PLM Interest Group

PLM Product Structure Standard

Managing the Product Structure is one of the primary functions of PLM. Doing so accurately underpins every part of the lifecycle, from Design to Customer.

This Standard is for experienced PLM practitioners, and enables you to cross-check your Product Structure against best practice in full technical detail.

Roger Tempest, PLMIG Co-Founder

0 Executive Summary

One of the primary functions of PLM is to embody the company's entire product structure, so that it can be managed across its evolution and its lifecycle.

It is important to get this right. A clear and accurate understanding and embodiment of the product structure underpins every part of the lifecycle, from design through engineering change, to integration with manufacture and support.

However, the structure of even a single product can be very complex. In the real world of corporate divisions, product families, systems and software, which are produced for different markets, it can be very difficult to define and depict the complete picture.

Any organisation that implements PLM must understand and deal with this issue. The PLM system can only work on the configuration and data that are embedded within it. If the product structure is not accurate and complete, then the output of PLM will contain omissions or outright errors.

Not only is this an essential starting point for PLM in general, but it becomes of fundamental importance in the relationship between, and integration of, PLM and ERP.

The raw material for this PLM Product Structure Standard was originally produced by the PLMIG to resolve just such a complex situation in the maritime industry. It then became clear that the principles within the methodology apply to all products; and can be applied by any type of company.

This is a technical Standard, intended to be used by experienced PLM practitioners. There are no 'Pass or Fail' rules: instead the Standard expresses the theory and best practice in terms that every PLM practitioner will understand and find easy to apply.

Careful comparison of a real implementation to the Standard is a valuable tool to ensure that the overall PLM setup is well founded.

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