



Product Data Management Solutions

Case Study



Product Data Management Solutions that enable scalability and tighter control of product definition and change

Challenge



- Develop new part numbering scheme for next phase of product line expansion
- Move Bill of Materials from spreadsheet to product data management tool
- Develop processes that are effective but easy to use

Solution



- Introduce Pivot3 part numbers and manage all products within Arena
- Establish procedures to manage change effectively between engineering, services, operations and the contract manufacturers

Results



- Single Version of the Truth—All product data kept in Arena for engineers and contract manufacturers
- Engineering Change Control processes developed, documented and implemented within Arena
- Team Collaboration improved

Pivot3 engaged Global Supply Chain Solutions (GSCS) to implement a Product Data Management solution within their growing organization. The engagement included the definition of new processes and change management procedures along with a product data management tool, Arena. The processes would need to be easy but efficient and allow team collaboration both internally and with their contract manufacturer.

Pivot3 delivers both server and shared storage resources for centralized environments and small distributed sites needing high-capacity protected storage.

The Challenge

Pivot3's success in the marketplace meant the expansion of their product offerings. The Bill of Materials (BOM) for these new products were kept on spreadsheets as the details were being finalized. Each BOM included the necessary information needed to identify the material that was needed for the product.

Each time an update was made the latest spreadsheet was updated and circulated. The version of the spreadsheet signified that changes had been made. These changes were made due to customer requirement changes, engineering requirement changes, contract manufacturer changes, etc. Changes were typically communicated via email and circulated to everyone that was affected.

As Pivot3 expanded it became more difficult to manage the product and its changes using spreadsheets. In order to free up resources, Pivot3 realized a product data management tool, ideal for a small growing company, would help streamline the product management process and allow proper documentation to be captured along the way.

The Solution

With the help of GSCS' Product Data Management Solutions team, integrating a product management tool, Arena, into Pivot3 allowed them to capture each of their product's BOMs, costs, manufacturers, etc. and allowed them to begin managing all changes to the BOMs through one tool.

GSCS worked closely with Pivot3 to ensure that all organizations that needed the latest information about the products were able to access the exact configuration that was approved for production. GSCS also designed a process that fit the



“Teaming up with Global Supply Chain Solutions (GSCS) to integrate the product data management (PDM) solution Arena into Pivot3 allowed Pivot3 to continue to focus on day to day operations of the company while all of our current products were imported into Arena. Having a partner that was able to understand our PDM requirements and quickly provide an implementation in less than three months while we continued to ship product was of great value.”

– George Scholhamer
VP of Engineering
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Pivot3 environment that allowed Pivot3 internal users and contract manufacturers to play a role in the change management process; suggesting changes, approving changes, etc.

The Results

Teamed with GSCS, Pivot3 was able to successfully implement a product data management solution that allowed them to be prepared to quickly scale their business with tighter control of product definition and product changes.

Single Version of the Truth

GSCS worked with Pivot3 to get to the exact set of materials that would be purchased for each sellable product. Part numbers were assigned and the data was uploaded into Arena. Once completed the data included a list of all orderable items; including the BOMs for each. The data included data sheets, specifications, costs, manufacturers, manufacturer’s part numbers, vendor, and vendor part numbers. Access was given to all engineering, operations and engineering team members that have responsibilities for the products. The data was reviewed by the organization and released to production. All changes would now use engineering change control before being released to production.

Easy to implement Engineering Change Control

Engineering change control is a necessary next step once the data is in a product data management tool. Pivot3 needed an easy but effective change control process. GSCS reviewed the Pivot3 organization and current processes and developed and implemented an easy process that would allow both the internal teams and contract manufacturer to take part in the change control process. By adding this process, all communication on changes was now captured within Arena and could be referenced.

Team Collaboration

Pivot3 engineering team and Pivot3’s contract manufacturer work very closely to bring product to market. Working with GSCS, Pivot3’s PDM implementation allowed them to continue to work closely through the design, prototype and production process. The CM was provided their own account with access to upload quotes and to see all relevant data. Changes to product could be initiated by either the engineer or contract manufacturer. Both groups could make comments to the changes. By including all stakeholders in the process the team was able to continue to operate in a manner that was conducive to quick turn on any necessary changes.

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