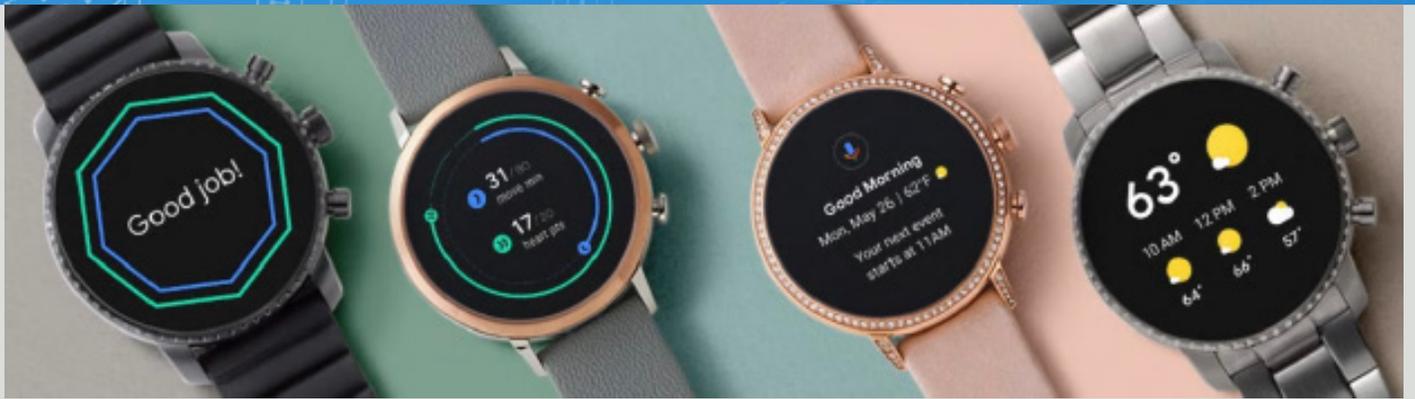# Fossil leverages Cloud hosted infrastructure to enable global collaboration

Background

To be an internationally recognized brand in the extremely competitive and ever-evolving Consumer Products market, companies rely on cutting edge technology and solutions to get their products to market quickly and efficiently. Commonly, these businesses are working in geographically distributed teams and using multiple contract manufacturers that are often half a world away. Companies are constantly looking for solutions that can improve their ability to support these complex workflows and eliminate roadblocks to collaboration.

One of these recognizable brands is Fossil Group, headquartered in Richardson, TX and with manufacturing in Asia and Switzerland. Fossil Group is a design, marketing, distribution, and innovation company specializing in lifestyle accessories. Under a diverse portfolio of owned and licensed brands, they bring each brand story to life through an extensive wholesale distribution network across approximately 150 countries and 500 retail locations around the world.

Skagen Falster 2 Gray Magnetic Steel - Mesh

Fossil Hybrid Smartwatch Carlie Rose Gold-Tone Stainless Steel

Misfit Shine 2 and Misfit Ray Fitness Trackers

Challenges

Distributed Design and Manufacturing Team

With global design teams, contract manufacturing, and joint development centered in Asia, SOLIDWORKS PDM was only part of the solution. The project scope and complexity grew beyond the capabilities of the traditional IT and engineering departments due to the increased requirements and the need for a global network and infrastructure.

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> **With our global network of design studios in Texas, California, Switzerland, and Hong Kong, the solution we needed exceeded our IT resources and budget. The need for a scalable and globally accessible solution had become critical to meet our aggressive product development road maps. Unfortunately no one was giving us any options.**
>
> — Brad Piercey, Director of Industrial Design at Fossil Group

Global Implementation and Deployment

Fossil had been exposed to SOLIDWORKS PDM and were excited about its functionality. Everyone involved understood that it offered all the functionality they needed. However, the added IT requirements made for a complicated and expensive implementation process. Fossil eventually spent years going back and forth negotiating implementation scope, but the increased IT and services required made PDM unattainable for their distributed design team.

Solutions

Epigrid Delivers Global Infrastructure

Late in 2017, Fossil found Converge and their partner EpiGrid. EpiGrid is a SOLIDWORKS Solution partner with a core competency on SOLIDWORKS PDM. EpiGrid is the pioneer SOLIDWORKS Cloud solution provider that offers Cloud-computing and managed services to engineering and manufacturing companies. With server hardware in data centers throughout the world, EpiGrid is the only Cloud-hosting provider tailored to the unique system and software requirements for engineers.

Converge, via the EpiGrid solution, provided Fossil with an infrastructure that immediately solved their collaboration issues with their distributed design team. This infrastructure not only met the PDM system requirements, but also eliminated the added burden an on-premise solution would have placed on the Fossil IT department.

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> **I was shocked when we found the EpiGrid solution. We had been searching for PDM in the Cloud for years and thought it was just not possible. It was a breakthrough when we learned that the solution was turnkey. Not only was it a managed Cloud solution that addressed our IT requirements, but the guys at EpiGrid are SOLIDWORKS and PDM experts with years of engineering experience designing products across various industries.**
>
> — Brad Piercey

Solutions

The Axis Vault Simplifies Implementation

Through hundreds of implementations, EpiGrid Developed the Axis Vault implementation process that is offered by its partners. The EpiGrid Axis Vault is a fully documented PDM vault configuration that contains the summation of the design control process collected through work in diverse industries and will satisfy the needs of most companies.

Secure Remote Access Promotes Global Collaboration

A soft requirement, originally thought to be unattainable under the original infrastructure plan, was remote access. Fossil engineers are constantly traveling to suppliers and vendors all over the world. Additionally, they were using various contract design and manufacturing resources around the world that needed access to current design data. Now with the EpiGrid Axis Vault, Fossil has the ability to collaborate with its entire value chain from anywhere in the world.

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> We had literally spent years in an overly convoluted mess of other systems requirements; then Converge showed us the EpiGrid Axis Vault. It was as if they had been on our team the whole time. They understood exactly what we were looking for. Having a comprehensive, documented implementation process reduced our roll-out time and cost significantly, and working with Converge, a SOLIDWORKS VAR who understood hosting and Cloud solutions, was a huge weight off our shoulders.
>
> — Brad Piercey

> "
> It's hard to explain how much this has changed the way we work. The ROI is massive in scale. The ability to easily and securely work from anywhere in the world has impacted our workflows in ways I couldn't have imagined. Working from a remote campus, at a vendor, or even working in China, we no longer needed to have meetings just to figure out which version we should be working on. We are constantly finding new benefits of this solution.
>
> — Brad Piercey

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> Fossil needed an expert and, most of all, zero learning curve for implementing a SOLIDWORKS PDM solution. This solution of managed Cloud services from EpiGrid and remote PMD admin services from Converge removed a huge burden and allowed us to focus on our designs. When going from 0 to 60 with a SOLIDWORKS PDM vault, there is no room for learning on the job.
>
> — Brad Brinson, Senior Mechanical Engineer at Fossil Group

Ongoing CAD and PDM Administration services

With the implementation completed by Converge and documented per the EpiGrid Axis Vault, Fossil then needed to address the administration and management of the PDM system. As with all systems, the ongoing cost is always a consideration. Managing and administering a PDM system generally takes away some resources from engineering that would have otherwise been used in designing products. In the case of Fossil, any PDM solution would be complex enough to require a full-time administrator. While Fossil knew they would eventually bring on a full-time PDM administrator, they were not prepared to do so in year zero on a tool that was untested and not yet validated. Converge's Remote CAD Administration Service was the perfect solution that enabled Fossil to fully focus on onboarding their product team with a turnkey solution – removing the cost and burden of having to hire a full-time administrator.

Conclusion

By hosting their PDM Professional vault with EpiGrid, Fossil was able to relieve a huge IT burden, not only for the engineering team, but also for the IT department. The EpiGrid solution removed the barriers to communication between the two and allowed each to focus on their specific tasks. Productivity is improving for Fossil's design team, and they can rest easy knowing that their most precious asset, their CAD data, is safe and secure, and accessible from anywhere now.

" The EpiGrid solution allowed us to leap forward over lengthy hardware requirement meetings and IT budget approvals, which enabled us to focus on workstream, best practices, and increasing our frequency on product to market. Our operations and expense planning is significantly simplified... we are using this experience as a reference for other departments beyond our engineering team.

— Brad Piercey

Converge Has the Skill Set & Experience To Help You Make the Right Choices To Enable Your Digital Transformation

Engineering Experience
Our products and services are built by engineers for engineers.

Cloud Experience
Our partner EpiGrid has helped customers host SOLIDWORKS for 10

Secure & Reliable Access
We ensure your CAD data is secure and accessible to distributed teams.

Speed to Market
We help you get up and running quickly to realize maximum ROI

CONVERGE

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We bridge the gap between Engineering and IT teams helping you make the right choice for managing CAD in the Cloud efficiently while taking the ongoing burden off your IT department to manage the applications.