

INTIER AUTOMOTIVE SEATING
NEWMARKET, ONTARIO

Automotive Seat Manufacturer Gains Visibility and Collaboration with Agile PLM

Business Challenge

Lack of Visibility and Cost Control

“Engineering changes are constantly happening at Intier,” said Barb Evenden, senior buyer for Intier Automotive Seating, an innovative leader in the design and manufacture of seating systems for the world’s major automobile manufacturers. “Before Agile, we managed the engineering change process with complicated Excel spreadsheets, and we had absolutely no system to integrate the Purchasing side.”

At Intier, every task was on a different spreadsheet, and it was very difficult to manage all the documents, keep track of changes, and identify the latest version of a design. Intier did not have a way to tie all the activities together, and did not have visibility into the development process, because most of the product record was on paper, and each program, each buyer and each spreadsheet was a silo.

“If you don’t have visibility into your process, you don’t really know what your process is, and everyone is off doing things their own way,” Evenden said. “Even when two buyers were working with the same OEM or the same supplier, they didn’t have a way to collaborate or strategize with each other. So we would lose money because we were paying different prices for the same part on various projects.”

“We couldn’t track engineering changes or costs on each specific part, so a supplier could slip in a change that we didn’t know about and that could also cost us a lot of money,” Evenden continued. “We had no way of electronically communicating to our supply base. Using only manual methods, we couldn’t get the whole picture.”

In addition, the Engineering Department did not have visibility into the Purchasing process, and both departments lacked the ability to collaborate with each other, resulting in costly changes made late in the design cycle.

“To make matters worse, you had to be a programmer to work in our previous PDM system,” she added. “It was a nightmare.”

Solution

Complete Visibility into the Process

Intier deployed Agile PLM to manage costs and engineering changes throughout the product lifecycle. The Purchasing Department brought Agile to Intier, and after the Engineering Department saw the system in action, they adopted it as well.

“We were looking for the best solution in the marketplace that could support complex quoting cycles, including material, non-material, recurring and non-recurring cost analysis as well as facilitate collaboration on the evolution of these cost models with our internal and external suppliers,” said Jeoff Burris, vice president of purchasing for Intier. “After evaluating several solutions, we chose Agile PLM for its functionality, flexibility, ease of use and quick implementation time. We were up and running with the Agile solution within weeks.”

With Agile, Intier now has a level of visibility into the process that they never had before, enabling them to track all activities and costs against any specific part, and keep costs under control. Engineering also has the same visibility into the suppliers quote, and Agile enables them to communicate and collaborate with Purchasing on a real-time basis. In addition, suppliers are connected through Agile and have access to vital product information in real time, streamlining Intier’s communication with the supply base.

“I recently took on a new commodity that I had never worked on before, but through Agile I was able to quickly and easily see the history that would previously be



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BUSINESS

Designer and manufacturer of automotive seats.

CHALLENGES

- ▶▶ All Tasks Managed Manually on Spreadsheets
- ▶▶ Limited Visibility into Product Record
- ▶▶ No Means to Collaborate Internally
- ▶▶ No Method to Manage Supplier Communications
- ▶▶ Difficult PDM System

AGILE PLM RESULTS

- ▶▶ Reduced Sourcing Cycle Time – down by 30%
- ▶▶ Tighter Cost Control
- ▶▶ Commodity Buying Strategy
- ▶▶ Higher Productivity
- ▶▶ Stronger Supplier Alliances
- ▶▶ Competitive Edge

“Fast implementation, adaptability, functionality, ease of use — I just love the Agile system.”

- ▶▶ Barb Evenden
Senior Buyer

hidden away in someone's file drawer," Evenden said. "When someone asks me about a part, I have all the information about that part at my fingertips, instead of digging through file folders. Without Agile I would be totally lost."

Benefits

- ▶ **Reduced Sourcing Cycle Time:** Using Agile PLM, Intier has been able to reduce turnaround time on sourcing by 30%. They have even trained suppliers in the Agile system to streamline the process of sending RFQs (request for quote). "Now we are communicating with suppliers online rather than through archaic methods," Evenden said. "We send suppliers the whole RFQ electronically, with drawings, part details, everything they need. They log into Agile to see the documents, and we can verify if and when the supplier has looked at it. This capability has allowed us to cut down turnaround significantly."
- ▶ **Tighter Cost Control:** "Agile enables us to manage our costs more efficiently," said Evenden. "It makes costs visible so we can make the right decisions that will ultimately lower our costs."
- ▶ **Commodity Buying Strategy:** Agile visibility allows Intier to leverage their parts purchases by buying millions of components in bulk, rather than individually for each buyer and program.
- ▶ **Higher Productivity:** "Purchasing is the conduit between Engineering and the supplier," Evenden explained. "If we are bogged down with managing spreadsheets, we can't do our jobs. With Agile, we can spend our time more productively keeping costs in line, finding cost reductions, and communicating with suppliers. We are saving time, getting the job done faster, and saving the company money. Intier is getting more out of the Purchasing Department because of Agile."
- ▶ **Stronger Supplier Alliances:** Agile helps Intier build stronger alliances with suppliers by providing visibility into system, and streamlining Intier's communication with suppliers. For example, Intier integrated the supplier cost breakdown sheet into the system. Suppliers continue to use the same familiar document with no additional training needed; they can work on it offline; and the data is imported directly into Agile. "We are communicating better and strengthening relationships with our suppliers through Agile," Evenden confirmed.
- ▶ **Competitive Edge:** "The ability to integrate bills of material, RFx, engineering change management, bid packages, spend information, and other key sourcing data in order to automate purchasing activity and improve overall cost management is something that Intier defines as a competitive advantage," concluded Jeoff Burriss.

To learn more about how your company can get results with Agile PLM solutions visit www.agile.com or call an Agile representative closest to you.



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Intier chose Agile PLM for the following capabilities:

- ▶▶ Rapid implementation
- ▶▶ Easy web-based access
- ▶▶ Visibility extended to supply chain
- ▶▶ Robust search engine
- ▶▶ Intuitiveness and easy navigation

"Without Agile I would be totally lost."