

Case Study | Aerospace

Vertical Power uses Jama Contour to bring the cockpit into the 21st century.

Vertical Power's products have been called, "The next important advancement in general aviation." Their innovative electrical systems for recreational and experimental aircrafts are bringing the modern digital world to the cockpit, enhancing the flight experience for pilots.

Recently, we spoke with Kevin DeVries at Vertical Power and asked him a few questions about his team's use of Jama Contour and the process they use to design their innovative products. Kevin brings to Vertical Power's management team over 15 years experience in design, development and testing of state-of-the-art embedded and real-time processing systems – having worked for Boeing developing advanced systems for the Air Force and other government agencies. While finishing his Masters in Computer Science, Kevin developed the flight software for the Imager on the Mars Pathfinder.

What are the goals of the projects you're managing within Contour? Tell us a little about the products your team is building at Vertical Power.

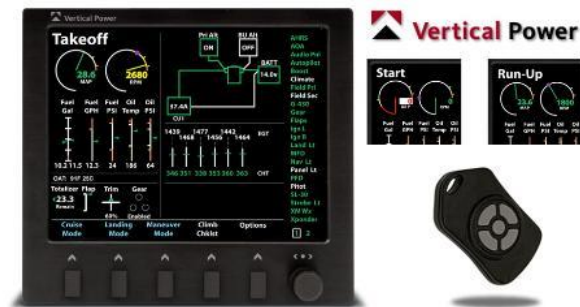
Vertical Power develops Enhanced Circuit Breakers for the experimental aviation industry. Our goal is not only to power the different electrical devices on the aircraft, but do so in a manner that reduces pilot workload, increases safety, and simplifies the wiring process. Our innovative "Flight Mode", based on the physical environment of the aircraft, allows us to perform actions, provide alerts, display checklists, along with other functionality within a consistent context.

How large are your projects in terms of the number of requirements involved?

The high-end VP-200 system has nearly 800 requirements; the VP-50 model has over 200 requirements.

What development process do you use?

We use a variant of an agile method for development. We define which requirements are needed for the next release, along with a set of issues to resolve. A general schedule is laid out for that work and usually within a



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Kevin DeVries

Lead Developer, Vertical Power

few months the next release is available for general release. We use Contour to track which requirements are in the current Sprint as well as a relative priority for when we want unimplemented features developed.

What's the biggest challenge you and your organization face in managing this process?

Many of the requirements, especially for the VP-200 are conceptual. Vetting out the concepts to actual requirements, not only from a use case perspective, but engineering the integration of the new functionality in the old code base, can be a difficult exercise.

“The ability to quickly edit, find and update status for the requirements within Contour has allowed us to focus on development, not requirements tracking.”

*Kevin DeVries
Lead Developer, Vertical Power*



Why did you choose Contour? How will it help you be more successful?

We chose Contour because of its Web-based interface and data tailoring. Because our development team is fairly small and agile, we needed to have low overhead when it came to storing and updating requirements (and test cases too!).

What were you using before Contour to manage requirements?

We had put a significant amount of requirements and conceptual functionality in a Word document. It quickly became over-bearing to track priorities, requirements for the current Sprint and the changes in such a linear format. Contour gives us the freedom to manage requirements at an item level and create specification documents and other reports at a summary level as needed.

About Jama Software

Thousands of users worldwide. Billions in R&D projects managed within Contour.

At Jama, our mission is to help organizations build great products. We're collaborating with companies across industries, from top government agencies to several of the world's largest, most innovative organizations such as Intel, Merck, Emerson, Amgen, Wells Fargo, Bio-Rad, SMART Technologies and many others to design new ways to smash information silos, speed innovation and build high-quality products.

Jama Contour, the leading Web-based solution for social product development and requirements management, is now trusted by thousands of users worldwide managing billions in R&D projects. Join us.

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