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kolb Cleaning and Cideon

## Spare Parts Ordering Made Easy Thanks to New 3D Spare Parts Viewer

**Finding a modern and practical solution for the ordering of spare parts is not an easy task. In kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH, Cideon has found a more than worthy partner to develop such a solution to market readiness. The result? A digital spare parts catalog for kolb customers and a mature, pragmatic standard solution for all Cideon customers. A win-win situation for both companies.**

### Small Components with a Big Impact

Electronics play a crucial role in today's industry and modern production processes would be unthinkable without them. It enables the automation and optimization of production and manufacturing processes. Electronic systems and sensors monitor and control machines, improve the precision and quality of manufactured products and at the same time minimize energy consumption and operating costs.

This makes it all the more important to ensure that the electronics used are working optimally. This is where kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH comes in. kolb is an interna-



### kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH

kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH is a leading global manufacturer of cleaning solutions for the electronics manufacturing industry, with headquarters in Willich, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. In addition to cleaning systems, kolb also provides the corresponding cleaners to ensure a complete process. kolb uses advanced technologies in machine building and cleaners. The company focuses on sustainability and environmental friendliness, for example with water-saving systems and water-based cleaners. With customers from the automotive, aerospace, railroad and high-end consumer electronics industries, kolb serves a wide range of electronics cleaning requirements.

tional full-service provider of cleaning systems, cleaning chemicals, technology, process and software design for the electronics manufacturing industry. The company manufactures machines and cleaners for large and well-known global customers, ensuring the optimal use of electronic components in industry and private use. With a high level of in-house expertise, kolb covers all processes involved in the cleaning of electronic components and is at the forefront of innovation by using new technologies and placing a high value on sustainability.



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# kolb Cleaning Chooses the Cideon Sparify Solution

## From Paper Drawings to the Digital Catalog

kolb and Cideon have been working together successfully since 2011. Christian van der Stein, Head of Product Management at kolb, recalls: "Back then, we decided to design exclusively in 3D. We implemented Autodesk Inventor and Autodesk Vault Professional as well as various smaller programs. Since then, I have been in regular contact with Cideon whenever we need something."

The request for a digital spare parts catalog came from the customers. "Until now, we have provided printed PDF lists of our spare parts. Of course, we kept an eye on what was happening in the market and what our customers were telling us. There are VR goggles that allow you to look inside a machine and see what spare parts are available. That's great at a trade show, but not necessarily practical for everyday use. We wanted a pragmatic solution that would keep the workload and costs within reasonable limits," explains Christian van der Stein.



**Challenges:** Implementation of a modern and digital spare parts solution for the customers of kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH

**Approach:** Proof of concept for trade show presentation, then implementation of technical details in the follow-up project

**Cideon Solution:** Cideon Sparify including customizations

**Cideon Service:** Expansion of the standard solution Cideon Sparify with the help of kolb's input, connection of Sparify to the ERP system with a special tool

**Outcome:** A pragmatic, easy-to-use solution for spare parts management



Technical centre of kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH in Willich

Around the same time, Cideon also came up with the idea of using Autodesk Platform Services (formerly Autodesk Forge) to develop a digital spare parts catalog as a standardized product that directly reuses our customers' existing data. As part of the portfolio process, a workshop was organized in the summer of 2022, attended by four selected Cideon customers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop was held online. "The aim of the workshop was to find out what pain points customers have in the area of spare parts sales. Of course, we had already thought about what our customers might need, and the input from the workshop was very much in line with what we ended up developing as a product," says Cideon Portfolio Manager Benedikt Sigg.



## Development of an Online Application for Spare Parts Management

One of the four clients was kolb. Christian van der Stein looks back positively on the workshop: “Our expectations were definitely met. The customer requirements from the workshop were very different, because at that time we didn't even know in which direction the solution would ultimately go. However, our expectations were met 100% with the subsequent project. We can actually say that it turned out exactly as we had hoped and imagined at the time, or perhaps even a little cooler.”

Cideon also returned to work with new ideas and a more precise plan from the workshop. For Cideon Solution Manager Sebastian Cordes, one thing was clear: “There is a market”. The management was also convinced and so the product Cideon Sparify was developed.

Cideon Sparify is an online application for spare parts management. The solution uses existing 3D CAD models from the design department as well as metadata and makes them available on a cloud platform. This data is then used to create a 3D representation of the product on the web, from which an end customer can directly select the spare parts they need. Users can access the application either from a separate page or by integrating it into their own website.



### Christian van der Stein

Head of Product Management,  
kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH



“Our expectation was to be able to visually present the 3D models already created for production on a platform in such a way that allows our customers to see at a glance what they could order as a spare part. Our expectations were met 100% with the subsequent project.”



### Proof of Concept for the Trade Show Presence

“As the product development of Cideon Sparify progressed in mid-2023, we approached all four customers from the online workshop. kolb immediately picked up the thread and had the idea of using it to build their own service portal for their trade show presence. They had an immediate vision of how they wanted to use Sparify,” recalls Sebastian Cordes. Christian van der Stein adds: “Our expectation was that we would be able to visually present the 3D models already created for production on a platform in such a way that allows our customers to see at a glance what they could order as a spare part.”

In fall 2023, kolb attended the 'Productronica', the most important international trade show for the electronics manufacturing industry. The goal was to set up a proof of concept (PoC) with Cideon Sparify before the trade show. Many existing customers were present at the trade show to ask about new products and the new platform was presented. At this point, the solution was already configured as it is used today, but some technical details were still missing.



# Integration of the Spare Parts Shop on the kolb Website

Christian van der Stein quickly realized that kolb wanted to continue using the solution: “Customers really liked the spare parts catalog. Many of them said that they finally no longer had to search for pictures and mark them with an indicator to select spare parts. Now they can click on the part they want, put it in the shopping cart, and get a quote.”

## Step by Step Towards the Final Spare Parts Solution

Cideon Sparify is implemented as a standardized 'Basic Solution' - for example in an environment with Autodesk Vault and Autodesk Inventor. In other words, the 3D CAD models come from Inventor and the metadata for the spare parts come from Vault. At kolb, the technical setup was a bit different.

Although kolb uses Autodesk Vault, the metadata for the spare parts comes directly from the ERP system. For Sebastian Cordes, this was a valid use case: “When we defined a basic product, we already knew that there would be some customers who would deviate from the basic solution and only store important data in the ERP system. In the proof of concept phase, we wrote a tool that extracts the metadata from such systems and converts it into the correct form. It can then simply be uploaded to Cideon Sparify.”

After the proof of concept, a number of technical improvements were made. Among other things, it was important for kolb to be able to select and thus order available spare parts that are not visible in the CAD assembly. Cross-selling articles can now be linked in the ERP system and selected by customers in Cideon Sparify as part of the ordering process.



### Added Value for kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH

- **Continued use** of existing 3D models from the design department and metadata from the ERP system
- **Modern and digital provision** of spare parts information for a large, heterogeneous customer base
- **Visually appealing interface** for customers to select and request spare parts
- **Unique identification** of spare parts by the customer

To keep the workload as low as possible, kolb expressed the wish to enable a collective upload for all machines in Cideon Sparify as part of the project. Previously, the basic solution only allowed one upload per machine. This means that the spare parts catalog can be updated in just a few minutes with minimal manual effort, even in the case of major changes.

Cideon Sparify already offers multilingualism in the basic solution. kolb uses the German and English version to enable international customers to easily order spare parts. The online spare parts platform is integrated into kolb's own website via an iFrame. Denise Knorr, engineer at kolb, explains: “We currently provide our customers with a QR code that they can use not only to access the spare parts, but also to access the manual for the respective machine and other documents.”



## Clear Display of Spare Parts

The solution went live on kolb's website at the end of April 2024. The technical design and production planning departments are responsible for maintaining the models and the metadata file in Sparify. Feedback and input come from sales and service. Overall, Sparify also simplifies internal communication between the various departments. Denise Knorr is enthusiastic about the user interface: "Cideon Sparify is relatively easy to use. Uploading is quick and easy. You upload the model; enter the data you want to display and can also make changes later. The spare parts display is also very clear."



**Denise Knorr**

Engineer,  
kolb Cleaning Technology GmbH

"Cideon Sparify is relatively easy to use. The upload is quick and smooth. You upload the model; enter the data you want to display and can also make changes afterwards. The display of the spare parts is also very clear."



### Learning From Each Other

For Cideon, the cooperation with kolb was very helpful in developing the standard solution and offering other customers a suitable range of functions and better usability in the future. Cideon consultant Andre Zawadzki was involved in the implementation phase from the proof of concept to the actual go-live and is very satisfied with how the project went: "Thanks to the valuable input, we were

able to improve Cideon Sparify even further. This positive and constructive communication is not something we take for granted." Sebastian Cordes, who was mainly involved in the early product development, agrees: "I always enjoyed the very constructive exchange with kolb Cleaning, it was just a great collaboration."

kolb is also satisfied with the current status quo and the path to it. "In the end, it has become a very efficient solution. We Germans are often known for over-engineering. But we now have the most pragmatic approach we could have found. Cideon Sparify has already become a cool product," concludes Christian van der Stein. Denise Knorr adds: "The communication channels have always been short. The close cooperation was very practical, with really friendly and constructive discussions. Sooner or later, we always found common ground, even if we sometimes missed each other's point."



All cleaning systems are manufactured in Germany.



## Future Extension of the Current Solution

So, what are the next steps? Naturally, kolb would like to expand the current solution further over time. Feedback from their customers and sales partners is very important. The well-coordinated project team will then meet again to discuss which requirements will be included in the standard solution and which will be implemented as custom developments. One thing is for sure: thanks to the constructive and positive exchange, Cideon Sparify will only get better.



### Andre Zawadzki

Consultant,  
Cideon Software & Services

“Thanks to the valuable input, we were able to improve Cideon Sparify even further. This positive and constructive communication is not something we take for granted.”



### About Cideon

Cideon advises and supports companies in optimizing their product development processes – from the initial concept through to engineering, production and services. Cideon's innovative solutions ensure continuous data flow along process chains making data accessible and cost-effective throughout the company. In this way, Cideon's customers can fully exploit the potential of digitalization to benefit themselves and their clients. Cideon employs 310 staff at 13 locations in Germany and Austria. It is part of the Friedhelm Loh Group, a globally successful Group with 12 production facilities and 95 subsidiaries.

Further information can be found at: [cideon.com](https://cideon.com) and [friedhelm-loh-group.com](https://friedhelm-loh-group.com)

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