

## **Discussion Guide**

Thought Leadership Summit on Digital Strategies  
*Collaborative Product Generation*  
May 13, 2003 -- Cleveland, OH

### **Topic Statement**

Sustained revenue growth in any industry requires a steady stream of innovative products. However, developing and bringing new products to market is becoming increasingly complex. In many markets, customer segments have become increasingly fragmented, making traditional market research more challenging. Likewise the driving forces of outsourcing and globalization have led to rapid supply chain disintegration. Product designers, marketers, and manufacturers are often no longer in the same building or organization. More likely, they are spread over several continents in organizations with different cultures, languages, and business objectives. Effective collaboration within and across organizations, including between manufacturers and retailers, is the key to bringing the right products to market at the right time. In this summit, we will examine how companies leverage partnerships through information integration and collaboration – improving products, driving down cycle times, and reducing supply chain costs. Specifically, we will discuss why, how, and with whom companies should leverage collaboration.

### **Flow of the Day—Questions to Consider**

*First three sessions will be 1-1/2 hours each. The fourth will be 45 minutes.*

#### ***Session 1: Defining the Business Drivers of Collaboration***

What are the major challenges for your firm in managing product development? Is collaboration more or less important than it was in the past? Why?

- What are the primary challenges for your organization in managing product development today (portfolio management, product development planning, product development execution,...)?
- How do you define collaboration? How do you get involved with your suppliers and partners to help solve product and supply chain processes?
- How are product and solution development different?
- How is collaboration different when the focus is on branded, custom special, private label, or complete solution development?
- Are the efforts to improve product development focused on improving existing models, or on finding new development models?
- How is product development changing in your value chain? How is your value chain changing your product development?

***Session 2: Partnerships: When and with Whom***

There are many potential partners, both internal and external to the organization, in a product development project. How do you prioritize these potential relationships? How do you differentiate the types of relationships you might have with potential partners?

- What does partnering mean in your organization?
- Which partnerships do you believe are most critical to successful new product development? How does your industry or the types of products you are developing impact your answer?
  - Internal partnerships among manufacturing, marketing and R&D?
  - Partnerships upstream with engineering design firms, parts/components suppliers, technology sources?
  - Partnerships downstream with customers, distributors, retailers, end users?
  - Partnerships with outsourced manufacturing and logistics providers?
- How do you assess and leverage your own internal capabilities, those of your potential partners, and how they fit together?
- What are the incentives to collaborate? How do you share the value created?
  - How do you encourage product development organizations to interact with partners?
- What are the characteristics of various relationships or partners that make it better or worse to partner with them?
- How do you measure success?

***Session 3: Collaboration Approaches and Tools***

What are the most promising collaboration approaches and associated tools?

- What tools do you find most useful? What are the general characteristics of these tools?
- What is your tools strategy? How do you rollout and support tools? How do R&D and the CIO work on this together?
- How can you ensure that outsourced partners have the most accurate and up-to-date information on your products?
- How important are links to sourcing or CRM platforms? Links to PLM/PDM systems and to collaborative work group tools, etc?
- What success have you had with partners adopting your tools?
- How do you measure ROI on your new product investments?
- What tools will be needed in the next 12-18 months?

***Session 4: Summary***

At the end of each summit, we listen to the takeaways, the “portable” learnings from the day for each participant (following focus areas suggested):

- Best practices
- Organizational impact
- Metrics, incentives and productivity
- Digital strategies opportunities
- Value chain collaboration opportunities