IBM

Lotus software

IBM Lotus Forms software for manufacturing: helping optimize supply chain transactions, costs and time to market.

Highlights

- ■ *Helps optimize supply chain transactions and collaboration, improving responsiveness to the ever-changing marketplace*

- ■ *Helps reduce costs associated with error-prone, manual processes and workflows, when handling real-time information for all aspects of the supply chain*

- ■ *Helps you comply with industry regulations and effectively manage PDM implementations*

To collaborate with a worldwide supplier base, you rely on complex business processes to drive the purchase and use of hundreds, if not thousands, of raw materials. And these materials often are used to produce goods in multiple locations. Optimizing material prices, evaluating and managing supplier performance, and maximizing vendor/factory communication can help you establish and keep a competitive edge.

While many businesses view them as a necessary evil, forms are critical to capturing information and driving work activities. Yet paper-based, manual forms are more prone to errors and are time consuming to use. Information trapped in paper forms isn't easily accessible, making it difficult for organizations to further optimize their businesses. Working in combination with other software products that enable business activities like e-mail

delivery and workflow and content management, IBM Lotus® Forms software helps address challenges manufacturers face today. The need to streamline and automate manual processes initiated by forms. The need for more accurate form data entry and more timely delivery of business-critical information across the supply chain. The need for secure and real-time collaboration and business integration, internally and externally. And the need to free information trapped in paper forms.

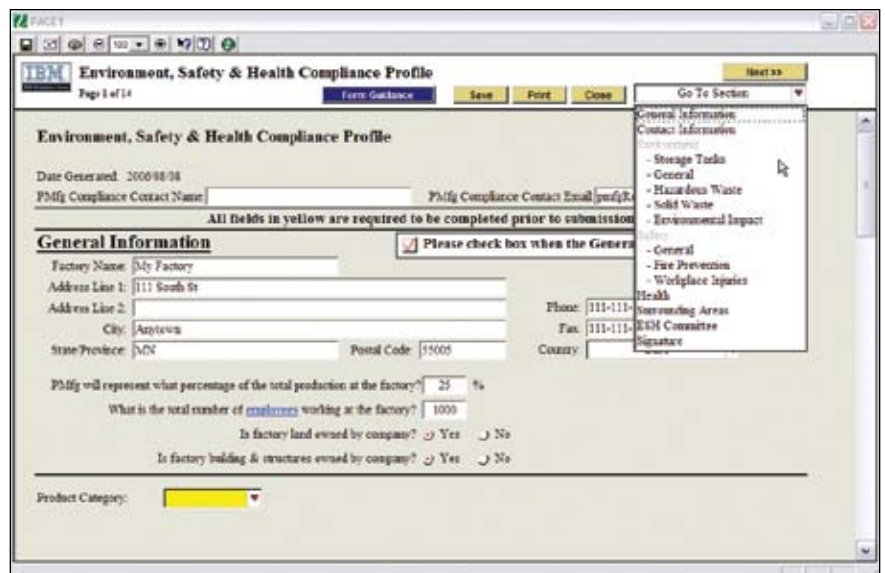**Optimizing business-critical processes**

To remain competitive and increase the speed of business transactions, you need to automate and streamline manual processes, integrate systems of record, acquire complete, accurate and timely information and receive real-time feedback from suppliers, business partners and customers.

In addition, suppliers, business partners and internal audiences expect a reduction in paper forms, simplification of complex workflows and more efficient processes to communicate essential information, such as real-time inventory and pricing information, and delivery schedules. These efficiencies can help to increase revenue and enable your organization to become more responsive to the marketplace and, ultimately, more competitive.

Speeding transactions and reducing costs

Simplifying information capture and automating information processing can help your organization speed business transactions by reducing manual intervention and increasing operational efficiency. Automating forms-based processes can help your organization achieve a "once and done" process, because open data integration standards can help eliminate costly exception handling and enable straight-through transaction processing.

Wizard-based, electronic forms capture the complete transaction — template, data, logic, digital signatures and attachments — as a single XForms open standards–based document that is easier to complete than paper-form counterparts. Lotus Forms software provides an easy-to-use front

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end to all your business processes, making it easier to integrate information with existing enterprise systems. The results are easier information processing, routing and archiving, reduced data-entry errors and increased user adoption. Security-rich Lotus Forms software helps you more easily and quickly handle time-critical transactions, such as supplier negotiations.

Forms are used in business processes across the manufacturing organization, from a raw material detail sheet and compliance to environmental, safety and health profiles to lab testing and product costing, with the potential for each application to realize significant gains in overall collaboration, integration, accountability and performance, and a reduction in staff labor.

Lotus Forms software simplifies the approval process with overlapping and sectional digital signatures. Plus, your organization can take advantage of the software's ability to route electronic forms more quickly to the appropriate people.

Helping reduce risk and address compliance issues

To achieve compliance with industry and corporate regulations, you need to track and record transactions that span multiple divisions across your organization and supply chain ecosystem. In addition, business data and information must be monitored and managed carefully to ensure compliance.

Lotus Forms software streamlines processes and provides timely, centralized access to information. Based on open standards, the software makes data more accessible across forms, helping enable your organization to obtain accurate data that can minimize operational risk.

Lotus Forms software delivers a comprehensive transaction record, including data, presentation and business logic, within one security-rich, XForms based form to facilitate compliance. Lotus Forms software can help your manufacturing company address specific regulatory requirements, including product data management (PDM) standards. Because the Lotus Forms user interface is dynamic in nature, it updates the form with any changes made to the PDM system—helping enable you to remain compliant with changes to the standards. Adding digital signature capabilities increases security and accountability, and it creates a comprehensive audit trail that is stored in PDM.

Lotus Forms software delivers pixel-precise, exact representations of paper forms that help streamline integration of global compliance databases and eliminate technology issues related to previous solutions.

Lotus Forms software can benefit your business

Lotus Forms software can help your manufacturing company:

- *Drive dynamic, intelligent interfaces that adapt to specific transaction types.*
- *Improve efficiencies, data quality and integrity in critical business processes within the supply chain process by supporting complex business rules and workflows.*
- *Enhance services, information sharing and collaboration between internal users, suppliers and business partners, to minimize risks, such as increases in supplier costs or raw material storage prices.*
- *Meet security and global regulatory requirements through the use of digital signatures and data encryption.*
- *Integrate data with other systems, including those based on IBM middleware, as well as other software such as SAP, Siebel and PeopleSoft..*
- *Position its supply chain management strategy and infrastructure for future scalability as its use of electronic forms grows.*

Lotus Forms software helps to reduce the time, costs and problems inherent in paper-based form processes. It unleashes information trapped in paper, making it instantly available to anyone, at any time, anywhere—helping speed business transactions and increase responsiveness. It builds intelligent, easy-to-use dynamic forms that reduce or eliminate errors at the point of entry, reducing staff requirements and expensive exception processing. Lotus Forms software aids in streamlining global business operations, breaking down language barriers and helping to reduce the cost of integrating information to business resources. And it enables efficient and productive development of forms-based processes, supporting team development and reuse of business components used across forms applications.

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For more information

To learn more about how IBM Lotus
Forms software can benefit your man-
ufacuring business, please visit:

ibm.com/software/forms