

customer case study

Kawasaki Industries

Kawasaki Heavy Industries Achieves High Productivity with their Customized Mission-Critical Uniface Application

A Leader in the Robotic Manufacturing Market

Founded in 1896, Kawasaki Heavy Industries, LTD. is one of the biggest heavy industries company in Japan. They manufacture motorcycles, ships, trains, aerospace, industrial machineries and so on. The company consists of seven major segments and has worldwide business operations.

Their Robot Division is in the Precision Machinery Company segment. The robots manufactured are mostly used in the automobile industry, which is one of Japan's major industries, and in addition to various other manufacturing industries. The robots contribute to improvement of productivity and product quality along manufacturing and assembly lines.

Kawasaki adopted Uniface in 1995 to develop their mission-critical production management system. Since then, Uniface has been highly valued because of its flexibility for quickly implementing change to their mission-critical application in order to follow changing business requirements. <



“With high productivity and ease of implementing change, Uniface makes it easy to follow the changes of industrious robot business market.”

Mr. Yasushi Kurosawa,
Manager, Information System
Section

Customer



Sector

Manufacturing



Country

Japan



Challenge

Kawasaki needed a flexible solution to develop its mission-critical production management application. In the competitive and fast changing world of the industrial robot market, it was vital to be able to react to change quickly in order to follow changing business requirements

Results

- Customized production management system deployed with Uniface
- Manage 100+ annual changes to missioncritical system
- Application available to the robot manufacturing assembly process 24/7

Enterprise Application Development

Uniface Benefits

- 1 Productivity
- 2 Reliability & Security
- 3 Enterprise Scalability
- 4 Technology Independence
- 5 Technology Innovation
- 6 Integration & Reuse
- 7 Collaboration for Results
- 8 User Community
- 9 PartnersUnited Program
- 10 Powerful Development Environment

Customized Approach to Building a Mission-Critical Application

After a thorough search and not finding a suitable packed app in the market, Kawasaki quickly realized that they would need to develop a custom production management system. As they looked into and compared functionality of several development platforms, they determined Uniface was the best solution. The reason was that, unlike the popular language of the time (Visual Basic), with Uniface they were able to employ a data focused development style (Model driven). This was important to them so that once their application was built, they would be able to make changes to their application with minimal work, which lead to high productivity.

Another reason that Kawasaki chose to go with Uniface was that it was easy to learn and use by its development team. When the Uniface was implemented, six members of the development team were able to learn the product during a three-day training session offered by Compuware Japan. Two additional members learned Uniface “on the job,” and by being mentored by the other developers. <

Current Day Operations

Today, Kawasaki’s production management Uniface application remains mission-critical in the manufacturing process of their robots and must be available 24/7. Responding to the demands from end-users and changing the application is also a regular undertaking, but Uniface makes this possible for the team of six developers. “Because of the high productivity of Uniface, we are able to answer the end-users’ requests far more rapidly, with flexibility and at realistic costs compared to other packaged software,” explains Yasushi Kurosawa. “Annually we have about 100 requests for a change to a system from our end-users and we can manage them with Uniface.”

Since the launch of the initial product management application, Kawasaki has also developed a Parts Management System that processes and manages (lists, numbering, parts make-up, etc) of over 620,000 parts. A Packing Export Management System has also been developed and is used for processing the shipping planning, assembly on-site planning and packaging. And by nature of their industry, the development team is continuously working on improving functionality to meet the changing business needs.

Kawasaki’s future plans include deploying their applications on the web and in the Cloud. Says Mr. Yasushi Kurosawa “I am sure when we do develop a system on web environments, or on Cloud, Uniface will be a strong candidate.” <



Kawasaki, working as one
for the good of the planet
“Global Kawasaki”