



Transforming your PDM Implementation into a PLM Transformation

We have been in the PLM arena for the past 20+ years. It has been and currently is a challenge for organizations to modify their perspective that Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) solutions are Enterprise solutions that are a MUST in today's environment of delivering every increasing complex products to the marketplace. The general stance in companies we work with and in industry in general is that PLM is viewed as an Engineering specific solution. This typically comes from the way PLM is/was introduced into the organization, which is most times by Engineering. Engineering has the need to manage and control the configuration of the Product and its associated Engineering artifacts. This usually starts with Engineering Drawings and CAD models. This is what's classified as a Product Data Management (PDM) approach. All in all, this is a great starting point, the challenge most organizations have is "Why and How" to expand this to the rest of the enterprise? How to get from a PDM to an enterprise PLM approach is the challenge at hand.

This starts by having a conversation that is typically a controversial one for most organizations. This is the conversation centered around the appropriate fit of PLM within your organization's Enterprise Solution Architecture. The focus here is to establish how each Enterprise Solution is utilized in terms of which process and what data each solution supports. Typically, organizations utilize the following solutions sets; CRM for Customer information and sales information, such as Leads, Opportunities and Proposals; ERP for financial processes / information, order management, etc.; PLM for product and process information, Bill of Material, etc. This conversation defines the aligned enterprise strategy for where information will be authored and managed. It also defines the interaction that occurs between these solutions with cross-functional enterprise processes. This then provides the needed information to build the needed integrations from a data perspective along with the triggers that will launch processes and information creation and management in adjacent enterprise systems to eliminate troublesome duplicate data entry that creates misalignment and confusion from department to department. With the understanding that the view of this information to the organization's employees, partners and suppliers, should be based on the unique Process and Role not from which system the data resides. The goal is "One View" with all needed information for each Process and Role.

Along with this is the need to embrace and influence the other disciplines within the organization. The value attained from implementing an end to end PLM solution for the organization is a differentiator. What we mean by this is that the value within engineering is great, however extending the solution to the enterprise, results in an exponential benefit. Why is that? It comes from the number of people and additional use cases that the information, created and configured in engineering is used in other disciplines, while providing the base definition for other functions to add information that can support the product throughout the different lifecycles of the product's life. From utilizing and adding information to create digital work instructions for Manufacturing, to the addition of key quality characteristics from the engineering model for the inspection process and incorporating service parts and documentation for the service of the product. This being just a short list of some of the value that comes from going from an "Engineering" focused PDM to an "Enterprise" PLM solution.

If your organization designs, develops and manufactures products, the life blood of the organization centers around product information. The different views (Sales, Design, Manufacturing and Service) of this information and the needed understanding that the information you are viewing, creating, editing and adding to, represents a known and understood configuration ("In Design", "In Validation", "In Production", "End of Life", etc.)

At DRIVEN-4 we have not only had the tough conversations needed to go from a PDM foundation to an Enterprise PLM, we also have extensive experience on defining the strategy and roadmap to realizing the benefits.

If you'd like to discuss this further give us a call.

Next Month: Delivering a Predictive and Preventive Solution for your Manufacturing Floor