



Man Bus

Creates Custom Workplaces
with Visual Configuration

Introduction

When considering a bus cockpit as a workplace, the emphasis naturally shifts towards prioritizing worker well-being and job satisfaction. Leading European manufacturer, MAN Bus has embraced this concept wholeheartedly, propelling it into high gear. They have introduced a groundbreaking workplace configurator utilizing interactive visualization technologies.

The configurator customizes driver workstations, known as cockpits, in various ways. MAN's distinction lies in its steadfast dedication to prioritizing the driver's needs and maximizing limited space. This customer-focused approach ensures every design aspect enhances the driver's experience.

Before a visual configurator: a manual process

To meet the needs of the client MAN had a very manual process in place:

- Initial discussion with engineering teams and the customer to identify required switches and functionalities.
- Creation of a rough sketch, capturing individual positions using CAD drawing tools.
- Review with the customer to validate the initial mock-up and incorporate any necessary changes.

This process would often need manual revisions from engineers until the customer was satisfied.

Marc Witte, Team Leader of Engineering at MAN, emphasizes that the iteration process was more intricate than it may seem:

“If a switch needed repositioning, its data had to be recorded in an Excel spreadsheet alongside all function parameters. These details were cross-checked with other switches to determine if the desired repositioning was feasible”

Streamlining Configuration Options

In order to effectively manage the vast array of configuration options and improve responsiveness to customers, MAN opted to digitize their customization processes. Setting clear parameters for their ideal configurator, akin to diligent engineers, was essential:

- Real-time 3D visualization for configuring the entire cockpit.
- Availability of all options.
- Streamlined configuration process requiring only a few mouse clicks.
- Error-free generation of all required 2D CAD drawings and bill of materials.



Results

Seeking a solution aligned with their self-imposed objectives, MAN discovered Tacton, a specialized provider of Visual Configuration software tailored for large manufacturers.

“What convinced us early on was Tacton’s know-how in visual configuration and their industry expertise. In Tacton we found a partner for developing our vision for a cockpit configurator”, explains Marc Witte.

As MAN’s started to see just how powerful Tacton’s configuration and visualization tools were, they understood that the way they interacted with customers would also change for the better. Configuration, therefore, became a lot more customer-focused.

This new way of configuring resulted in the launch of a web-based configuration solution that can be accessed by our team from any web-browser. This web version of the configurator offered a lighter version of the configurator, allowing non-technical personnel to carry out a basic configuration using drag-and-drop functionality.

The web configurator came with many User Experience (UX) development such as the highlighting of errors with colors and indicating valid alternatives. Users can also store their FAQs that they can access later.

The future-oriented solution also for our global workforce The result of the visual configuration was a success for MAN. As Marc Witte explains: **“Not only is our driver station configurator a modern solution that allowed us to save between 70% and 80% of engineering resources that were previously needed but also gives our customers a realistic graphical rendering of our products - which of course is great for our brand.”**

Currently, the engineers in Ankara, Turkey, and Poznan, Poland use the tool. Using the configurator was so intuitive that other business areas such as sales or customer service can easily work with it, explains Marc Witte. No matter what the driver’s workplace of the future will look like, MAN is set to configure it.



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