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PLM: Helping Apparel Companies Compete in a Changing World

As a \$550 billion industry, apparel has witnessed remarkable change. Globalization, greater brand recognition and the development of new market opportunities contribute to a broad range of challenges, from intense competition and pricing pressures to increased season/line complexity. Supply chains add to the challenges as they grow longer, more geographically diverse and, ultimately, more complex.



Apparel brands, retailers and suppliers in search of real competitive advantage need seamless links between trend-setting creative and production practicalities. Achieving it requires superior communication and sophisticated data management that delivers flawless visibility into material, product and development activities. No wonder AMR Research has identified Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) as one of the hottest technology trends in the industry.

STRONG LINKAGES, INTEGRATED SOURCING

PLM solutions build stronger linkages between the once-separate steps within the apparel process. By creating integrated sourcing processes, PLM incorporates all of

the key elements of the supply chain, helping apparel companies enhance time to market, improve supply chain performance and deliver superior quality.

Dassault Systèmes' ENOVIA PLM offerings for the apparel industry include:

- The ENOVIA Apparel Accelerator for Design & Development, an off-the-shelf Product Lifecycle Management solution that enables rapid deployment of a state-of-the-art, scalable enterprise solution that takes apparel products from trend to design, sourcing, manufacturing and, finally, to the customer.
- The ENOVIA Apparel Accelerator for Sourcing and Production, developed in cooperation with Wing Tai's Zymmetry Group, that seamlessly connects global sourcing and production offices with



▶▶ PLM has been one of the hottest technology areas in the apparel industry for the past 18 months. As organizations have focused on getting their arms around all of their material and product data and gaining visibility to the status of different development activities, they are increasingly looking to PLM vendors for support.

AMR Research. Top Technology Trends in the Apparel Market. June 2007

brand and retail headquarters, all on a single PLM platform.

The Apparel Accelerator for Design and Development comes complete with best practices for apparel design, including pre-defined work processes, industry-specific data models, reports, role-based user interfaces and document management capabilities. These help fashion product design companies solve the strategic challenges of increasing global competition, shrinking product lifecycles and ever-changing seasonal consumer demands.

The Apparel Accelerator for Sourcing and Production integrates sourcing within the design and development process, allowing users to seamlessly manage collaboration with production offices and retailers. It supports sourcing, costing and pre-production processes and offers visibility

and process control for brand and retail global operations.

Key benefits of the two solutions include reductions in the inefficiencies caused by poor communication; integration of processes to manage product, project, color, material, line plans, vendors and sourcing; early communication of expertise and knowledge with the supply chain; effective tracking of seasonal line planning calendars, approvals and responsibilities; dynamic response to shifts in seasonal requirements, industry trends and consumer preferences; improved gross margins through greater control over cost analysis and vendor negotiation; increased management control with visibility into pre-production and production processes and associated costs; and optimized merchandise opportunities and cost control through online Request for Quotes.

Examples of ENOVIA PLM apparel solutions in action include:

REI Recreational Equipment Inc. REI is a \$1.3 billion outdoor gear retailer with 90 stores and its own gear, apparel and bicycle brands. REI relies on Apparel Accelerator to reengineer processes to be more efficient, effective and faster to market. Kevin Myette, REI's director of research, notes: "Everyone was working hard, but because we had no central source of reliable, accurate data everyone was 'speaking different languages.' Now ENOVIA helps us to speak the same language."

Quiksilver Surf and skate brand Quiksilver has designers in the US, Australia and France. "If the information is available to be seen and accessed by us and our suppliers, there is no limit to what can be achieved creatively," says Chris Schreiber, VP of Technical Services. "PLM allows us to leverage good local and good global information."

Michael Kors Michael Kors, leading American luxury fashion designer, is one of the newest ENOVIA PLM for apparel users. "Over the last four years we have experienced explosive growth," says Gia Castrogiovanni, president of the Women's division. "It was strategically important for us to find a PLM solution that could be implemented quickly, provide an open platform that could interact with other applications and ultimately scale to meet future demands".

For more information:

www.3ds.com/products/enovia/industries/consumer-goods/apparel

