focusing on the regions where demand is highest, including Russia and Turkey.” As Van Ham adds, “In those places, we install local partners and offer local training, but Sofon also plays a role there. From the perspective of product management, we make sure that we tackle things project by project during the roll-out. In this way, maintenance and any extensions run smoothly.”

THE TOOL FOR DEALERS

At the moment, not all dealers work with Sofon yet. “Our internal sales office still takes care of the configuration for some dealers,” Liebe says. “Those that do work with Sofon,

run the software locally. We want all dealers to work with the web version of Sofon and produce their own configurations and quotations. It is therefore no longer necessary to install the software locally. We know the right version is being used and we don’t really need to check the configuration we receive. That saves our internal sales office time. If our dealers work with the web version, we also have more insight into the job that they do: how many quotations are sent out? What is the conversion? Do we see ten shots taken while only one hits its mark? That means there is work to be done.”

WHAT DOES MINKELS ACHIEVED WITH SOFON?

- Clear and error-free quotations and bills of materials
- Graphic representation as starting point for further configuration
- Expectations customers become reality; no disappointments and always ‘Right the First Time’
- Most dealers work with Sofon
- All dealers are switching to the web version of Sofon:
 - No locally installed software
 - More insight into dealer activities
 - Configurations and quotations made independently

