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# **RETHINK YOUR PLM GUIDE**



Product lifecycle management aka PLM has existed for most of the modern era. We didn't call it "PLM" out of the gate, but the concept itself has existed for quite some time.

As PLM grew and grew, it became more of a requirement within organizations across the world. The more accepted it became, newer PLM technologies started to emerge.

Product lifecycle management software as we know it today has evolved trifold since the early days of the internet and even though we now have cloud-based PLM solutions, many organizations are still living the "on-premise" lifestyle when it comes to PLM systems. Does this sound like you and your organization? If so, then it's time for you to rethink your PLM.

## MODERN PRODUCTS AND CLOUD PLM

The phrase “Product Lifecycle Management” was coined almost twenty years ago along with the many companies that sprang up with it during the 90s. Agile Software, Bom.com, and MatrixOne were created to manage CAD files, hardware changes, and manufacturing updates.

A lot has changed since the roaring 90s of grunge, CAD files, and dot-coms. Today we have the iPhone, Amazon Prime, hybrid cars, Facebook, and the cloud – but PLM systems themselves haven’t changed since the phrase’s conception. To develop and launch products in today’s digital age, you need a flexible, modern (and cloud-based) PLM solution.

- **Higher Customer Expectations:** Mobile apps, eCommerce and next-day delivery have transformed what customers expect from companies.
- **Multi-channel Distribution and Sales:** Thanks to the success of PLM systems, many companies have done a decent job of transitioning products from engineering to manufacturing. However, launching products with multiple partners has become a major issue. Getting sales, marketing, channels and service partners up to speed on the latest product updates – and coordinating all their activities, such as updating sales tools, service instructions, and partner certification – has remained isolated from the product development process.
- **Internet of Things (IoT):** IoT offers companies great opportunities but also many challenges. Many IoT products now have multiple systems, partner products and software packages. Connected products also give way to constant feedback and customer usage data. Unfortunately, many PLM systems are unable to manage non-hardware data.
- **Cloud Platforms:** The cloud has helped companies streamline how internal and external stakeholders collaborate on product development and launches. While cloud apps help lower overhead and IT costs, they have a much bigger impact on product success. Having a single cohesive platform for threaded discussions, mobile

support, point-and-click administration can dramatically alter how people work with each other to launch products into the marketplace.

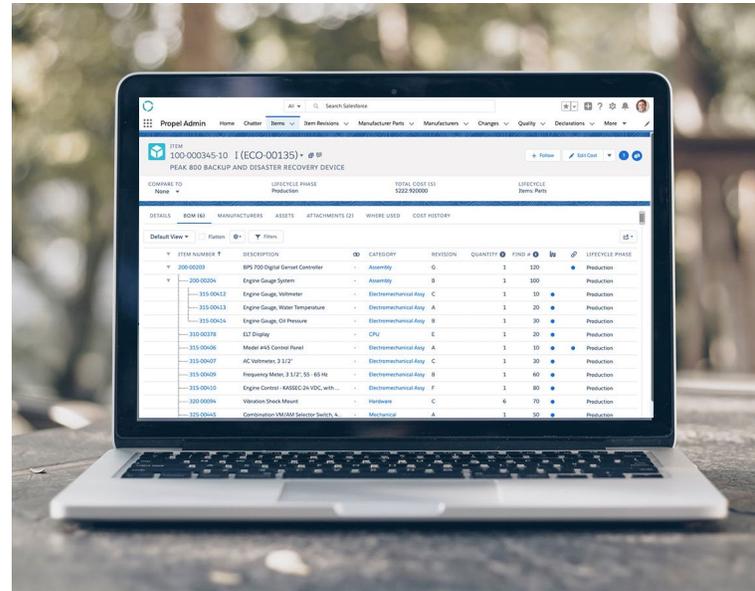
## PROPEL – A FRESH APPROACH TO PLM

Propel was started by PLM and development veterans, who spent the last several years working with the latest cloud technologies. While most PLM companies spent their time focusing on designing hardware and handing off changes to manufacturing, the Propel team noticed there was still a considerable gap in translating product updates into customer adoption and market success.

Propel's approach to PLM focuses on getting product updates into the hands of people who care about them the most – your customers. We call it “concept to customer” and we are firm believers in it.

If you deal with a complex network of products, services, channels, and customers, Propel can help you intelligently roll out any types of product changes to your employees, partners, portals, and customers. Propel enables you to collaborate on every phase of the product, so people will continue to love you and your products.

If you don't plan on getting aboard the digital transformation train, you can rest comfortably with your current PLM system. However, if you're already dealing with a multitude of software updates, product changes, partner onboarding and more-detailed customer data, Propel can make a world of a difference.



## CUSTOMER AND PRODUCT INSIGHTS

When you make a product change, it's critical to know what kind of impact it will have in the field. Typically speaking your PLM is integrated into your ERP, so you have a good idea of the impact on your inventory, but what about the effect it will have on your customers? When you release an Engineering Change Order (ECO), do you know which customers are affected? If your PLM software is not connected to your CRM, then chances are you don't see any pertinent information.

Because Propel is seamlessly integrated into Salesforce, we make it easy to track the relationship between customers, product revisions, and partners so that you can take appropriate actions. When you update a product, you can instantly see which customers, service partners, and channels will be impacted most. No more worrying, hoping and guessing. As you go through the product development process, you can track your product pipeline and gauge whether you're on target to meet your revenue goals.



## ALL PRODUCT CONTENT

Most of the time companies only use PLM software to manage their hardware and manufacturing components because their existing PLM software is insufficient and sticks to the predefined nature of the item lifecycle stages. While that makes sense for “items,” it doesn’t fit the bill for software, sales, content and so on.

Propel’s flexible lifecycles allow you to uniquely manage all types of product content.

But how?

Just like Software goes through Test, Alpha, Beta, Released, and so forth. Collateral and Specifications go through Draft, Approved and Obsolete. If you want to be more granular in the lifecycle phases you can define how open or controlled you want the change process to be. Moreover, Items in an Initial stage can be changed without any approval process, whereas a Datasheet in the Approved Stage requires a revision change if a specific field needs to be updated.



## TASKS AND REMINDERS

Follow-up tasks, such as a cost-impact analysis or pricing update are crucial in most PLM situations. Your PLM system may offer project management features, but it might not be integrated with product changes.

Propel allows you to create tasks, assign them to team members, and relate them to engineering changes, parts, manufacturer parts, customers, files, etc. You can also set up reminders and due dates, so you can make sure they get completed on time.

## RUN YOUR BUSINESS FROM ANYWHERE

Being able to review, update, and change product information shouldn't force you to be married to your laptop. Most PLM systems allow you to review and approve changes from your mobile device, but they're limited to just those capabilities. Creating items and BOMs, editing dashboards, or running reports isn't possible in traditional PLM systems.

Thanks to Propel you can do everything on any device, any browser, and any operating system. You can drill into dashboards, do Where Used, and view threaded discussions – all on your phone, and all without having to buy additional modules.

This isn't a test. Propel offers full PLM capabilities on your phone.





### **NEXT STEPS FOR YOUR PLM**

PLM has always been a solid solution for helping manufacturing companies manage product changes. But as the decades-old technology becomes more and more dated, it may be worth considering a fresh approach if:

- You want to understand the impact of product changes on customers, partners and channels
- Software and customer data are becoming a bigger part of your products
- You need to manage changes to other product information besides hardware and parts
- You need greater flexibility to manage other customerfacing processes
- Multiple partners are involved in the sales and service of your products
- You need an easy out-of-the-box solution versus integrating multiple applications
- You're looking for a company that delivers frequent and rapid innovation



Propel provides a modern cloud product lifecycle management and quality management solution that grows with your business and helps everyone connect with your customers, products, and services so you can propel innovation and propel your business.

Learn more and watch a guided tour at [propelPLM.com](https://propelplm.com)

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