



PLM 2025-35

PLM Body of Knowledge

A Synthesis of Users and Knowledge

User companies are the reason that PLM exists – without businesses that make products there would be no need for all the effort. And effort is what it is. When scaled up to large corporations, the complexity of that effort leads each company to generate its own methodologies based on what is found to work best. These can embody many man-years of experience and learning.



Until now there has been no mechanism or platform for companies to share their good practices and solutions with each other, so that everyone can implement PLM right first time. Neither has anyone distilled these learnings into a Body of Knowledge that the industry can use.

The PLM Interest Group has been hosting an International Panel of practitioners and organisations to discuss how PLM can become more professional. Over the course of those meetings the proposal has arisen for a **PLM 2025-2035** project that will provide just such an industry-wide platform.

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The project will run annually, aligned with the natural pace of actual PLM implementations and consisting of two streams:-

- **User Collaboration**, comprising user companies only; and
- **Knowledge Development**, in which organisations from all parts of the industry can participate.

The reason for the distinction is not to try and exclude people from the User stream – it is because PLMIG experience with user groups shows that users come up with much more detailed and practical ideas when working amongst themselves than they do when vendors or advisors are present.

Keeping the separation provides a double benefit, because in order to derive common, neutral conclusions from the Users' work, the findings must be distilled and rationalised – which is exactly what is needed for a Body of Knowledge.

User Collaboration

In 2020, just before the pandemic, the PLMIG ran a [User Community Pathfinder Meeting](#) in Belgium. As its title suggests, the aim was not just to provide user companies in Belgium and the Netherlands with a chance to meet and work together, but also to test out the way that PLM user groups might work in the future.

The meeting was a success on both counts. The participants shared long-standing problems with each other that were solved in working sessions, and a blueprint for future collaboration was identified. The PLM 2025-35 User Initiative carries this forward.

The PLMIG has the structure on which the solutions can be framed, and the project itself provides the drive. With a year-on-year rolling programme, there is no need to force the timescales. Participating users put their current issues into the mix (and hence get benefits that are immediately useful); and can apply the findings at the natural pace of their implementation.

Knowledge Development

The drive to make the PLM industry more professional resumed in 2025, and the question of a neutral Body of Knowledge has arisen repeatedly: in any given situation, what is the expectation of a qualified person; how should he or she react; what are the proven working methods to be applied; what standard of outcome should be achieved; and what specific knowledge or skills would be required? And where can he or she go to find this information?

Such a Body of Knowledge can be created if all of the distributed PLM experience around the world is shared and structured in a useable way. Other disciplines such as project management have achieved this with models or books of knowledge that their practitioners have come to rely on.

With distilled inputs from the User Initiative and the PLMIG reservoir of neutral material the PLM 2025-35 Body of Knowledge Initiative makes this possible. The stream is open to all types of organisation, enabling vendors, integrators, consultants, academics and educators to collaborate without giving out proprietary information; and becomes an intensive forum for rationalising PLM thought.

The PLMIG has extensive experience in distilling neutral information from working discussions, and will be feeding such material across from the User stream as part of the input. Vendor and advisor participants can add the elements that they would like to see included, and can help structure the BOK to make it of optimal use to their client base.

2035 Vision

PLM has obviously evolved (where 'evolution' is natural unguided change in response to existence and external events): but it has not progressed. Progression, in business and project management terms, is deciding what should be done to improve the current situation in a defined way, and achieving it over a planned time period.

If we are changing the future then a good question for the next 10 years would be: "Do we have a Vision for where PLM should be in 2035?" The PLM 2025-35 Project may be the vehicle that makes it happen.

Methodology

User companies collaborate by inputting technical and business issues they would like solutions for. The PLMIG works with the companies respectively and as a group to structure and develop these, and provide working material that each company can apply directly. The PLMIG will distil the underlying theory into neutral structures that will then become part of the Body of Knowledge stream.

The Body of Knowledge stream is open to organisations of all types and all parts of the industry. By working in a neutral format, vendors, integrators, advisers and educators can collaborate safely without needing to share proprietary information. The PLMIG will manage the collaboration, produce the working documentation and publish the Body of Knowledge.

The detailed proceedings of the User stream will be confidential to the companies involved, but the logic of the Body of Knowledge will be freely available. The aim is to enable everyone working in PLM to access the same right-first-time information.

Participation will be for each 12-month period from when the project launches, and is envisaged at \$10000 per organisation. Everything is provided. PLMIG manages the project, runs the working sessions, produces the documentation, structures the Body of Knowledge and actions the feedback process. Participants need enough time to read through and feedback on the documentation, and to take part in the working sessions of their choice.

Find Out More

Ongoing developments can be followed on the PLMIG web site at www.plmig.com.

If you have questions, feedback or are interested in taking part you can contact Roger Tempest at plm2025-35@plmig.com.