Metaphase® Foundation

Product knowledge provides the business context you need to transform your company's information assets into a bottom-line difference. Product knowledge allows you to make strategic business decisions. It drives the innovative content that goes into your products. It enables you to accelerate your take-to-market processes.

To leverage your company's information assets in an e-business infrastructure, SDRC offers Metaphase®—the world's market leading suite of product knowledge management (PKM) solutions.

Metaphase Foundation enables you to establish the cornerstones for your PKM environment. Its fundamental set of PKM capabilities allows you to create, share, and exchange product information on an enterprise basis.

The Role of Metaphase Foundation

Metaphase Foundation provides the entry-level Metaphase solution for building your PKM environment. Its functional capabilities enable you to:

• Provide a single point of access to your enterprise's widely dispersed product information.

• Transform these otherwise isolated information assets into business knowledge.

• Inject this knowledge into automated processes that expedite your company's take-to-market cycles and support your customer base.

Once Metaphase Foundation is in place, you can extend your PKM capabilities by adopting focused Metaphase solutions for all of the phases of your product lifecycle. Focused Metaphase solutions are available for change management, configuration management, component and supplier management, design collaboration, systems engineering and requirements management.

Metaphase Foundation provides fundamental PKM capabilities for:

• Data management/control
• Product definition
• Workflow-driven processes
• Collaborative information exchange
• Flexible search and navigation

Data Management Control

Metaphase Foundation enables you to identify your enterprise's product-related information assets and manage this information through a controlled repository. Users "release" information created under multiple applications and authoring tools by registering this information in Metaphase and making it available for enterprise access.

Check-in, check-out, and version controls reflect continuing changes made by your enterprise's information authors. These controls provide the "right" information to your knowledge users whenever they request it.

Federated controls let your company share product information with your external suppliers, business allies and customers in a secure and autonomous environment.

Product Definition

Metaphase Foundation lets you logically relate individual documents, drawings, geometry models, validation tests and other forms of product information into higher-level product definitions. Companies typically define a variety of product-related business "objects" (e.g., parts, subassemblies, assemblies, and entire product structures) in terms of the information assets that describe them

These product definitions provide a business context that you can subsequently leverage for decision support and process automation. In essence, product definitions turn your company's product data into product knowledge.

Workflow-Driven Processes

Metaphase Foundation enables you to establish repeatable workflows that reflect your company's product-related business rules and decision-making processes. Metaphase workflows allow all of the people who have a stake in product realization to participate in the creation, review and approval of your product definition materials.

You establish user roles to define who is authorized to participate in your workflow processes and what definition materials they are entitled to create, view and approve. You incorporate these business rules into Metaphase workflows so your product definition materials can be reviewed and approved in accordance with your company's policies and procedures. Metaphase Foundation's tracking and auditing capabilities provide complete histories of the processes you implement.

Collaborative Information Assets

Metaphase Foundation enables you to turn your product document and design materials into universal formats that can be reused and exchanged across your PKM environment. Your knowledge users are able to find product information that has been created by multiple information authors across your virtual enterprise.

Metaphase transforms these information assets into universally viewable images that your knowledge users can view, markup, route and print without having to install authoring software on their desktops.

Metaphase Foundation provides publication and subscription capabilities to notify your users when certain kinds of product-related events occur. For example, users can ask that they be information when a particular product document is revised or when a change request is issued against a particular part.

Flexible Search and Navigation

Metaphase Foundations lets your knowledge users employ conventional web browsers to search your PKM environment for widely dispersed product information. Users search through your enterprise's wealth of product knowledge by specifying part numbers, part/product attributes, and content strings.

Graphical product structures enable your users to navigate the relationships that exist between various components in your company's product configurations. This navigational capability allows users to quickly find the product information they did need to perform their jobs efficiently.

Business Advantages

Optimized ROI
• Perform knowledge management, document management, and total quality assurance in a single information infrastructure.
• Interface your product development information with other mission-critical systems, including your ERP systems.

One-Stop Information Shopping
• Identify your company's most valuable product knowledge and register it in Metaphase once.
• Reuse this knowledge many times for many purposes.

Strategic Decision Support
• Establish a single point of access for all of your product knowledge.
• Leverage this collective knowledge for strategic decision making.
• Determine whether it is feasible to design and manufacture a proposed product, support the product after it is built, and make a profit on it.

Enterprise Scalability
• Accommodate user populations that range in size from a few hundred to hundreds of thousands.
• Leverage Federated Metaphase to share product knowledge with your suppliers and customers—while retaining control over who joins your federation, what knowledge you share, and what rules and validations protect your information assets.

Web-Enabled Productivity
• Use the web browsers you employ to surf the Internet to interact with Metaphase.
• Shield your knowledge users from the nuances of PKM.
• Locate the product information you need by performing content-based searches or attribute-based searches, issuing part numbers, or selecting graphical components on a tree-like product structure.

Architecture

Metaphase is built on an open, standards-based architecture to ensure that your solutions can expand as your organization evolves and grows.

Open Database Support
Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server

Open Interface Support
X/Motif, Windows, Java

Open Platform Support
Windows NT
Sun Solaris
HP-UX
IBM AIX
SGI IRIX

Open Network Support
TCP/IP
NetBIOS
HTTP

Foreign Language Support

Single-byte enabled on all supported databases and platforms in standard release. French and German localizations are available as separate products.

Multi-byte enabled on Oracle database and selected platforms. Japanese and Korean localizations are available as separate products.

For More Information

For more information, contact your local SDRC representative or call 1-800-848-7372.