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## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY VDL GROEP

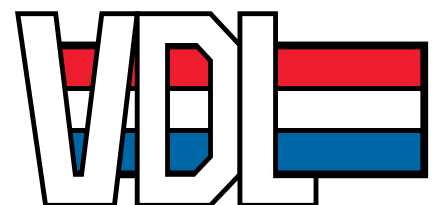
*The VDL Group is an international industrial family business with 93 operating companies, 16,000 employees and is active in 19 countries. The self-developed ERP Software was technologically obsolete and no longer suitable for future functional expansion. The VDL operating companies needed to be able to access data faster and the business processes had to become more efficiently organized and professionalized. This challenge is exactly what Thinkwise thrives on. The existing ERP software was modernized and extended and is now ready for further national and international growth.*

### Challenge

VDL has been working for around thirty years with its own PBS developed in RPG. PBS stands for Production Control System (Dutch: Productie Besturings Systeem). PBS was used by the VDL operating companies to support the logistic process. PBS formed the basis for the VDL philosophy. The focus lay on the result from an order and a specific manner of handling sales and production orders. The control of the business on the basis of added value and management reports, which contained the same data for every VDL company, is now still an important component of the VDL philosophy. All PBS functionality had to remain available and all existing peripheral applications had to be integrated. In addition, VDL Extra, the quality management system, and the EDI Engine for secure electronic messaging, which was developed by Thinkwise, had to be completely integrated. VDL Extra was developed earlier, together with Thinkwise, to satisfy the stringent requirements of the automotive and ISO/TS16949 standards and was already in use at seven operating companies.

*"Our motto strength through collaboration is also very applicable to our strategic software partner Thinkwise. Thanks to this successful collaboration, we can continue to innovate successfully in the future."*

**Paul Stoop**  
ICT Projectmanager ERP  
VDL The Netherlands bv





## Solution

In the first year a start was made to modernize the existing PBS to the modern Thinkwise platform and to integrate VDL Extra into one integrated software solution: VBS. PBS stands for VDL Control System (Dutch: VDL Besturings Systeem). The Thinkwise EDI Engine was added to this. An engine with which on an annual basis more than 41,000 messages are automatically exchanged with, for example, Volvo, DAF, Bosch and Schmitz. Within one year, PBS has been completely replaced, expanded and modernized.

VBS was subsequently implemented at two pilot companies. The follow-up phase was started following these successful pilots. The intention is that within two years VBS will be implemented at 33 operating companies by four parallel VDL/Thinkwise teams. The implementation time for each company is an average of six weeks. During this process five new operating companies have been added that do not work with PBS. These companies used a different ERP application (for example SAP R/3) and have been converted to VBS within twelve weeks. VBS is now successfully implemented at 25 operating companies. It is expected that 38 operating companies will be operational with VBS by the middle of 2018, with in total approximately one thousand end users.

## Result

With VBS, the VDL operating companies have available one integrated software solution. All functional department processes are fully integrated and automated.

This ensures that information is always available in real time. Double entry of data is a thing of the past. Integrated BI ensures that all strategic management information is completely transparent at any time. There is a financial link with SAP R/3 FI. Order processing has been optimized. A transfer of papers to the purchaser is no longer necessary. This is dealt with automatically in VBS. There is a direct insight into the requirements for materials, hours and time. In addition, EDI has been extended with a link to the suppliers. Manual processing to accomplish this is no longer necessary. This increases efficiency and reduces the chance of errors. It previously took one person working full-time to do this. Due to the short learning curve, of on average three half-days per person, new employees can quickly start using the system. Finally, it is important that the VDL philosophy has been retained.

## Future

VBS is easy to use and ready for the future. Modifications and expansions can be implemented easily and quickly. Consider, for instance, the expansion of the service orders with a service provision module for the automatic handling and processing of the maintenance of vehicles. The VBS Credit Management Tool will be deployed more widely so that when entering an order for a customer a message immediately appears if this customer is not creditworthy. VDL has the perfect basis with VBS to achieve all its innovative plans and integrate more existing packages.