Welcome to the Podcast on the subject of Product Lifecycle Management. Manuela Kerker interviews Rudolf Heierli, PLM Team Leader IMT Alps.

Manuela Kerker: „Could you give us some details about you and your job at IBM?"

Rudolf Heierli: „My name is Rudolf Heierli and I joined IBM in December 1988 as a Systems Engineer. Since 1995 I have been servicing numerous customers in Switzerland as Sales in the PLM area. Then in 2006 I took over the technical management of the Swiss PLM Team, and since 1 January 2009 I have also had responsibility for the PLM business in Austria."

Manuela Kerker: „Could you give an example of Product Lifecycle Management ?"

Rudolf Heierli: „Throughout the whole lifecycle of a product data are generated from development, production, operations, sales and so on. In addition, numerous people and processes are involved in the workflow. The objective of Product Lifecycle Management is then to ensure that all areas and systems can access a common data base. This leads on the one hand to increased data continuity and at the same time to an improvement in data quality. To give you an example, if a high-tech company decides to launch a new mobile phone on the market, then initially the requirements from Sales and Marketing are established and evaluated. On the basis of this information it is then decided what functions the new product must have in order to be marketed successfully. Here it is important that product management is in a position at all times and in all places to check and monitor that the development takes place similarly in mechanics, electronics and software – so that deadlines can be respected, cost control ensured and that the final product can be commercialised and distributed just as it was originally planned. In the high-tech sector in particular it

is extremely important to be on the market on time because a delay of two or three months means massive loss in market share and thus turnover and profit."

Manuela Kerker: „In the context of Product Lifecycle Management IBM offers a variety of applications packages, such as CATIA and DELMIA. How do these software bundles support the business process?"

Rudolf Heierli: „We at IBM PLM market primarily the solution portfolio of Dassault Systems, and have been doing so very successfully for more than 25 years. Here we differentiate basically between Author Systems and Management Systems. The CATIA und DELMIA products you mentioned come under the Author Systems. That means that with these applications new data and information, e.g. 3D-geometries or process flows are generated and produced. Other products in the Dassault Systems portfolio are ENOVIA, SIMULIA and 3DVIA. Here we also count 3DVIA and SIMULIA as Author Systems and ENOVIA as a Management System. In the environment of Dassault Systems we therefore have a complete portfolio for the whole development and production of new products. This includes the CATIA solutions for 3D geometry production, DELMIA for digital planning and management of the production processes, SIMULIA for the design for resistance and virtual simulation, 3DVIA for the production of product-specific documentation, and ENOVIA as overriding administration or management system."

Manuela Kerker: „The basic idea behind PLM seems to be understanding the whole Product Life Cycle and thus managing it better. Is that realistic?"

Rudolf Heierli: „In principle, yes. The idea of Product Lifecycle Management is indeed to provide all those involved in the production process with a common data base. Today the difficulty is to ensure this continuity, because in the past isolated solutions were developed in the different business areas. For example in development the drawing board was replaced by the 3D-CAD system, whereas there was no reaction in Production or in Marketing to this massive change in Product Development, either in the processes or in the data management. So the necessary adjustments in the internal operating flows were not or insufficiently carried out. A

possible approach that IBM can offer its customers here is for example an integration of these isolated solutions on the basis of Websphere as Middleware."

Manuela Kerker: „For which industries are the PLM supporting products best suited?"

Rudolf Heierli: „Product Lifecycle Management is basically suitable for all industries that develop, produce and market a product and also perhaps offer product maintenance as well, so quite independently of the actual product itself. But today we are mostly represented with our products in the following industry sectors: automotive, aerospace, industrial equipment, high-tech and electronics, consumer goods and energy."

Manuela Kerker: „What market trends are pointing the way for the further development of Product Lifecycle Management?"

Rudolf Heierli: „In actual fact there are two market trends that are important for the future of PLM. Firstly there are cost savings, then there are possibilities for increase in turnover or profit. The introduction of a company-wide PLM concept is the only possibility of achieving both. The introduction of an ERP System or its optimisation helps to optimise cost savings. The introduction of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System again helps in identifying new markets or new customer needs, thus leading to additional turnover potential. A PLM System on the other hand can help optimise processes, shorten through-put times and thus save costs. Moreover, a PLM System supports the development of new, innovative products and thus also helps open up new markets with additional turnover possibilities."