

IBM ECM for Retail

Merchandising and Supply Chain Efficiency

A key goal of retailers is to run merchandising and supply chain functions as cost-effectively and efficiently as possible. This is understandable, given the expectations of shareholders and the competitive pressures retailers face. If retailers are to satisfy their target customers, they must make fundamental changes. They must build networks in which the various merchandising and supply chain functions are fully integrated and enable a more detailed understanding of the customers served. They must also tailor operations to suit different products, customer segments, markets and timeframes. Complete integration and optimization of the merchandising-supply network is one of the key components of delivering a customer-centric shopping experience.

IBM Enterprise Content Management (ECM) can significantly enhance key areas of merchandising and supply chain efficiency, in addition to reducing costs and improving customer service. Retailers who have implemented IBM ECM solutions have realized benefits such as:

- greater efficiency in managing supplier contracts, orders and shipments



- improved cash flow via timely invoice payments
- improved web site navigation and search for increased web sales
- better insight into customer and market trends
- manage all product information via a single secure access point
- improved employee productivity by providing current, accurate product information
- quicker responsiveness to changing market demands
- streamlined employee recruitment and hiring process
- significantly reduced storage and handling costs for documents
- efficient compliance with governmental regulations

“IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition delivers the best end-user experience by synthesizing the seeker’s request, translating it into an effective response and organizing the information returned in a manner that makes it easy for our customers to act.”

– Daniel Jarashow
CEO
Campmor, Inc.



Drive Operational Excellence

In support of every item sold is a plethora of critical business documents and processes – product descriptions, images, media assets, contracts, supplier agreements, invoices, employee information, sales reports, corporate policies, email, store plans, regulatory guidelines, and myriad other documents and processes that define and direct retail operations. The ever-increasing volume of documents makes it imperative that retail organizations manage these effectively and securely in order to attain operational efficiency. Retail organizations that continue to rely upon error-prone manual processes involving paper-based transactions forgo opportunities to dramatically reduce operational costs.

IBM ECM Solutions for Retail

IBM ECM offers solutions that have enabled retailers worldwide to manage critical corporate content and business processes associated with products, suppliers, employees and customers, thereby attaining a significant reduction in costs and a corresponding increase in operational efficiency.

Every aspect of the retail environment involves an increasing number of documents – both paper and electronic – that must be captured, processed and retained. IBM's ECM solutions can assist retailers to efficiently manage these documents (regardless of source or format) and their associated business processes as well as gain additional efficiencies and cost savings through integration with web commerce, product information management, existing ERP, custom

applications and legacy systems. Key areas in which IBM ECM capabilities can positively impact the efficiency of retail organizations include:

Information Enhanced Shopping Experience

Consumers, more knowledgeable than ever, expect detailed product information and a consistent shopping experience. Increase e-commerce revenue by providing complete, current and consistent product information (provided by supplier and retailer) across all channels. Improve web site navigation and sales by providing relevant search results to meet unique customer needs and offering timely, relevant promotions based upon the customer's profile.

Merchandising

Streamline the vendor applications and product submissions process with the goal of quickly responding to changes in market demand. Improve pricing and promotion management by having all relevant product information available via a single secure point of access via integration with your product information management system. Employ electronic forms, e-mail and business process management to accelerate the collection of product and supplier information regardless of source or geographic location.

Customer Care

Obtain deeper insight into customer trends and refine the merchandising strategy to exploit these trends. Prepare sales associates to meet customer needs by offering a “complete view of the customer” by combining information from the

“We are able to identify and have control over our invoices at any point of time in order to answer both vendor and internal inquiries. Instant invoice retrieval is a tremendous improvement over the “old fashioned” way of processing. The system allows us to conform to SOX controls, process invoices faster with fewer errors, and position ourselves so that we can handle volume increases without adding to the headcount, which we would not be able to do using old methods of processing.”

– Daphne Sumner
Accounts Payable Manager
Skechers USA Inc.

customer database with relevant customer information such as email, fax, etc. Increase the effectiveness of sales associates by providing current and complete product information.

Compliance

Regulatory and legislative pressures as well as the expense of the discovery process have demonstrated the relevance of content management systems in enabling an organization to achieve compliance with evolving regulations. Establish the controls and mechanisms required to automatically categorize documents and retain them as corporate records regardless of the source or format of the content. Employ electronic discovery to reduce the cost of litigation.

Streamline the Contract Process

Improve the efficiency of contract development, negotiation, review, approval and execution. A collaborative environment enables internal and external parties to participate in the contract process, automatically incorporates relevant email messages as part of the collaboration and uses business process management to guide the contract lifecycle process.

Optimize Accounts Payable

Significantly reduce cost and inefficiency by automating the accounts payable process. Capture invoices electronically. Automate the review, approval and payment process via integration with accounting or ERP systems. Retain invoices as electronic records. Improve cash flow by

automatically taking advantage of early payment discounts.

Efficient Employee Lifecycle Management

Achieve greater efficiency in the hiring process and managing employee information – something that is imperative given the high employee turnover and seasonal hiring typical of the retail industry. Eliminate unnecessary paper work, assure an automated and consistent verification, orientation and training process, and quickly process changes in employee status to reduce human resources costs. Relevant employee documentation can easily be linked to employee data in the ERP system, thereby providing a single, secure point of access for all employee information.

Operational Efficiency

Streamline core business processes such as order planning, shipment coordination, invoice processing, contract management, employee on-boarding and lifecycle management, email management and archiving, report management and distribution, and vendor collaboration, all while leverage existing ERP and CRM investments.

Bringing Value to the Retail Industry

IBM enables retailers to quickly deploy and immediately modify the many processes that optimize the management of suppliers and products while providing accurate and complete information to customers and employees. IBM has a well-established reputation and presence in the retail

industry worldwide providing ECM solutions that are empowering retailers to:

- Improve overall operational efficiency in the areas of supply chain, merchandising, vendor collaboration, contract management, employee lifecycle management, invoice processing, compliance and product information management.
- Provide an information-enhanced shopping experience – allowing customers to make buying decisions based upon complete and current product information
- Improve customer service by enabling a “complete view of the customer,” thereby allowing retailers to tailor products and services with the goal of increased customer loyalty and revenue
- Comply with an increasing number of federal, state, local and environmental regulatory guidelines
- Gain better customer insight through analysis of customer transactions and communications

IBM ECM solutions address the unique requirements of the retail industry to reduce costs as well as increase merchandising and supply chain efficiency while improving the customer experience.

About IBM ECM

As the clear market leader in Enterprise Content Management (ECM), IBM's ECM solutions help organizations make better decisions, faster by managing content, optimizing business processes and enabling compliance through an integrated information infrastructure. IBM's ECM portfolio delivers a broad set of capabilities and solutions that integrate with existing information systems to help organizations drive greater value from their content to solve today's top business challenges. The world's leading organizations rely on IBM enterprise content management to manage their mission-critical business content and processes.



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