Overview
ATLAS ELEKTRONIK GmbH develops naval and maritime electronics systems for submarines and surface vessels, including sonar systems, heavyweight torpedoes and anti-torpedo weapons. Headquartered in Bremen, Germany, ATLAS ELEKTRONIK employs more than 1,500 people across 12 subsidiaries and reports annual sales of €337.6 million.

Challenge
Customers all around the world rely on ATLAS ELEKTRONIK systems to help protect harbors, coastlines and maritime vessels from threats such as piracy and smuggling. With the safety of the seas at stake, the company must ensure that its solutions can be quickly rolled out and easily adapted to meet customers’ tactical requirements.

Recently, ATLAS ELEKTRONIK was contracted to implement a state-of-the-art command and weapon control system for one of its customers. The distributed software system needed to be deployed to some 250 workstations across five separate locations, all within a strict delivery window.

Siegfried Münster, Project Manager at ATLAS ELEKTRONIK, said, “Our systems are based on a modular structure and open system architecture, which allow customers to modify the solution to fit their unique needs. This flexibility does come at a price, as it requires much more complex configuration management, customization and deployment.”

To meet a tight implementation deadline, ATLAS ELEKTRONIK looked for a solution that would enable it to deploy a large number of customized systems in a short time with limited manual intervention.

Solution
ATLAS ELEKTRONIK selected SUSE Studio—a powerful tool for building custom software images and appliances.

“SUSE Studio was the most flexible solution,” said Siegfried Münster. “It offered a reliable framework of features and configurations and still allowed for easy customization, so we could tailor the system to customer needs without compromises.”
“With SUSE Studio, we have one master image and one system for managing everything, which has considerably streamlined the deployment process.”

STEPHAN KAMPF

System Engineer Operating Systems
ATLAS ELEKTRONIK GmbH

The company replaced a home-grown packaging and scripting solution with SUSE Studio. Using the solution’s intuitive web interface, ATLAS ELEKTRONIK easily created and configured appliances from a single point of control and then rolled them out to different customer sites.

Stephan Kampf, System Engineer Operating Systems at ATLAS ELEKTRONIK, said, “SUSE Studio is so powerful that we can use it to deploy a complete data center from a single appliance. We build one installation server, which includes a set of intelligent scripts that automatically install and configure a whole range of other servers. All the customer has to do is unpack a single appliance, and SUSE Studio takes care of the rest.”

The SUSE solution offers comprehensive documentation and management of appliance configurations, all controlled from a central console.

“With our old solution, we had to copy individual files and configurations from different network locations and roll them out to a desktop one-by-one,” said Kampf. “With SUSE Studio, we have one master image and one system for managing everything, which has considerably streamlined the deployment process.”

SUSE Studio helps ATLAS ELEKTRONIK to accelerate software development cycles by making it quick and easy for the company to test new functionality and environments. This also gives developers a better chance of detecting any errors or incompatibilities in new appliances before they are rolled out, mitigating risk and ensuring a better end-user experience.

Results

With SUSE Studio, ATLAS ELEKTRONIK has gained a centralized, controlled way of creating and testing new software appliances. The new level of efficiency is helping the company to boost workload capacity, ensuring timely implementation and integration of its systems throughout the lifecycle of this customer project.

“In the past, implementing software systems was a complicated process, requiring considerable time and manual intervention,” said Münster. “SUSE Studio takes a large part of the effort out of software deployment and helps us get customers up-and-running with our systems much faster.”

An added bonus for ATLAS ELEKTRONIK is the solution’s cost-effectiveness: the company anticipates a full return on investment in SUSE Studio within the integration phase of this project.

“The engagement with SUSE has been a real success, in terms of collaboration with the SUSE team, which was excellent, the rich functionality of the product and the rapid return on investment,” said Münster.

“SUSE Studio helps us get systems rolled out and projects completed much faster, so we can meet tight deadlines and deliver a perfectly tailored, high-quality end product to customers. We are pleased with the results we have seen so far and are confident that the solution will be a huge advantage for future customer implementations.”