



# VC999

## proALPHA: Method to the Implementation

### Mechanical and Plant Engineering

#### Name:

VC999 Verpackungssysteme AG

#### Website:

[www.vc999.ch](http://www.vc999.ch)

#### Products:

Vacuum packaging systems, packaging materials, support and maintenance, consulting

#### Locations:

Headquarters: Switzerland  
Distribution companies: Germany, Belgium, Columbia, Canada, Mexico, USA, Austria  
Development and production sites: Switzerland, Germany, USA

#### Employees:

215 (2017)

#### Focus:

ERP Implementation

#### Highlights

- Clear implementation method with defined phases and project tasks
- Acceptance, transparency and project success guaranteed with equally represented project teams (steering committee, project leaders, key users)
- proALPHA standard process models as best practice guidelines
- Easy modeling and optimization of processes using the business process designer (GPD)
- Smooth introduction phases and go-live

Swiss packaging specialist VC999 has used the comprehensive ERP solution proALPHA since the beginning of 2016. Already introduced at the headquarters, one Swiss production site and one German subsidiary, proALPHA will be gradually rolled out at the other sites. The project phases, consisting of evaluation, implementation, training, tests, go-live and rollout, were classically based on a standardized implementation method. This has the advantage of clearly defined project phases and tasks.

The company's name, VC999, stands for "Vacuum Capacity 99.9% ". This is the maximum level that can be reached for food vacuum packaging. The family-run business lives up to its name: it represents the highest possible output and quality of the machines produced. It also stands for success: VC999 Verpackungssysteme AG is continuously expanding. Today, it has almost a dozen distribution companies all over the world, which requires consistent value flows and customer-oriented service management.

"The implementation of proALPHA is a huge success. We first try and test the processes in the headquarters and then roll them out to our subsidiaries."

**Peter Schmollinger**, Chief Operating Officer (COO), VC999 Verpackungssysteme AG

### Consistent Processes Mapped, Even for 4,000 Service Calls

The legacy systems VC999 has used for sales, production and support had run out of steam. They no longer covered the three company divisions, production and sales of packaging machines, trade in packaging materials and the important service business. proALPHA consistently maps all divisions and processes at VC999. Since the beginning of 2016, the family-run business has dealt with 4,000 service calls per year for a total of 7,000 machines installed in Switzerland alone.

### Rollout Strategy: Headquarters First, Subsidiaries Next

VC999 first introduced proALPHA at its company headquarters in Herisau because it has the highest level of complexity within the company group. For this reason, and in order to streamline introduction, the company first implemented the core applications: sales, purchasing, materials management, production, service, financial accounting, and cost accounting. This was soon followed by additional functions such as business intelligence (BI) and CAD integration. "It was our goal to make the processes highly efficient right from the beginning and to set them up cleanly using templates. Once the processes had proven effective at headquarters, they were rolled out in

the subsidiaries as required. This rollout strategy worked. This rollout strategy proved successful: as at headquarters, introduction at the first subsidiary in Germany went smoothly, the focus being on sales and service processes.

### Concept Phase: All Processes Under Investigation

During introduction, VC999 also benefitted from intensive preparations. A thorough analysis prior to implementation revealed which standard proALPHA processes could be adopted and which ones had to be customized to the industry's specific requirements. The strategy of VC999 was to keep to the standard proALPHA processes wherever possible. These best practices are based on the experience of several hundred companies. Since many processes are interdepartmental, for example the sales and service process, VC999 subjected many of them to close examination. This even included processes that were not intended for the first go-live phase, because VC999 insisted on getting the big picture. They wanted to know exactly what to expect later and what the processes and the ERP system would eventually look like.

### The Process Designer Made a Good Job

The company's structures and processes were modeled and mapped using the proALPHA business process designer (GPD). This allows VC999 to display its processes and structures simply and clearly. In addition, it shows the interrelations between company processes. For the design of the target processes, the standard process models in proALPHA proved to be a valuable template. At headquarters and in the German subsidiary, all critical processes immediately went smoothly after the go-live. "We didn't have any downtime at all. The change of systems went unnoticed by our customers," says Peter Schmollinger, Chief Operating Officer (COO) at VC999.



### Parity on Project Teams

Project teams are crucial to success. For this reason, every project committee at VC999 was built up on an equal footing. This ensures that an ERP project is accepted by both parties, remains transparent and is advanced accordingly. As such, the steering committee was led by the CEO of VC999 and by a proALPHA managing director. In cooperation with the other committee members – the head of IT, the CFO, and COO Peter Schmollinger – they set the strategic project goals and made key decisions. Overall project management was also assumed by a tandem: COO Peter Schmollinger and a proALPHA project manager.

"proALPHA supported us with their enormous process know-how. We instantly sensed that the consultants were intimately familiar with processes like ours due to their wide experience. This was a great help," says Peter Schmollinger. "We also received valuable impetus from within our own ranks provided by the key user team, which is composed of employees from various departments. Their task was to evaluate the processes and implement them for practicable and efficient use."

The special selection of key users has proven VC999 right. It was not the heads of department that were selected, but their stand-ins. "The heads of department are very busy," Peter Schmollinger explains. The stand-ins have that quantum of extra time that can be decisive for the project's success." Furthermore, it is easier for them to objectively evaluate the processes and creatively improve them, because they have not usually been employed at the company for decades. "It went perfectly well," says Peter Schmollinger "particularly taking into account the fact that it required employees to do extra work."

### Tried and Tested Implementation Concept

The implementation of proALPHA has been a huge success. VC999 has used it to design consistent processes and value flows. It started with value flow-relevant modules for the headquarters in January 2016, and for the German subsidiary in June 2016. For implementation, the family-run business relied on the tried and tested proALPHA concept. A clear evaluation phase was followed by a corresponding implementation phase for the first two rollouts. Peter Schmollinger considers the assistance provided by proALPHA's consultants to be extraordinarily competent, and especially emphasizes their process know-how. Still, there is room for two little improvements. In future, he wants to encourage the employees to participate more intensively in the training offered, thereby maintaining their enthusiasm beyond the end of the project. Furthermore, he intends to move the integration tests up before employee training so that they can be trained on a system that is up and running. "Despite this, the classic implementation was perfect for us, because it has been tried and tested so many times," says Peter Schmollinger. "We Swiss don't have to invent everything."

"The consultants at proALPHA and the implementation concept have convinced us and helped us a great deal."

**Peter Schmollinger**, Chief Operating Officer (COO), VC999

proALPHA Schweiz AG  
Jurastrasse 12 ▪ CH-4142 Münchenstein  
info@proalpha.ch ▪ www.proalpha.ch

proALPHA Business Solutions GmbH  
Auf dem Immel 8 ▪ DE-67685 Weilerbach  
info@proalpha.de ▪ www.proalpha.com

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User Report

