

**Textron Inc. (NYSE: TXT), a \$13.2 billion multi-industry Fortune 500 company, decided in 2004 to standardize their global businesses onto an SAP<sup>®</sup> business information solution, knowing the challenge would be impressive. Rev-Trac<sup>®</sup> change control technology by Revelation Software Concepts Pty Ltd (RSC<sup>™</sup>) helped Textron maintain close management of the SAP software changes the project required... and quickly became an indispensable business tool for the multinational giant.**

## To Unify a Giant

Headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., multi-industry giant Textron, Inc has approximately 44,000 employees in 34 countries. Many of their brands in the helicopter, business jet, golf/turf, automotive/industrial, defense contract and finance markets are global market leaders. They range from Bell Helicopter and Cessna Aircraft to industrial wire and tools specialist Greenlee, from golf and utility vehicle maker E-Z-GO to the Textron Financial unit. Unifying such a diverse presence through a standardized SAP-based business information system would be far from simple.

But Textron managers understand well the value of increasing operational efficiencies in every economic cycle. ERP Software from SAP<sup>®</sup> would be the primary vehicle for integrating these efficiencies into Textron's day-to-day operations.

In a real sense, the timing was even fortuitous. Business units that already expected IT changes for compliance with new regulations could treat the enhanced efficiencies as a bonus. The inevitable process changes would not be seen as arbitrary or "imposed by corporate," but rather as adjustments to projects already planned.

## Enabling the Transformation

Textron knew going in that close management and a carefully phased system evolution would be crucial for success. Disruption must be minimized or eliminated despite the extensive changes planned. Companies in heavily regulated industries, such as aircraft, defense and finance, are subject to close inspections to ensure regulatory compliance, in addition to the broader reporting requirements of the U.S. Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

The senior-level IT team charged with planning the new system knew they faced an unusual challenge. Integration of completely independent brands – many of them market leaders with well-established internal processes – would require great care. Transforming separate, vertical systems in fundamental



ways is a significant challenge in its own right. Broadly integrating these systems into a set of universal business processes added a new dimension to the challenge.

**"It's so easy to stay 'by the book,' our people don't even go looking for shortcuts anymore. Rev-Trac tracks and enforces approvals throughout the process, so there's never any confusion. It eliminates chasing after people for signatures and we always have visibility and accountability."**

**—Bhaskar Ramachandran, Manager, SAP Technology, Textron Global SAP CoE**

## Managing via Rev-Trac

The IT planning and implementation team knew it needed a change control system that could manage the multidimensional project with flexibility, power, responsiveness and reliability. After detailed review of competing products, Textron turned to Rev-Trac, by RSC.

Over the next four years, the Textron team introduced separate, existing North American IT systems to a unified approach at the deepest levels of "the magic behind the curtain," where information is processed for rapid delivery to those who need it. Changes made at those deep-tech levels inevitably come with profound consequences for the entire system.

Rev-Trac enabled the team to do everything "by the book," with full documentation of processes and enforced approvals for all changes, without adding layers of complexity to the system. Documentation was mandated and completed every time.

## The Transformation

The Textron team implemented its new systems in multiple phases, each involving its own industries and regions. First, a team of 200-plus members worked with U.S.-based internal systems at Bell and Cessna (aerospace sector),

Greenlee (industrial sector), and Textron Systems (high-tech and defense contracting). Textron initiated Rev-Trac change control early in this cycle and the initial implementation went smoothly. Common problems, such as changing procedures without documentation or proper authorizations, were avoided. Changes did not have to be reverse-analyzed or re-engineered later, after the trail went cold.

Late in 2007 and early in 2008, the next phase began and is currently in process. This stage of the transition involves bringing Rev-Trac change control to multiple market regions outside of North America. In early 2008, the team began the process by introducing Rev-Trac to business units in Great Britain and the rest of Europe.

Textron's David Brown unit in the U.K. is self-supporting and maintains its own SAP R/3 landscape, but they now use the universal Rev-Trac master



console for change control purposes. As the Rev-Trac implementation program rolls forward, a similar setup is planned at other European units as they establish their landscapes.

"When any new system gets introduced, our IT guys tend toward skepticism," notes Michael Hitchborn, Senior Project Manager at David Brown. "With Rev-Trac, the whole implementation took only a week, nothing was disrupted and within another week the possibilities of how Rev-Trac can help us down the line were already coming clear."

By now, the team says, use of Rev-Trac has already expanded well beyond what they originally anticipated. This is in part because the RSC solution makes close management of evolving systems much easier and more automatic. It also enforces authorizations

inside SAP product-based systems.

As a result of this steadily expanding use, both the number of Rev-Trac users and the amount of data maintained in Rev-Trac supported systems has grown beyond original projections.

## Change and the Textron Corporate Culture

Each main Textron operating unit, on its own, had already started working to replace or modify existing BI systems in response to new regulatory requirements and evolving market needs, so Rev-Trac's arrival was opportune. When the unit managers were brought into the new, more comprehensive Rev-Trac control processes, they perceived many synergies at the process level, where at first the broad market differences might have made potential advantages less than obvious. Compliance requirements in various business units created similar decision-making environments, so strategic purchases, human resources administration, improved management visibility and, in the U.S., Sarbanes-Oxley legal compliance needs all enhanced the new system's acceptance.

With Rev-Trac, Textron found it could integrate these disparate environments smoothly to give the separate units consistent processes, with full control and visibility. The result was to manage the processes horizontally, across multiple business units, instead of vertically, in separate processes for each unit. In effect, externally mandated changes made the jobs of the internal Textron teams easier.

Horizontal process integration also demonstrated the high value of automation in extensive systems' change management procedures.

## Better Visibility, Audit-worthy Records

Rev-Trac change management provides the team with the process visibility and control they need. SAP Operations Analyst Skip Malkuns says, "We always know what changes are being made and who approved them."



Adds PMO Manager Todd Kackley: "We've gone through a number of audits since we started with Rev-Trac and we come away clean every time." Malkuns expands on the theme: "We have huge projects being implemented – one has been going on for over two years with over 4,000 transports – but we can control all changes in our objects just by using Rev-Trac. We turn on tracking and know who's working on primary versus secondary landscapes. We turn on locking and overwrites never happen, dependencies are never misplaced."

## Fast Response, Long-range Vision

Rev-Trac makes both fast-response and long-range change implementations easy. Since it is written in ABAP/4®, the native SAP language, Rev-Trac functions as a wholly integrated part of the SAP solution rather than an external add-on. It introduces no added layers or API complexities.

Kackley says Rev-Trac's useful little touches "fill the gaps you see in other tracking systems." He explains that Rev-Trac removes any concern that people may do things differently in different locations, perhaps even changing the system without consulting others. Rev-Trac takes care of it all, so the need – and temptation – to make undocumented changes on the fly simply disappears.

**Auditors respect our ability to run histories and reports, and pull them up at any time. They love it that we can show compliance and prove visibility, that it's a built-in part of our regular processes... and obviously, we love that too."**

**–Todd Kackley, PMO Manager, Textron**

## Moving Forward with SAP

Textron expects Rev-Trac will continue to play an important part in maintaining and changing their SAP product-based information systems. For example, the company has installed dual primary and secondary landscapes, scheduled to go live in early 2008.

"We will soon be deploying CTS+ (change and transport system) to manage Java changes," says Ramachandran. "With proven benefits, based on our experience with the regular R/3 environment, we will be expanding the Rev-Trac scope to include Java changes."

## The Bottom Line

Ramachandran says a direct "bottom line" assessment of ROI is difficult but Rev-Trac's importance to proper, unimpeded management of and visibility into projects makes its benefits very clear.

"Finance likes to see hard numbers," he explains. "We may not be able to tell them precisely how much Rev-Trac's reduction in potential mistakes saves us. But we can say it would take several full-time people just to manage change records inside our SAP landscapes without Rev-Trac. They can look and see that we manage the whole system, including change records, with minimal staff now. That gives them a number they can see and rely on, year after year."



He says the qualitative benefits are harder to nail down but are equally, if not more, important. How many more mistakes would people make without Rev-Trac's automation of manual tasks? How much more difficult and expensive would it be to maintain process visibility compliance? How much faster can changes be implemented?

Ramachandran says the value of such benefits has become clear now at all levels of management, simply because of the visibility Rev-Trac provides. Where other change-tracking systems use anything from paper trails to email audits, Rev-Trac maintains a positive record that managers can access immediately.

"This high visibility is among the most important benefits of all," says Ramachandran. "Rev-Trac eliminates a lot of risk for us."

Malkuns expands on that theme. "Even maintaining Rev-Trac is pain-free because it is internal to SAP. It was really easy to install and configure. We could pick and choose from an incredible variety of options consistent with our evolving processes. And it gives us visibility wherever we ask it to."

For a company doing business in the current highly regulated climate, that level of transparency is perhaps the most important benefit of all.

**Rev-Trac**<sup>®</sup>  
Now you're really in control

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**Rev-Trac has become invaluable to us. Nothing gets lost because everything is visible and coordinated. And RSC is great to work with. We use them for a lot more than just questions like "It's broken, what is the fix?" We'll say we're thinking about doing this or that, and they'll send us back two or three ways to do it even better. They're like a member of our team.**

**– Skip Malkuns, SAP Operations Analyst, Textron**

