

# A NEW TAKE ON PRODUCT DATA MANAGEMENT

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## ■ THE BOTTOM LINE

*Winchester Business Systems helps PLP Streamline Change Control Environment*

Global manufacturing is a competitive business with small margins. Mistakes in managing the business can have catastrophic effects on the bottom line. Manufacturers today cannot afford to make mistakes. Successful businesses need to continually infuse the latest technology into their processes to bring down costs.

Preformed Line Products Co., a major manufacturer of communications and power utility products, realized that they needed a more efficient way to react to their customers' needs. With multiple manufacturing plants in the U.S, they also knew that any efforts to implement a computerized data management system for engineering document management must also include the automated workflow tracking that would help them manage their future growth. They turned to Winchester Business Systems for the answer.

Winchester's President, Michael Regentz, worked closely with the Project Team to identify the bottlenecks in the current engineering approval processes. After a careful review of their change request processes, Regentz discovered areas where a change in workflow could take advantage of collaborative techniques available in today's technology. "Mr. Regentz' experience in engineering/manufacturing processes coupled with his knowledge of collaborative workflow was invaluable", praises Mr. Bob Hazenfield, Vice President of Engineering. "It ensured we were applying the right technology to enhance the business processes."

Winchester's Engineering Change Control System (ECC) provides a model product configuration management sys-

tem that can be used as a template in establishing a standard for unique company environments. Winchester's consultants tailored ECC to exactly match the workflow requirements identified. ECC



*PLP's management believes the e-PLM capabilities support its collaboration initiatives*

uses the power of Lotus Notes and Domino to integrate and speed the flow of information between all the elements including those in design, engineering, manufacturing and work flow management - as well as sales, customer service, suppliers and partners. "We build our applications in Notes because we know Domino can provide the collaborative support we need to make this application reach its highest potential", says Mike Regentz.

ECC's data management framework enables authorized users to access the system worldwide either via their desktop or by logging onto the internet with a standard browser. According to Hazenfield, successfully managing such a large program requires collaboration among many elements, including those in design, engineering, manufacturing and work flow management - as well as

sales, suppliers and associates. ECC provides seamless access to data and information sharing among everyone in the program - and participants can work independently on their tasks without

having to change their existing software tools. For example, CAD/CAM drawings of existing parts are available to anyone using the system, just by clicking a button. Drawings are available instantly along with all information about those products including parts lists, assemblies, where-used, and effectivity dates.

Having financial and inventory information available, decisions about new or modifications to products can be made on the basis of customer need balanced against supplier availability and manufacturing costs. More informed decisions result in better profit and delivery performance for the company. For the customer, it means dramatically improved delivery of product within planned budgets.

**Winchester Business Systems,** a Premier Lotus Business Partner, knows that Lotus Domino is the answer to the collaborative workflow challenges facing businesses today. Domino underlies and integrates all of the technology requirements in a seamless architecture; web publishing, e-mail, ERP database access, collaboration and workflow. "Technology has become more than a productivity tool," says Regentz. "Technology is a strategic issue that directly impacts a company's competitive advantage. Our clients' principal concern is the management and wider availability of knowledge about their products, markets, and customers."



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