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Omnion Finds Oracle® Configurator Made To Order for Hologic

Hologic™, Inc. of Bedford, Mass., which specializes in developing medical diagnostic and imaging devices for women's health, has found a more efficient way to ensure that products are configured and shipped accurately and quickly.

By adding Oracle® Configurator to Hologic's E-Business Suite, Omnion Consulting of Woburn, Mass., was able to give the medical device company the ability to take orders and configure customer solutions quickly and accurately all in one step.

Hologic makes complex medical devices, such as digital mammography systems and imaging devices for detecting osteoporosis. To provide optimal performance, some features should not be matched with each other in the final product. Yet the ability to mix-and-match different features is important, as the needs of a small rural hospital or individual medical practice are often much different than the needs of a major teaching hospital. In addition, where the equipment is being installed is important, as different countries have different standards.

Oracle Configurator was programmed with specific business rules to automate the configuration process, ensuring that all products are configured appropriately.

Hologic staff taking sales orders no longer have to worry about mixing and matching components that are inappropriate for that installation or redundant, and instead of taking several minutes to fill an order, with many back and forth communications with the sales force, the internal staff can often complete the process in seconds.

Advantages of using Configurator include:

- Fewer errors
- Quicker filling of orders
- Fewer returns
- More satisfied customers
- Compliance with Engineering Change Orders (Change Control) (ECO) is automated
- Information is shared throughout the enterprise; paper "cheat sheets" are unnecessary
- The knowledge of how these configurations are structured doesn't walk out the door every night. These configuration details become institutional knowledge and are no longer tribal knowledge.

Real-Time Configuration

Configurator is ideal for complex products that can be custom ordered. In Hologic's case, orders are filled by phone, fax or e-mail, but Configurator can also be set up to take orders online through Oracle's iStore or Oracle Quoting.

Configurator guides the person entering the order through selection rules that expedite and control the process. To fill the order, Hologic staff first gather customer requirements and map them to a set of product options. Based on a series of questions, the business rules behind the Configurator determine which components work best for the specific product and which components are incompatible.



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As information is input, Configurator focuses follow-on questions and options to include only choices that meet customer requirements. Prompts and warning messages alert the user when an invalid selection is made.

“With Configurator, the process is fully under control,” according to Omnion President Mark McCormack. “There are no scratch sheets saying ‘this goes with this,’ or ‘this does not go with this.’ Information is communicated throughout the organization, so there is shared knowledge of customer orders, and the turnover is quicker.”

Once Configurator guides the customer to a valid configuration, it can be tested using a debugger within Oracle Configurator, then saved for future use.

Oracle Configurator has access to product and order data from throughout the E-Business Suite. By supporting all sales channels from a single, centrally maintained configuration model, Configurator ensures model consistency across the enterprise. Requests can be submitted through any channel, but they must be validated through Configurator’s configuration model, which is deployed with unique user interfaces across the enterprise.

Because it relies on a single, enterprise-wide configuration model, Configurator can accurately feed orders to manufacturing and supply chain applications to streamline fulfillment. Oracle Configurator also includes a powerful mechanism to manage ongoing changes in the configuration model. Users can add, delete and edit rule text directly, or copy and paste it from other sources.

Because business rules were followed when Configurator was programmed, Hologic customers can now be ensured that when they order different components, they will not only work together, they will all be shipped and will arrive at the same time, even if they are shipped from different plants.

“Configurator is not just fulfilling an order,” according to McCormack, “it’s mixing and matching different products from different factories to provide a solution.”