Overcoming Product Data Challenges in Publishing Organizations Using Oracle Product Hub
Abstract
As content in the publishing industry goes online from traditional physical books, along with various innovations in delivery channels, product data management processes and data model design to manage the increasing number of product versions becomes more challenging than ever. This paper deals with some of the critical features that are required to solve growing data management challenges in publishing using Oracle Product Hub.

Overview
In publishing, as in any other industry, over the past few decades product data has come to exist in a wide variety of applications, systems and databases, as well as spreadsheets and other formats. Product information is fragmented throughout different business groups, users or systems, instead of being available centrally. There is an increasing number of product data outputs required (e.g., online, physical print catalogs, learning solutions, electronic data feeds, etc.). This has become a major publishing challenge, and organizations are countering it by introducing product data management strategies. To ignore it would only lead to a high degree of inconsistency and incompleteness in product information, leading to data redundancy and data quality issues. In order to produce accurate and consistent information, product data models must be flexible enough to accommodate multiple manifestations, gathering data from varied applications and mastering it, before publishing it according to well-defined business rules for consumption by downstream applications.

Critical Features
Now more than ever, publishing organizations need a scalable, configurable, rules-driven and robust product information platform. Oracle Product Hub capabilities, enriched with Cognizant’s information management experience, provide the foundation for meeting this growing need.

Some key capabilities of our solution include:
Product Data Modeling

Product data modeling is one of the key aspects of any Oracle Product Hub implementation. Prior to designing the model, any content that is to be associated with the product in Oracle Product Hub, but not to be managed in Product Hub, must be determined. Oracle Product Hub is where the product is created, collated, cleansed, governed, shared, published and retired.

Content is managed outside of Product Hub, but is associated with items in Product Hub. Content items could reside in any of the product manifestations or medium in which it is transacted or sold to customers.

We recommend managing the association of content items to sellable versions of product offerings in different formats, using structures in Oracle Product Hub. Pricing of content to be managed at content item level, and any add-on, is applied at the structure level. This ensures no ambiguity while managing royalties and subscription accounting transactions. This framework, coupled with Oracle Product Hub’s other features listed below, provides a flexible data model that can support publishing industry needs.

Figure 3: Product Representation

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Figure 4

Online and Physical Product Data Management

The fluid development of content presentation to customers – the core information asset in the publishing industry – poses a unique set of challenges for any publisher. Content set management for online channels differs from traditional physical products management. Very often, product managers collate different content and content types to deliver sellable product packages. Conversely, in the physical world, content association with physical products doesn’t vary much, but typically traverses a longer lifecycle process before hitting the data in Oracle Product Hub. To minimize complexity and accommodate business practices associated with online and traditional, physical product data management, we recommend separating online and physical content associated with products. When both are managed in Oracle Product Hub, it is best not to link them (though content may be the same); instead, create them separately as items in Product Hub.
Online Product Introduction

Having well-defined processes for new product introductions in online channels is another critical need. Content items flow into Product Hub through an automated, common induction process, with built-in business validations. From there, product managers may package various content to provide sellable offerings, which go through different data collection, validation and approval processes before reaching the online customer application. Cognizant provides a scalable framework to support this business requirement, which can be extended for online, as well as physical or other channels.

Product Publishing Framework

Product Hub needs to share a common definition of product and product offerings across the organization for various downstream applications (i.e., royalties, financials, fabrication, CRM, WAM, etc.). Cognizant’s scalable and automated Product Data Publishing framework is detailed in our paper, “Automated Product Data Publishing from Oracle Product Hub is the Way Forward,” a 20-20 Insights solution. (Note: This solution can be implemented in Fusion or EBS platform).

Conclusion

Oracle Product Hub features, coupled with Cognizant’s scalable framework and solutions, will deliver real business benefits that support organizations in countering challenges faced in product data management in today’s publishing industry.

About the Author

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Onboarding Product Data, Mergers and Acquisitions

These days, mergers and acquisitions among publishing companies are a common occurrence. In order to streamline onboarding of product data into our architecture and processes during these events, we must have a defined business process, incorporating workflows, and a data management process in Oracle Product Hub. Using the well-defined, repeatable processes and flexibility that Oracle Product Hub provides, we can make onboarding product data during a merger or acquisition much easier and manageable.

Figure 5 : Framework for New Product Introduction and Data Validations
About Cognizant

Cognizant (NASDAQ: CTSH) is a leading provider of information technology, consulting, and business process outsourcing services, dedicated to helping the world’s leading companies build stronger businesses. Headquartered in Teaneck, New Jersey (U.S.), Cognizant combines a passion for client satisfaction, technology innovation, deep industry and business process expertise, and a global, collaborative workforce that embodies the future of work. With over 75 development and delivery centers worldwide and approximately 199,700 employees as of September 30, 2014, Cognizant is a member of the NASDAQ-100, the S&P 500, the Forbes Global 2000, and the Fortune 500 and is ranked among the top performing and fastest growing companies in the world. Visit us online at www.cognizant.com or follow us on Twitter: Cognizant.