

Customer Success Story

Rockwell, North American Aircraft



USES CENTRA 2000 TO MANAGE B1-B TECHNICAL MANUALS

When the Technical Publications Organization of North American Aircraft needed a state-of-the-art document management system to manage hundreds of thousands of pages of technical data, they looked to Auto-trol Technology Corporation. This task can be overwhelming when one considers the need to track the production process of graphics and text for numerous programs. Auto-trol was able to respond to their needs—and exceed them—with its CENTRA 2000 product (CENTRA 2000).

North American Aircraft Division's (NAAD) Technical Publications Organization, located in Palmdale, California, was trying to move their illustrations and technical documents from a secured mainframe environment into a client-server environment. The client-server system offered a more open architecture. However, at the same time NAAD needed this system to allow the technical manual writers and illustrators to reliably archive, retrieve and secure B-1B and C-130 data. CENTRA 2000 supported NAAD's needs—and more.

With its roots in the NASA space program, CENTRA 2000 was created to manage the complex relationships of technical information. The creators of the CENTRA 2000 package left NASA to form Centra 2000, Inc., which became a subsidiary of Auto-trol.

"With the old system, when our technical illustrators would complete a project, they would have to manually interact with the file server in order to store and track data," said David Darr, Technical Publications, Team Leader of Automation and Administration for NAAD. But since the illustrators already were working on Auto-trol's Tech Illustrator (TI) software, integration between TI and CENTRA 2000 solved the problem immediately.

CENTRA 2000's integration capabilities gave the illustrators a check in and check out system and a way to move, retrieve and store data. The whole process was menu-driven, just point and click. All document management could be done in the TI graphics program," Darr said.

NAAD's Technical Publications chose CENTRA 2000 product because of its ease-of-use, user-friendliness, open architecture, and integration capability.

Auto-trol's service was found to be equally impressive. Auto-trol's "Quick-Start Service" had the illustrators working on the system in a couple of months. NAAD was impressed by Auto-trol's immediate response to questions and the bug-free and seamless integration of CENTRA 2000 with the TI graphics program.

"This is a very professional, customer service oriented company. Essentially, we have combined our resources and worked as a team to ensure program success. This meant we took full responsibility for our customer/supplier relationship and solved problems together, even if the problem pointed to a non-Auto-trol application. In other words, if we had a problem, we had the problem. They're willing to do what it takes, even assist in integrating other non-Auto-trol applications, to get the job done," Darr said.

NAAD implemented CENTRA 2000 to manage its B-1B publications and soon will put it to work managing publications for the C130 Gunship. Technical Publications is taking the process even further, integrating CENTRA 2000 with an Auto-trol provided viewing and redlining package called MYRIAD from Informative Graphics. If a document is called up on a computer, CENTRA 2000 can tell the user if there are graphics involved, and Myriad can then view and be used to redline the document if desired.

Darr said, "We haven't finished exploring all the ways we plan to use CENTRA 2000."

Future plans include implementing CENTRA 2000's WorkFlow Module with a new file server and putting the system through a stress test. After proving it can handle the several thousands of tasks planned during the test, CENTRA 2000 will become a part of Rockwell's workflow process.

"We are in the process of evaluating performance improvements resulting from implementing this system. Preliminary data indicates that these tools, along with associated process changes, will result in significant savings," Darr said.

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