



Oracle Reasserts Commitment to Manufacturing

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Manufacturing Insights attended [Oracle's](#) annual Manufacturing Summit in Pella, IA, which, in addition to being the tulip capital of the U.S., is the home of [Pella Windows](#) — a marquee Oracle customer. The focus of the summit and presentations from Pella and other manufacturing firms certainly reasserted Oracle's commitment to the manufacturing space.

The major theme running through the proceedings was the horizontal span of industries using Oracle manufacturing software and the vertical "shop floor to top floor" coverage from MES to manufacturing intelligence.

When comparing SAP to ERP rival Oracle, the discussion often centers on SAP's highly integrated environment that can be more expensive and complex to implement, whereas the acquisition-happy Oracle offers a broad and highly modularized portfolio that was not always well-integrated. Oracle's Manufacturing Operations Center (MOC) seems to indicate a step towards achieving a higher level of integration that helps Oracle customers achieve greater data visibility and better decision-making.

MOC employs a unified plant data model that integrates and synchronizes real-time MES-generated shop floor data from multiple plants with the ERP transactional data to provide contextual analytics using Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE). OBIEE is a multi-source analytics engine using a prebuilt, premapped and prepackaged data warehouse combined with predefined performance metrics, dashboards and reports. Oracle resisted the temptation to tie MOC to its own ERP system and built it as an open ERP-agnostic S95 model that could potentially simplify the integration and offers faster time to value, although it is unclear if there are any MOC implementations that are non-Oracle ERP to date.

Yet another approach to simplifying expensive software implementations was exemplified by Emerson Electric and Deloitte. "Oracle in a Box" is a prepackaged OBIEE preconfigured for Emerson's standard core business processes, localized, patched and tested. The application is hosted, managed and supported by Emerson's IT Shared Services.

With implementations in more than 50 operating units in over 30 locations, Emerson reports typical implementation cycles of 16 weeks vs. 56 weeks for a traditional implementation effort in a manufacturing environment. Even when a significant customization of the prepackaged application was required, it still averages less than 70% of traditional implementations.

Oracle demonstrated a deliberate effort to focus and simplify its offering for manufacturing firms. Instead of presenting a collection of very capable individual tools, which typically requires a significant integration effort that customers often underestimate, this Manufacturing Summit focused on business metrics and processes, encapsulated best practices, and prepackaged applications. Oracle certainly demonstrated the technology and industry knowledge to deliver on this value proposition, and it appears that the company continues to create and connect more dots in its "surround SAP" roadmap.

Existing Oracle manufacturing customers, especially those that look to enhance manufacturing intelligence capabilities, should consider leveraging the integration between OBIEE and MOC. Adopting the ideal multi-plant model is not simple and no doubt requires further investment and a significant level of customization, so customers should consider following a hybrid approach that leverages, to the extent

possible, Oracle's predefined BI modules as the starting point to establishing an enterprise-wide, multi-plant standard that can be prepackaged, customized, tested, and implemented faster and at lower cost.

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