Truth Hardware:

e-Catalog Gives Customers and Suppliers 24x7 Access to Products, Specifications, and Information

"By creating an electronic catalog and providing the means and technology necessary to maintain and improve it, Micrografx has brought Truth Hardware up from the past. We can now act in a more efficient and effective manner to meet customer expectations."

Matt Kottke, Truth Hardware

Truth Hardware is the leading designer and manufacturer of quality operating hardware.

The company produces hinges, locks, operators, and remote-controlled power window systems used on wood, vinyl, metal, and fiberglass windows, patio doors, and skylights. Truth sells its products directly to manufacturers of residential and commercial windows and patio doors.

Truth's corporate mission is best summed up in its Quality Policy: "To serve the customer by always providing the best products and services, right the first time, on time, and through continuous improvement."

Challenge

To migrate from traditional paper catalogs to an electronic parts catalog, accessible from CD or on the Web

Solution

Micrografx ActiveCGM Electronics Parts Catalog with output flexibility and superior linking and navigation

Results

Dramatic savings in time, labor, and money, plus greatly enhanced customer service

Manufacturing

THE PROBLEM

Truth needed to find a way to better produce and distribute its parts catalog to its customers:

- Their paper catalogs incurred huge costs associated with printing and shipping.
- Frequent updates and service bulletins made the printed catalogs quickly obsolete.
- Truth's customer service department needed a faster, easier way to access catalog information while on the phone with customers. The catalog—almost the size of two phone books—was simply too large and cumbersome to navigate easily.

Truth Hardware chose *Active*CGM Electronics Parts Catalog developed by the Solutions Group of Micrografx.

THE CHALLENGE

Truth required migration to an e-catalog to improve productivity and effectiveness.

The outmoded method of physically delivering an oversized paper catalog to customers was expensive and time consuming.

- **First,** the translation of Truth's CAD data to print often altered or completely lost special characters and text embedded in their drawings.

- **Second,** the archaic method of creating and maintaining a physical catalog cost the company time and money.
- **Third,** with no electronic system in place, Truth had no tools for updating materials or adding promotional and technical data on products from newly-acquired companies.
- **Finally,** the massive catalog was an inconvenience for Truth's field sales staff, already burdened with having to carry product samples and a laptop.

In order to create the e-catalog, Truth needed a partner who could maintain visual and graphic integrity in translating Truth's CAD data to an electronic medium. Truth had little experience using electronic publishing to develop printed materials. The company was virtually starting at "square one", and required both the introduction of a new technology and training in the use of that technology.

THE SOLUTION

ActiveCGM offered output flexibility, plus superior linking and navigation.

Truth Hardware wanted to develop a means to have its catalog available electronically via the Web and through CD distribution.
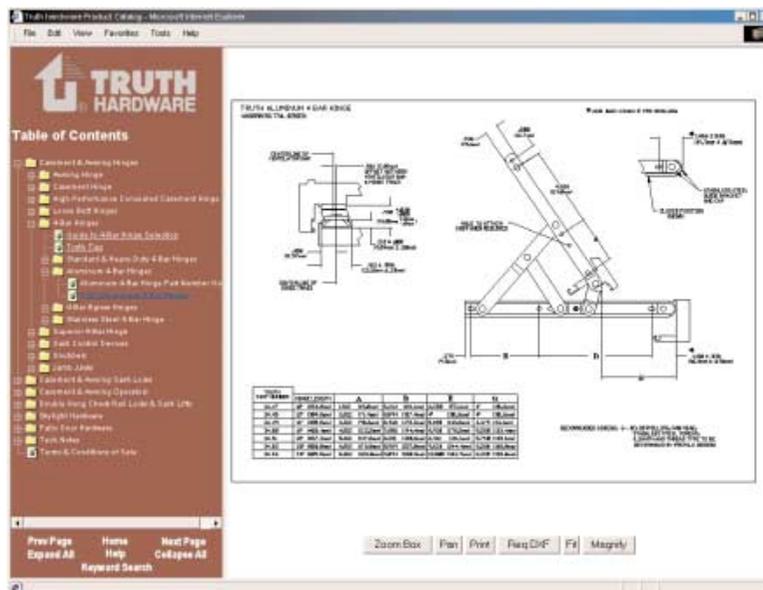
Screen capture from the new online version of Truth Hardware's product catalog. Graphics created by ActiveCGM can be published on the World Wide Web, a corporate intranet, or in an Electronic Publishing environment.

However, many customers still requested physical catalogs, so Truth needed to create printed catalogs from the same source.

Another key requirement that Truth identified was the ability to directly access product information from a simple catalog listing. This required the solution they chose to provide superior linking capabilities.

During the investigative phase, Micrografx demonstrated a prototype for Truth which convinced them that the Micrografx solution would deliver what they needed.

Once Truth chose *Active*CGM, Micrografx went to work loading the software onto Truth's existing system. All of Truth's product information was contained and managed in Word and AutoCAD files. Micrografx worked with Truth to convert all of its Word documents to HTML and AutoCAD files to CGM graphics files. With the newly converted CGM files, Micrografx linked CGM graphics to the product data information documents and added call-outs. The callouts enabled approved viewers to drill down to more detailed parts of the product drawings.

When the system was in place, Truth provided training on functionality and maintenance. At their National Sales Meeting, Truth's executives rolled out the new e-catalog to an enthusiastic sales team.

THE RESULTS

Truth saves time and money while putting new products before the public eye.

Truth has cut in half the amount of time required to get product information into the hands of customers by eliminating much of the time it took to assemble and print the physical catalogs.

- What used to consume at least four weeks—publishing, fulfilling, and shipping—now takes one week.

"We are gradually reducing our fulfillment requirements—affixing labels, sorting, and mailing," says Truth spokesperson Matt Kottke. "Fulfillment labor has now been halved and we anticipate an eventual reduction by 80 percent."

- Truth now produces between 30 and 40 percent fewer physical catalogs and the number will continue to drop as customers become more comfortable with the Web.

- Since each printed catalog costs $20 for material and postage (not including labor), the cost savings have been considerable.

Additional benefits Truth's electronic solution has provided include dramatically reducing the time required to make changes to the catalog which is now available on CD and the Web. Having the catalog accessible on the Web makes it easier for customer service to answer inquiries. Employees can now devote more time to the proactive—rather than reactive—elements of their job. This reinforces Truth's position as an industry leader.

Truth plans to use the system that Micrografx helped develop as a springboard to new and better ways to share information with customers. Truth hopes to use these tools in the development of a future e-commerce site, one that provides more customer-oriented information concerning the products that interest them.

Electronic Parts Catalog Solutions Using *Active*CGM

With the *Active*CGM Electronic Parts Catalog solution, you can put up-to-the-minute parts information in the hands of your customers, sales force, and vendors.

The *Active*CGM solution lets you:

- Import and View existing CAD drawings and other technical data

- Link your drawings to database repositories, other drawings, or related information automatically or interactively, making it easier for your customers, dealers, and employees to find the right information quickly

- Animate drawings to graphically demonstrate parts-related maintenance procedures

- Update your catalog by updating the files in your repository, not by reprinting thousands of pages

MICROGRAFX ®

What Customers and Integrators are Saying...

CERN Shares Information Worldwide:
"Distributing design data to the hundreds of physicists, engineers and technicians at CERN and in all the collaborating institutes on the five continents is a challenge. *Active*CGM Author offers us a new way to provide access to the drawings database with links between related drawings and a drawing's feature or other documentation. The set of linked drawings and documents can then be graphically navigated to find the required information, eliminating the need of keyword searches."

Marcel Mottier
Ingenieur CFAO, Division Technologies Mecaniques, Eurpoean Organization for Nuclear Research–CERN, the Birthplace of the World Wide Web

Already a Standard...
"*Active*CGM creates highly interesting possibilities in delivering graphics and engineer-ing information across the internet. *Active*CGM technology is based on the Computer Graphics Metafile format, which is an internationally accepted, vendor-neutral stan-dard used in everything from clip art to the documentation of aircraft. As an *Active*X Control, *Active*CGM addressed technical content delivery across the internet because CGM is already used worldwide, already has a MIME type, and can be imported by the Office applications today."

Paul Maritz
Group Vice President, Worldwide Platforms Group, Microsoft

Supply Chain Benefits:
"At corporate, we have a real need to display drawings in costing, purchasingand aftermarket all across the company. With the *Active*CGM Browser used as an Active X control with internet Explorer, we'll get the information faster. A lot of times, we just need to get an idea of what a part looks like. We don't necessarily need to see a hard-copy print."

Jim Bosworth
Group Leader, Industrial Engineering and Parts Distribution, Freightliner Corporation

A Key Technology:
"The CALS, Electronic Commerce, Government, and Commercial practices at PricewaterhouseCoopers are primarily focused on commercial aerospace and defense clients, so I need strong alliances with proven, key technology partners in that market…these products are widely accepted and supported in those industries and are a must in any system integrator's toolkit."

Lou Piper
Managing Associate, PricewaterhouseCoopers

About Micrografx Inc.
Micrografx Inc. is a recognized global leader in enterprise graphics software. The com-pany focuses on providing corporations with intelligent graphic solutions that help people visually communicate and analyze key corporate information, processes and ideas to solve real-world business problems. Through the use of Micrografx technical graphics technologies, clients can utilize their technical illustrations in a powerful and cost-effective way to provide interactive graphics to internal as well as external customers. For more information, visit www.micrografx.com.