



**Good communication plays an important role in every successful human endeavor. Why should your business be any different? Team communication and collaboration help you gain and keep the edge you need to succeed. And mySAP™ Product Lifecycle Management (mySAP™ PLM) gives you that edge by providing your business team with capabilities for collaborating on product development and design throughout the entire product life cycle.**

## **SAP Solution Brief**

# **LIFE-CYCLE COLLABORATION WITH mySAP™ PRODUCT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT**

**HELP YOUR BUSINESS TEAM COLLABORATE  
WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS**

## **TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS TEAM ENVIRONMENT WITH mySAP™ PLM**

In many ways, your business is just like a competitive sports team. Your strategies are dynamic, and as the tactics play out, you must communicate your action plan with team members quickly and efficiently. The information you share and how you share it can vary widely – from one-on-one communication, as between a goalie and the team's defensive coach, to one-to-many and many-to-many communication, as in a soccer team huddle.

If your company is like most, you're working in a global environment. Your team members, suppliers and other business partners, and customers are spread throughout the world. Face-to-face meetings are often not possible, due to time and budget constraints. Remote collaboration can be problematic, since direct access to core enterprise systems from external locations requires more stringent security measures.

Your team needs to share mission-critical product and project information of various kinds, such as project plans, product structures, parts information, and service bulletins – and in various formats, ranging from messages to diagrams and spreadsheets. And it's vitally important to communicate quickly and clearly. The results of good communication are easy to spot: efficient and effective product development cycles, clear and unambiguous activities and goals, consistent and reliable data, and immediate and precise responses to changes in the market or in customer needs.

mySAP™ Product Lifecycle Management (mySAP™ PLM) gives your business team all the tools they need to be effective team players and collaborate throughout product and project life cycles:

- **Collect and organize** product and project information in a logical, project-based framework
- **Share** information over the Web and collaborate with internal and external partners
- **Execute** business process transactions throughout the project life cycle, such as maintenance of bills of material

## **COLLABORATION STYLES TO MATCH YOUR GAME PLAN**

### **One-to-Many and Many-to-Many Communication**

Do you want to be a world-class player in the global market? Do you need ad hoc collaboration capabilities both inside your enterprise and with other enterprises in one-to-many and many-to-many relationships? If so, then the cFolders capability of the cProjects suite in mySAP PLM is right for you. In this environment, any business partner with the appropriate authorization can review current project information and initiate actions to change, delete, or add product or project information. mySAP PLM provides a dynamic and responsive collaboration environment that enables your team members to work together on multiple tasks across the globe.

### **cPROJECT SUITE: BUILT TO BE OPEN**

As part of the cProjects suite in mySAP PLM, the cFolders capability resides on SAP® Web Application Server (SAP® Web AS) and supports open Web standards for communication, document processing, and security. You can easily access and connect to legacy systems or SAP solutions. If the system that's running cFolders resides outside the firewall – within a secure area – your partners don't need direct access to your PLM or enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to collaborate with your external and internal partners.

And they don't need any locally installed software – just a Web browser and a user ID in the system that's running cFolders – which is especially convenient for setting up collaboration with small companies. External users with low-bandwidth connection to the Internet can upload and download large files to the cFolders server via file transfer protocol (FTP). This means that anyone can access project information, anytime and anywhere.

### **cPROJECT SUITE: RICH FUNCTIONALITY**

The cFolders capability in mySAP PLM provides your business with a virtual collaboration environment where everyone can share, review, and change information. The notification function in cFolders can alert team members when changes are made in project documents or other objects in project folders to which team members have subscribed. In addition, team members can be notified when a document reaches a defined status – when the document is released, for example.

Any team member can initiate a virtual meeting using WebEx, a multimedia business communications service, and can select the appropriate people to invite. Upon opening a meeting invitation, the attendee receives a hyperlink to the project information that is the subject of the meeting.

Additional features are:

- **Specification data sheets** – Evaluating project bids requires you to collect and compare detailed information from vendors about the services and products they can provide. The data sheet function in mySAP PLM simplifies this process. The cFolders capability allows you to create data sheets for each vendor, based on classes and characteristics. Comparing vendors' project bids is easy, because mySAP PLM presents you with a summary of the data sheet information in Excel format.

- **Status management** – Status management features within cFolders help you manage the collaboration process. You're informed about any status changes during collaborations. In addition, when a document or object is released, cFolders can protect it from further changes.
- **Enhanced document management and collaboration** – You can include a wide variety of documents in any folder for collaboration, including computer-aided design (CAD) drawings, PowerPoint presentations, spreadsheets, and Word documents. During a WebEx meeting, your team can collaborate synchronously, and you can track changes and view revisions on-screen. Additional document management capabilities of cFolders include version control and full revision history, check-in and checkout, and documentation of who changed what and when.
- **Back-end integration** – cFolders allows your company to exchange information with partners, suppliers, and customers without giving them access to your back-end system. Objects used in back-end processes – such as materials and bills of material documents that are stored in the document management system in mySAP PLM – can be published in cFolders. Your external partners, suppliers, and customers can easily add data and can change or modify the information. You can seamlessly pull these changes from cFolders into your back-end system.
- **Comprehensive authorization capabilities** – Enhanced security allows administrators to specify access rights and capabilities (read, write, or no authorization) at the level of a cFolders object (such as a material, document, or bill of material) in any folder for each user. Authorizations can be managed easily through the inheritance capability and overridden as necessary for exceptions. A user who is authorized to access a folder but is given no authorization to access a particular document in the folder can view the folder but not the document.
- **Security** – All data passing between SAP Web Application Server and the browser uses Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption. You can ensure an even higher level of network security by using a reverse-proxy technology in front of the system that is running cFolders.
- **Work areas and competitive scenarios** – The mySAP PLM cFolder Integration with mySAP SRM enables you to create separate supplier work areas with individual authorization settings for managing information exchange during the competitive bidding process.
- **Collaboration templates** – You can create a template based on a previous collaboration. This means, for example, that you can reuse a complicated collaboration project structure, which reduces your setup time for new collaborations.
- **Web-based project management** – cProjects in mySAP PLM, a Web-based tool for collaborative project management, allows you to track project schedules, activities, and costs. In addition, cProjects supports the stage gate methodology, which is used to define milestones between project phases. Companies could use this methodology to ensure that all required tasks in one project phase have been completed before the next phase can be started. For communication with external project partners, cProjects uses the integrated cFolder capability.



### **DEPLOY YOUR COLLABORATION CAPABILITIES THROUGH PORTALS**

Once you have worked with team members to collect, share, and reach consensus on project information, you can execute the necessary business transactions. SAP provides the business execution framework by integrating cFolders and portals technology.

mySAP PLM is delivered with a complete enterprise portal solution that allows you to customize the aggregation of information to suit your needs and the roles of your team members. Your cFolders project structure becomes one of many iViews applications that provide dynamic access to the information and services you need.

### **THE COMPETITIVE EDGE YOU NEED TO WIN**

For your business to remain competitive and keep its winning edge, your business team needs to share information rapidly, think fast, and respond quickly. The life-cycle collaboration capabilities of mySAP PLM are exactly what your team needs to achieve your primary business objective: Getting the right product to market at the right time and at the right cost.

To learn more about mySAP Product Lifecycle Management, contact your SAP representative or visit our Web site at [www.sap.com/plm](http://www.sap.com/plm)

### **mySAP™ BUSINESS SUITE: YOUR INDUSTRY. YOUR BUSINESS. YOUR FUTURE.**

mySAP™ Business Suite provides unlimited scalability, best-of-breed functionality, complete integration, and easy collaboration over the Internet for every business.

Each mySAP Business Suite solution is powered by the SAP NetWeaver™ technology platform, a comprehensive integration and application platform that helps reduce total cost of ownership. mySAP Business Suite consists of best-of-breed solutions that incorporate powerful core functionality, industry-specific features, and best practices based on three decades of SAP experience.

It all adds up to a family of solutions that work together seamlessly to help you achieve your business goals.