Content Services

Improve the value of enterprise applications with accurate, organized component data

The Source
for Critical Information and Insight ™

IHS Content Services enable organizations to derive maximum value from their enterprise applications including component part sourcing and material and supplier management by ensuring that part master files, catalogs, and item information is accurate, consistent, and complete. With over 45 years experience providing a broad range of content services, IHS is able to determine the best solution to meet each customer's identified need. These services are applicable to all major industries and can be provided with IHS Reference Content products or as standalone services.

Optimize applications

Enterprise applications can only aggregate and analyze raw information – they cannot leverage information that is not present or inconsistent with data input standards. As a result, software effectiveness is limited by the quality of the input data. IHS Content Services can ensure that input data is clean and organized, duplicates are minimized, and the information used by the application software is current and complete. With a trusted information foundation, applications can deliver promised benefits without data limitations.
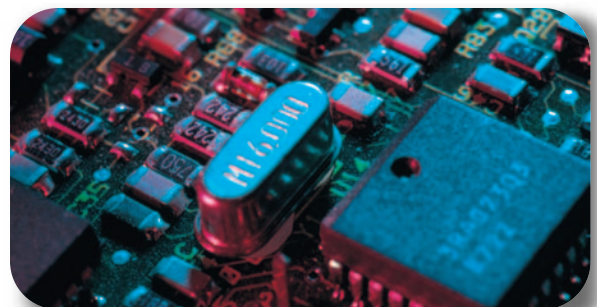
Increase product development productivity

Product development and engineering teams frequently spend unproductive time searching for part information in various databases and print catalogs. Data reliability and consistency is often questionable. Detailed technical data used by an engineer to make a design decision may be missing from the available data. Drawings and diagrams may not be easily associated with the required part, if they exist at all. Even when new, accurate information is created or found, maintenance of that data for subsequent use becomes a secondary consideration.

Reduce inventories and improve vendor relationships

Companies that have grown through acquisition frequently find they have multiple ERP systems with unique item masters and part identification practices. Even centralized procurement and material management processes can result in inconsistent and inaccurate part masters and item files. Without a thorough and comprehensive content management program, identifying excess inventories, duplicate parts, and spending patterns for direct material or MRO items may be impossible.

IHS Content Services can evaluate existing part information, determine the best method to "fix" the data, and supplement the existing item information with externally sourced data. This enables users to search and find the correct information, then analyze the result in order to make more effective procurement and supplier management decisions.

Services Summary

Content production process

Each customer engagement follows a proven process that begins with a project manager with the responsibility to meet delivery dates, process change requests, review and resolve customer issues, and ensure that both the customer and IHS are meeting the obligations defined in the Statement of Work (SOW). Content production is comprised of work teams, which have developed and refined production techniques to capture input data, source additional data, track production steps, assure quality and manage the release of finished content back to the customer.

Statement of work (SOW)

Every engagement begins with the creation of a mutually agreed-to SOW document that describes the specific responsibilities of each party, the required content elements and format of the deliverables, major milestones, and delivery dates.

Data audit

The first step in the production process is a data audit. This determines if there is sufficient data to perform the services as defined in the SOW, and allows IHS and the customer to resolve any data inconsistency issues before production begins.

Taxonomy and item classification

IHS creates a taxonomy or organization structure for the data that can be supplied by the customer, an industry standard taxonomy such as UNSPSC or eClass, or based on IHS's existing classification schema. IHS creates the data dictionary, the list of attributes (descriptions) required for each class, and the valid values for each attribute. This enables subsequent production processes to classify each item/part correctly and assure that correct values are assigned to each attribute.

Data cleansing

Often the existing data is "toxic", derived from many sources, with no consistent format or missing or incomplete descriptions and contains duplicate items. Before IHS migrates data to the taxonomy (puts each item into the correct class), the data is cleansed to fix misspellings, abbreviations, and errors. The data is normalized so that there is a common unit of measure for items in a class (feet, inches, meters, etc. are all converted to a standard unit of measure). The values are also standardized so that the name of each attribute is consistent (inch, in., and the symbol "are all shown as inch).

Data enrichment

The existing data may also be incomplete, with missing values for a specific attribute. For example, "thread size" may be an attribute for bolts, but some bolt descriptions in the customer data may have no value for thread size. Or the descriptive data may exist but it isn't shown with the other bolt data. In other cases, the customer may want a more complete description of a bolt, such as the maximum torque that can be applied.

Enrichment can be accomplished by "mining" information from either of two sources: 1) The customer's data files. IHS's production processes identify specific description elements and map them to the attributes assigned to each class in the taxonomy. 2) Various external sources. This includes obtaining information from manufacturers, suppliers, and web sites. This data can be in electronic file formats, PDF, HTML, XML, etc. or hard copy. IHS converts this data to an electronic format, cleanses it, and merges it with the customer's existing content.

Attachments

Component manufacturers often provide technical data in the form of images, diagrams, drawings, etc. If IHS sources technical data from manufacturers for enrichment, IHS can also capture these PDF documents and create attachments to the electronic data file produced for the customer.

File updates

If enrichment services are provided, IHS can maintain the information by periodically researching suppliers and manufacturers for updates, then build new data records which can be integrated with the prior data files. The frequency and scope of these updates is determined by customer requirements.

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