

# A group-wide “Single Point of Truth”



## Villeroy & Boch

### Solving a complex planning challenge

Villeroy & Boch AG, a company headquartered in Germany with more than 54 global subsidiaries and 14 production sites in Europe, Asia and the USA, was looking for an integrated and globally consistent financial planning solution.

Further complexity came from the subdivision of the subsidiaries into operational divisions as well as the challenge of integrating a total of 125 sales markets, including all relevant sales channels.

The goal was to leave behind spreadsheets – and all the associated inefficient processes – to establish a consistent and reliable data basis – a Single Point of Truth (SPoT).

To help them find their “SPoT on” solution, Villeroy & Boch launched a dedicated selection process and chose Unit4 – a global provider of Corporate Performance Management (CPM) and Business Intelligence (BI) solutions. Firstly, Villeroy & Boch compiled a detailed catalogue of requirements and then requested a proof of concept based on its internal data structure.

### The concept phase

Pascal Speicher, Corporate Financial Controller and CPM Project Manager at Villeroy & Boch, said: “Before the implementation, we underwent an intensive and detailed concept phase during which we engaged in an active dialogue with all involved people and departments. We worked out the various planning steps, developed a planning workflow and added individual information for each step. We only switched to the implementation phase after completing our concept.”

#### Customer

Villeroy & Boch AG

#### Sector/industry

Ceramic industry

#### Size

7,500 employees worldwide

#### Unit4 solution

Unit4 Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A)



## Results in a mouse-click and certainty that the sums all add up



### Automatic consolidation and plausibility checks

As the planning solution was to be implemented globally, it was necessary to take currency issues into account. In the past, currency consolidation had to be carried out in Excel. The new software, however, allows for a largely automated process. According to Mr. Speicher, the new tool provides help and plausibility checks for many different issues: “If we, for example, enter the outstanding accounts into the balance sheet, the system carries out a reconciliation with the sales volume and compares the ratio development for the respective periods. As a result, local financial controllers immediately see whether their planning is plausible or not. This enabled us to create and implement a consistent group logic.”

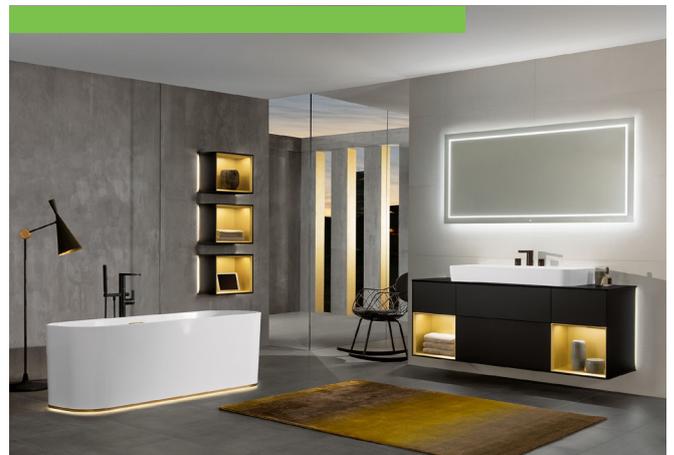
### “Data reliability cannot be estimated highly enough”

According to Mr. Speicher, the knowledge that all data in the system is reliable and correct is another significant advantage of the new system, which cannot be estimated highly enough: “All in all, we have about 230 users, 100 of them working in planning. As we are planning worldwide and still need to act with appropriate foresight, currency changes

have always been a big issue for us. Today, however, I can see all results in any desired currency with only a click and can still be sure that all sums are correct.”

### Demand-oriented planning and data integration

The capability to aggregate and display data at different levels – for example, based on individual companies or selected markets and regions – is another feature that greatly facilitates everyday planning. Mr. Speicher: “Now we can break down our group sales according to different criteria. No matter which direction we are looking at the planning cube, we are always working in the same integrated planning version, with the same data and figures.”



# The fact that we can now rely on one single version of the truth saves us a lot of time

**Pascal Speicher**

Corporate Financial Controller & CPM-Projektleiter, Villeroy & Boch

## The three pillars of risk management

For its group-wide risk management, Villeroy & Boch also relies on Unit4 FP&A, which has completely replaced the former time-intensive Excel-based process. “For classic risk management, we collect data from our subsidiaries once a month. This involves operative risks and opportunities that could affect the current business year. In addition, we compile a risk inventory once a year in line with our planning to identify strategic and medium-term risks,” explains Mr. Speicher.

All in all, risk management is based on three pillars: “Apart from the classic form of risk management, we also have monthly compliance risk reporting as well as an internal control system, which we use for quarterly and annual financial statements.”

## Positive changes for the entire group

According to Mr. Speicher, there have been plenty of positive changes since the implementation of the new tool: “The fact that we can now rely on one single version of the truth saves us a lot of time. Previously, we had to double and triple-check a multitude of Excel lists. Now we can use this time to focus on the contents of our data as well as further analysis.”



In addition to the software itself, Villeroy & Boch is also very satisfied with Unit4 FP&A's holistic controlling approach.

“As we are already experiencing significant improvements in quality and efficiency, we can certainly say that Unit4 was the right partner for our project implementation. And last but not least, the cooperation with the entire team works perfectly and is rather inspiring. We are looking forward to further collaboration with Unit4,” says Mr. Speicher.

## Benefits

- Streamlining/automating currency consolidation
- Data reliability ensured at all times
- A multitude of perspectives but all from one version of the truth
- Full and effective risk management
- Holistic controlling enabling a group-wide transformation in quality and efficiency