

Product management with link

CONTEXT

We are in the post-PC era. Companies that develop and sell products now collaborate, work, discuss when they are around the same table as well as at thousands of miles away. Collaboration is no longer restricted to the persons of the same company, but involves a more and more growing number of actors.



TYPICAL APPROACH

The business rules require to design, develop and deliver the best products in the shortest time and at the lowest possible cost. To meet this requirement, over the years a constellation of applications and software tools has been developed to support the Product management process.



RESULT

But the typical approach risks to be:



USER EXPECTATIONS

The way users want to work should be:



THE ANSWER

To answer this need, we designed link, an application for the complete management of the Product.



Simple, flexible and universal document organization, such as Wikipedia



Collaboration, chat and comments, among all the involved actors

link



Strict management of data connected to a database, whenever necessary



Integrated workflow system

Each authorized user can edit the same version of the document, at the same time and from any device.

ANATOMY OF A DOCUMENT

Link organizes the documents in assets, homogeneous sets of elements, such as finished Products or Materials.

A document consists of:

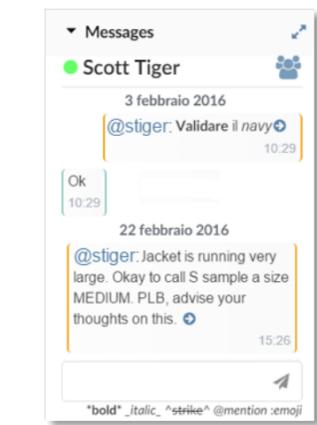
- a title and a header containing the main information,
- one or more sections of additional information.

Each section can be composed of one or more objects (form, image, structured grid, notes, attachment, video, spreadsheet), freely added by the user.

Comments, chat and notifications are integral part of the link experience.

A chat thread allows all the actors to work together at various levels of detail, from the global chat room up to the discussion of a single object in a document.

So you no longer need to use e-mail every time you want to discuss changes to a product.



Activities are included in a workflow system, that allows to define the list of the activities of the single users or groups. A simple but effective dashboard is available to track the projects.

Documents, chat, and activities are strictly tracked.

The history of all completed operations is available at all times.

The document data are synchronized on a relational database, as MS SQL server, Oracle, and Postgres. To access information, you can also use your own reporting tool or your favorite BI system.

The screenshot shows a detailed view of a product document for a "T0200002 Z08 Snap front jacket with rib trims". It includes a header with product details, a form for metadata, images of the product, a color selection table, a structured grid for specifications, a suppliers table, notes, a bill of materials table, and a fitting session report with a small spreadsheet.

Asset document's header

Form, whose fields can be selected or validated on master tables or other assets.

Image, acquired from any device

Video, stored in different formats and resolutions

Section (current)

Structured grid, whose fields can be selected or validated on master tables or other assets.

Section

View or chart. Capability to add sections that display external data tables or charts, such as bars and pies.

Section

Text. Free annotations, with the possibility of formatting and bulleted or numbered lists.

Section

Attachment. File (PDF, PSD, AI, DOC, XLS, PPT, ...), eventually displayed in the application.

Section made up by: form, structured grid, attachment, and spreadsheet

Spreadsheet. Unchecked data table, with the option of formatting and inserting formulas

Add new sections or objects

ARCHITECTURE

Underlying everything there is linkLAB which groups the common workflows to manage structured documents, on messaging and workflow. Basically linkLAB is the heart. On these solid foundations, each add-in contains environments and features to manage specific application areas.



PLM: Product Lifecycle Management
PCM: Product Content Management
DAM: Digital Asset Management

BENEFITS

Whatever product you're managing, link is a solution

- Simple
- Collaborative
- Customizable
- Multi device
- Fast
- Secure