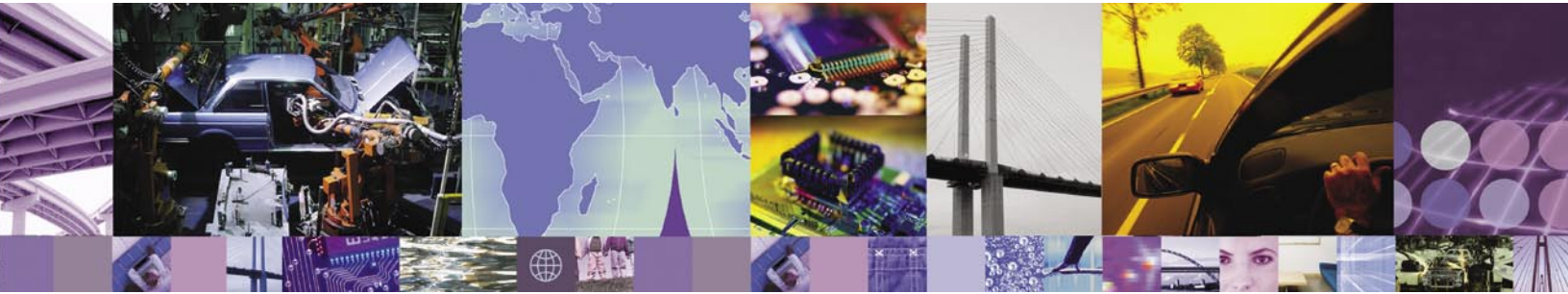


WebSphere® software

## Product information management capabilities combined with PLM solutions help bring products to market faster.



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### Highlights

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- ***Brings extensive marketing and sales capabilities to your PLM solution to enable more than just design and manufacturing***
- ***Delivers the most recent and accurate information to sales and marketing databases from your PLM systems***
- ***Provides an automated, audited process for collecting comprehensive product information, enabling an end-to-end process from conception to customer***
- ***Helps you federate, manage and maintain product information in one location to facilitate accuracy, timeliness and consistency across every touchpoint***
- ***Enables your organization to comply with global and industry standards that drive the need to synchronize product information internally and externally***

In every industry and sector of global business today, manufacturing companies, such as automotive, aerospace, high-tech and consumer goods, are searching for ways to make their organizations more nimble. To respond quickly to market opportunities and external threats. And to deliver their products and services to meet customers' unique needs faster.

### **Leverage product information management capabilities to extend the value of your PLM investment**

Product lifecycle management (PLM) is a strategic approach to creating and managing your company's product-related intellectual capital, from its initial conception to retirement. A strong approach to PLM can help you improve your organization's product-development processes.

But a PLM solution alone can't help you bring your products to market quickly and efficiently. By combining your PLM solution with a robust product information management solution, you can optimize your organization's ability to use product-related information to make better business decisions and deliver greater value to customers. You can also provide a single, integrated, consistent view of product or services information.

The bottom line: A robust product information management solution can help you address your business challenges by improving the integrity of your product information, streamlining your business processes and enabling your fast response to changing needs. With the right product information management solution, you can help transform your product information into a competitive asset.

IBM WebSphere® Product Center can help support your marketing and sales needs by extending the value of PLM to your demand chain. WebSphere Product Center acts as a bridge between existing manufacturing-facing systems, such as PLM, and customer-facing systems, such as catalogs, Web sites, kiosks and sales collateral.

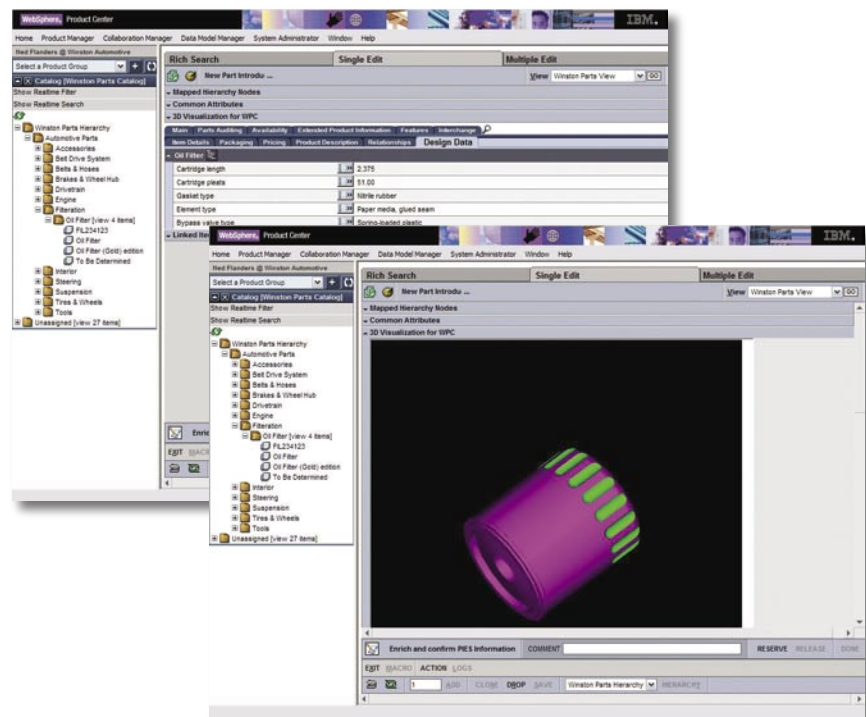
### Maximize operating efficiencies to gain competitive advantage

To compete effectively in today's marketplace, you must optimize operational efficiencies to reduce costs, provide a fast return on your existing IT investments and increase your profit margins.

Delivering correct, consistent,

timely product information to employees, manufacturers, customers and suppliers helps build stronger business relationships and increase sales.

To stay ahead of the thousands of products brought to market every week, you need to be able to quickly introduce new products, all with their own designs, materials, tests, packages, launches, promotions, pricing and merchandising requirements. You also have to track warranties and retire products—including price markdowns and other clearance activities for these items. If this myriad of product information isn't integrated with your business processes or applications, you can lose valuable time—while your competitors gain advantage.



WebSphere Product Center integrates with your PLM solution, enabling you to import valuable design and manufacturing information to enhance your marketing and sales processes.



*Product information management solutions will be the consolidation hub and integration point for product information and content references that are housed in various enterprise resource planning (ERP), PLM and enterprise content management (ECM) systems. This [point of focus] will increase the accuracy of product-related content and reduce redundant data stores and product entries.*

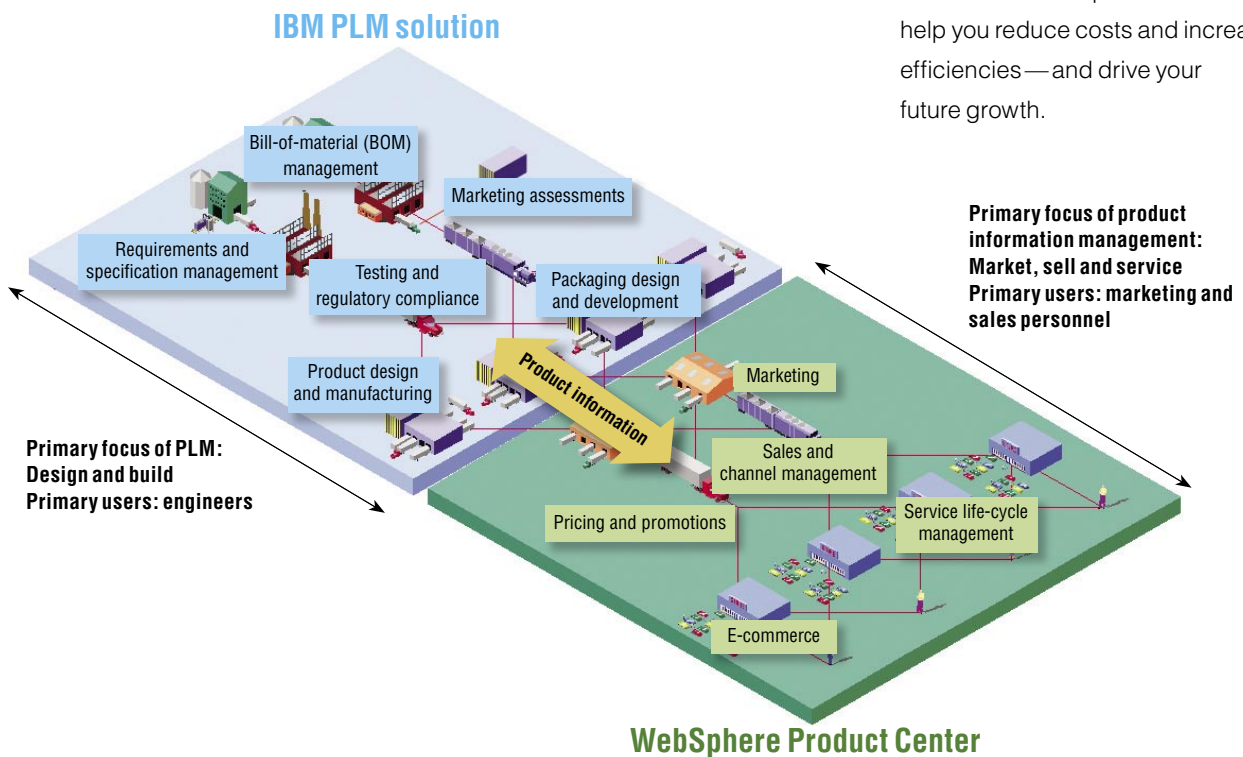
– Gene Alvarez, MetaGroup\*

Regulatory issues also compel the automotive and electronics industries to improve their product information processes. In automotive, these initiatives include Product Information Exchange Standard (P.I.E.S.) and Aftermarket Catalog Enhanced Standards (ACES); compliance with regulations such as the Transportation Recall, Accountability and Documentation (TREAD) Act; and support for radio frequency identification (RFID) and global data synchronization (GDS) standards. In the electronics industry, the regulatory initiatives include Waste from Electric and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), effective August 2005, and Regulation of Hazardous Substances (RoHS),

effective July 2006. These regulatory initiatives drive parameters and strict guidelines for the maintenance and exchange of product information. As a result, companies must be prepared to deliver accurate product information to support supply-chain collaboration, compliance and reporting requirements.

**Developing new products faster from ideation to launch**

Beating the competition—and getting products to market faster—means more than conducting a simple transaction. Getting ahead of competition and staying there takes coordinating several transactions throughout a product’s life cycle. An end-to-end product life-cycle strategy that combines existing IBM PLM solutions with WebSphere Product Center capabilities can help you reduce costs and increase efficiencies—and drive your future growth.



Product information management extends the value of PLM through the demand chain.

By providing one source for information to travel from conception to customer, you can present detailed, up-to-the-minute descriptions of your products. And by making that information easily accessible, you can give your customers what they need to make faster, better-informed purchasing decisions.

For example, in the automotive industry, engineers spend a lot of time and money redesigning components when existing components could be reused. This inefficiency can create a parts-management problem. Product data management (PDM) systems can't manage parts efficiently across vehicle families. However, integrating PLM and product information management solutions enable engineers to reuse components each time they create a new vehicle design. Another important reason for enhancing your PLM system with a product information management system is defect and warranty tracking, which can cost the auto industry billions of U.S. dollars annually. Product information management solutions can track the replacement

parts at the sales and service level. And when integrated with business intelligence (BI) solutions, product information management solutions can alert engineers about potential problems so they can begin the redesign process for components before they create expensive recall situations.

An end-to-end product life-cycle solution that combines PLM capabilities and WebSphere Product Center can help you address these product-to-market challenges. Leveraging leading-edge product information management capabilities can accelerate time to market of new products, marketing campaigns, and cross-sell, upsell and price promotions. Business users with diverse responsibilities can collaborate, create and maintain the variety of unique product attributes that you need to provide to your customers and trading partners. Eliminate IT bottlenecks by involving business users directly, helping them to create new revenue streams and optimize processes that can truly differentiate your company's product and services offerings.

WebSphere Product Center enhances your existing PLM solution by optimizing marketing and sales functionality, which enables you to:

- *Manage product information more efficiently and help rid your business of costs associated with errors in your data.*
- *Add virtually unlimited numbers of attributes to describe your products appropriately—and attract buyers by presenting the information to support their buying decisions.*
- *Link documents, such as engineering diagrams, user manuals, warranty information and product specification sheets to give users the most accurate, timely information available.*
- *Use workflow and e-mail notifications to enhance communication and speed processes.*
- *Manage multiple-language versions of product information. This tailored, global approach can make your worldwide customer experiences more meaningful, helping to build the loyalty you want to grow your international business.*
- *Impress the customer with three-dimensional (3-D) functionality around product viewing at Web sites.*

**A solution that can grow  
with your business**

Effective product information management is fundamental to the success of your overall PLM strategy. Consider how you can provide your customers with on demand access to up-to-date product information—whether one end of the transaction is the system of your supplier or distributor, or a personal digital assistant (PDA) in the hands of an individual consumer.

Because product and service information provides the foundation for virtually any transaction, combining your PLM solution with IBM WebSphere Product Center software offers a robust solution. Leverage your product information to operate your business at the speed the market dictates and your employees need. Become more efficient and respond faster. Get a jump on your competitors. And realize significant business benefits as a result.

**For more information**

To learn more about PLM with IBM WebSphere Product Center solutions, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

[ibm.com/websphere/prodinfomgmt/](http://ibm.com/websphere/prodinfomgmt/)



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\* Alvarez, Gene. "Putting Products in Their Place With Product Information Management: An Overview of Product Information Management." MetaGroup, October 2004.