



PLM Interest Group

# Data Management Manual

**Version 1.0**

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## 0 Foreword

In 2013, everyone who uses a computer, mobile telephone or tablet does some form of data management.

For the majority, this represents a relatively minor inconvenience. “How do I get my list of contacts from my old phone to my new phone?” “How do I manage an Inbox with 500 messages in it?” “If my C: drive fails, what do I need to back up?”

Commercial companies run business applications that are far more complex than this, and data management is a major problem. Computing devices are the lifeblood of the business, and in today’s world, everyone feels that they should be able to “point and click” without a glance at an instruction manual. The facility to let users do this does not happen without a lot of effort “behind the scenes”.

Poor or inefficient data management can be the underlying cause of massive costs of correction, but even if data management is done well, logic problems can still be unavoidable. In fact, it is fair to say that, in a working business environment, data management cannot be done “correctly”. There are always choices that have to be made, work-rounds to be applied, and new applications or upgrades that change the data architecture.

Furthermore, data management is a problem that is generally hidden from everyone apart from a small number of specialists, who have to make some very detailed technical decisions. Despite the existence of a number of associations dedicated to the subject, and a large body of published guidelines, principles and schemas, there are no instructions that apply to the detailed level. Those responsible for data management, in whatever part of the organisation, have to make up their own rules and best practices based on their particular skills and experience.

Pure data management is obviously very important in PLM (as well as in ERP, CRM, ALM and many other disciplines), and the PLM Interest Group has touched on the subject many times in its work since 2004. During the development of the [PLMuERP Handbook](#), data management became a subject of primary importance because of the impact that it can have on effective PLM and ERP integration.

This [Data Management Manual](#) incorporates the PLMIG material on generic data management that has been generated since 2004, together with some specifics for PLM and ERP. The rules and principles that it contains are not new, but they have never been formalised before. They embody the kind of knowledge that system managers talk about when they meet each other at conferences or on bulletin boards. The content of the Manual should form the basis of ‘basic training’ for everyone whose job entails the active management of product data.

This Version 1.0 [Data Management Manual](#) is the first publication of the PLMIG body of knowledge on the subject. In the future it may be added to and enhanced, based on feedback and new formalisation of ideas; or it may be superseded by some other reference work.

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