

Reducing time-to-market by unifying business processes



SITUATION

The customer's complex wholesale business entailed catering to the needs of their customer base, brands & licensors, with over 19 subdivisions operating almost independently, each with its own sales, merchandising, design and production / sourcing support team.

IMPACT

The customer was unable to leverage economies of scale due to lack of information on opportunity for bulk procurement. Huge sampling and development cost running into several million dollars due to lack of control and non visibility of sample management. Non standard tech packs were leading to quality issues.

RESOLUTION

This creation of standard processes and systems across the diverse organization for effective reporting of performance metrics and management control shortened the design-to-delivery cycle, improving the customer's time-to-market.

The Customer

A subsidiary of a global consumer goods conglomerate headquartered in New York with over 14,000 employees worldwide. The customer is a corporation with 6 groups, broken into 17 divisions, dealing in apparel, footwear, accessories & home products.

Challenges

- Manage multiple brands, labels, proprietary brands & licensing arrangements across the organization
- Diverse technology landscape with multiple existing PLM software
- Lack of control over distributed, non standard processes
- Non-integrated technology infrastructure (partial SAP in one division, others fully on SAP)
- Lack of central library with details of material, color, fabric, trim, packaging etc. Each division/subdivision was managing their own library using books, excel files, shared drives etc.
- Disparate tools for external collaboration
- Each subdivision had a tech pack process centric to their own needs, with some subdivisions following their customer's tech packs and the rest using excel, email or other mediums



Solution

ITC Infotech's process consultants undertook a discovery process across the global enterprise and laid out the 'as-is' process flows. This exercise revealed common process across the organization, laying the foundation for the creation of a common nomenclature across categorizing the business into four major streams: Apparel, Footwear, Accessories and Home. The team also addressed diversity requirement of various divisions, handling exceptions and populating industry-best practices in the common process. Through the business flow diagrams, ITC Infotech identified over 70% common processes, and mapped the process with PTC's FlexPLM®.

Three months of functional-design refurbishing followed where lifecycles were broken down into their component activities, taking into account quality parameters, resource allocation, user roles (super-user vs. average user) and common procedures were identified, streamlined and aligned across the various divisions.

Three levels of alignment were addressed: within a category, within the organization, and with industry best practices. This also clarified concerns about technology acceptance and software integration.

The realignment strategy was so successful that the customer decided to jump-start implementation by 6 months, in order to see the changes in action as soon as possible. controls, and process flows

Project Scope

- To restructure processes and align them across all subsidiaries and divisions
- To help the customer migrate its workforce onto a common platform
- To integrate legacy systems, knowledge pools, and work methodologies

ITC Infotech mapped out common process for licensing and non licensing business, and was successful in transitioning different groups to a common standard out-of-box process.

Highlights

- Business process restructuring across 19 divisions
- Eliminating process redundancies

- Integrating FlexPLM with SAP, Adobe Illustrator and other legacy systems
- Standard processes and systems across key locations (China, Hong Kong & United States)
- Creation of a search-enabled digital library, with information on materials, color, images, supplies, documents, BOM, and measurements
- Established hierarchy to represent organizational structure & business models across items including, season, product, material, color, images, supplier & documents
- Standardized tech packs were introduced across the organization, after studying all supplier needs and validating with super-users, thereby improving quality
- Enabled corporate monitoring of sample and design adoption ratio across the organization

Benefits

- Shorter inline and SMU calendars, driven by business needs
- Consistent Quality Assurance (QA) despite multiple brands, labels, licensing arrangements etc.
- Decreased costs in product cycle due to fewer redundancies/errors
- Increased accountability across groups through access controls, and process flows
- Sense of teamwork among formerly competitive units (becoming a common brand)
- Opportunity to leverage economies of scale

ITC Infotech's FlexPLM Practice

ITC Infotech shares a decade-long strategic partnership with PTC, and is a leading provider of FlexPLM and Windchill services. The company has a 100+ strong FlexPLM team with over 70,000 person hours of experience. The company has worked with some of the largest Retail, Footwear, and Apparel (RFA) companies across the globe.

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