HOW YOU IMPLEMENT A PIM SYSTEM EASILY

Implementing a Product Information Management system in an organization may sound like a task that takes a lot of time and demand a lot of internal resources. You need, among other things, to analyze, lead, communicate, and understand business processes for a successful project. But it is possible to execute PIM projects in easier, faster and less demanding ways. Let us describe how we work to successfully implement a PIM system in three months or less.

Our approach

We have three guiding principles when implementing a PIM system – we base them on experience from several successful projects. First of all, we always start small, focusing on what's most important. This generates speed and enables us to make progress and generate value with minimized risk. Secondly, we communicate as much as possible – clear communication and alignment with stakeholders pre- and post-development are crucial for a successful delivery. And thirdly, we use standards, leveraging the product through capitalizing on its capabilities to enable continuous development and improvement.

MVP is a starting point

We start every implementation project by creating a minimal viable product (MVP). An MVP is a version of a product that has enough features to be usable. Developing an MVP ensures that the initial implementation won't be costly, and we can be up and running in less than three months.

How to be up running in three months

Implementation in less than three months may sound incredible, but it's possible because we work with an agile mindset and a scrum framework, and according our guiding principles. Agile is a set of practices that improve our work effectiveness through the collaboration of a self-organizing and cross-functional team and flexible response to, for example, changes in requirements and resource availability. Such an agile team consists of a Project Manager, Business Analyst, Solution Architect, Lead Developer, and System Developer. All team members are, of course, inriver PIM certified.

Through an agile mindset – scrum methodology

The basis for the scrum methodology is delivery in sprints, time-boxed iteration completed in two weeks – and a month at most. Our inriver PIM platform implementation consists of four sprint deliveries. During the project, we assess progress in short internal daily meetings called scrums. At the end of a sprint, we have a sprint review in which we demonstrate the work done to you as a product owner to get your feedback. We also have an internal retrospective that enables our team to reflect on your feedback and improve.

Our method

When we implement PIM, we use a well-proven method, divided into three distinct phases:

- **Think** – here we prepare for the implementation.
- **Create** – we engage in the development and integration. We do the work in sprints.
- **Launch** – closing week to launch the system for production. At the earliest, after two sprints.

As the project follows an agile methodology, we initially only plan the Think phase in detail. The Think phase encompasses workshops where we define the data model and decide on product model handling and categorization of products. We go through, for example, product range, categorization of assortment and how products and parts of a range are related. We also determine details between inriver PIM and other systems - for example, business systems – and plan for integrations.

Based on the results of Think, a clearer picture of the project's other phases and activities can be formed and planned. Under Think, a first version of a product backlog will be created, to cover the scope of an MVP.

The art of a smooth implementation

There are some key factors to a smooth implementation. First of all, management must be on board. Management's task in the implementation process is to control the project and make decisions in those matters where their decision-making is required. It is important that management from the beginning of the project creates the right conditions for driving the implementation, both in terms of resources and mandate, for those who should run the project.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

It's essential to include both leaders and those with good business insight in the project. The project management should consist of one representative from the supplier and one from the customer. These shall, in turn, take part in a steering group comprised of leading persons with decision-making rights. The role of the project leaders in this forum will thus be to act as rapporteur members of the steering group.

GOOD COMMUNICATION

To be able to achieve set goals, the communication to the organization must work well. It is about providing relevant stakeholders with continuous information and reaching out with information to the right target group; shortcomings often arise here.

UNDERSTANDING PROCESSES, ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS, AND STRATEGY

There should be process flows and test scenarios drawn up early in the implementation. These will be the foundation for the requirements and affect the scope of the project and the calendar time for projects. These will also create a foundation for acceptance tests and staff training.

TRAINING THE USERS

One of the most common reasons for business system projects failing is lack of proper training and education, leading to employees rejecting new systems because they do not understand them. Ensuring employees can familiarize themselves with new systems before working with them is fundamental to this type of implementation.

TESTING

Testing and development of a system is a critical success factor in this type of implementation. Unless you test before you put the system in operation, you will not know whether you meet the target and requirements or not. There should be a clear testing strategy with planned test routines to identify any bugs and errors regarding the system.
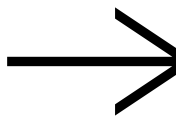
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Get access to long experience

Nexer's consultants are Scandinavia's most experienced within PIM. We have been partners with leading PIM system supplier inriver, since 2006. Their platform inriver PIM is everything you need in a single SaaS PIM solution. It's easy to use, intuitive, and secure. Inriver PIM helps you increase sales, streamline product data syndication, and scale. Your customers get the same powerful product experience in every one of your channels.

Nexer has a large team of inriver PIM certified consultants with deep knowledge of all aspects of inriver PIM. And thanks to our long experience and deep understanding of PIM in general and inriver PIM in particular, we offer swift and smooth implementations.

In 2020 Nexer was recognized at PIMpoint Digital by winning the "EMEA Partner/Customer Collaboration of the Year" award. We got it for our collaboration between Michelin and Nexer in a project where Michelin transforms their customer experience through inriver PIM.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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