

Tech-Clarity

making the value of technology clear

Issue in Focus: Enabling Mobile PLM

***IT Considerations for
Leveraging Mobility
to Extend PLM Value***



Table of Contents

Introducing the Issue.....	3
Leveraging Existing PLM Infrastructure	*
Device Considerations	*
Business Process Considerations.....	*
Application Considerations	*
People Considerations.....	*
Management Considerations	*
Conclusion	4
Recommendations	4
About the Author	5

***This summary is an abbreviated version of the report and does not contain the full content. A link to download the full report is available on the Tech-Clarity website, www.tech-clarity.com.**

If you have difficulty obtaining a copy of the report, please contact the author at jim.brown@tech-clarity.com.

Introducing the Issue

Many leading manufacturers have invested in Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) to improve the way they innovate, design, develop, and manage their products. These solutions help manufacturers improve their products, processes, and ultimately their profitability. The rise of tablets like the iPad offers an opportunity to further PLM value by reducing barriers to innovation, decision-making, program management, and contribution to product development by extending applications to employees while they are away from the office. It also offers the potential to share critical manufacturing or service data to those in challenging locations such as the plant or in the field.

The rise of tablets like the iPad offers an opportunity to further PLM value by reducing barriers to innovation, decision-making, program management, and contribution to product development.

Tech-Clarity's *PLM Goes Mobile* and *Program Management Goes Mobile* provide examples of how PLM-related processes can be improved by mobility, including:

- Analyzing and executing engineering changes
- Providing interactive, 3D manufacturing and service instructions
- Managing program status, issues, resources, and tasks
- Approving deliverables and signing off on stage-gate reviews

These scenarios provide tangible examples of how mobility can extend the value of PLM. The reports also detail common benefits manufacturers gain from PLM and identify how that value is extended by mobile applications. The reports conclude that “*Mobile devices like the iPad have set the stage to extend the opportunity for engineers and others in the product lifecycle to contribute, decide, act, and innovate with PLM.*”

For IT leaders, there are some very practical considerations to take into account when taking PLM mobile.

Mobile PLM is compelling to business leaders. For IT leaders, there are some very practical considerations to take into account when taking PLM mobile, including:

- Leveraging existing PLM infrastructure
- Device considerations
- Application considerations
- Process considerations
- People considerations
- Management considerations

Conclusion

Manufacturers have an opportunity to expand the value they get out of their existing PLM infrastructure through mobility. The value is compelling, and department leaders will likely want to move in this direction. IT can help identify and achieve that value, and should be ready to support it. In addition to supporting the business transformation, IT needs to take into account considerations regarding existing infrastructure, devices, applications, business processes, users, and management. The investment will not pay off as it should if manufacturers simply push existing applications onto mobile devices. IT has the opportunity to help enable the transformation to mobile PLM, and the responsibility to ensure that mobility is done right so the opportunity pays optimal dividends.

IT has the opportunity to help enable the transformation to mobile PLM, and the responsibility to ensure that mobility is done right so the opportunity pays optimal dividends.

Recommendations

Based on industry experience and research for this report, Tech-Clarity offers the following recommendations:

- Develop or expand your company's mobile device strategy and ensure it addresses PLM mobility
- Expand PLM information assets and processes to mobile scenarios
- Don't reinvent the wheel, leverage existing infrastructure investments including data, application logic, network, security models, and processes for mobile use
- Adopt devices that fit into the user's life and lifestyle so they will carry and use them
- Evaluate existing processes to determine if the speed and access of mobile devices will disrupt any current functions or controls
- Prioritize the processes and users to be enabled with mobile applications based on business need and potential improvements
- Make sure there is an "app for that" – rethink applications and processes to fit into the mobile scenario

About the Author

Jim Brown is the President of Tech-Clarity, an independent research and consulting firm specializing in analyzing the true business value of software technology and services. Jim has over 20 years of experience in software for the manufacturing industries, with a broad background including roles in industry, management consulting, the software industry, and research. His experience spans enterprise applications including PLM, ERP, quality management, service, manufacturing, and others. Jim is passionate about improving product innovation, product development, and engineering performance through the use of software technology and social computing techniques.

Jim is an experienced researcher, author, and public speaker and enjoys the opportunity to speak at conferences or anywhere that he can engage with people that are passionate about improving business performance through software technology.

Jim can be reached at jim.brown@tech-clarity.com, you can find him on Twitter at [@jim_techclarity](https://twitter.com/jim_techclarity), or you can read his blog at www.tech-clarity.com/clarityonplm.