Sustainable Variant management with Vulcan

Less maintenance, more benefit.
How you can efficiently recognise your product variants, plan and use them efficiently.

classix

a class of its own

How works sustainable variant management?

Variant management is about dealing with the diversity of products manufactured by a company. Whether this diversity is intentional (i.e. planned) or unintentional (due to individual customer wishes): planning, avoiding, reducing and controlling variants are recurring tasks for efficient cost reduction.

Sustainable variant management presents the issues

1. Recognation,
2. Planning and
3. Use

of variants in the foreground, observing exactly this sequence.

Too often, companies focus only on the use of variants, i.e. product configurators are in the foreground with *non-sustainable* variant management.

The product configurator must then be able to deal directly with existing data and structures, extensive sets of rules must be defined and repeatedly updated in a very time-consuming manner.
The first (supposedly) quick success of a product configuration introduced in this way loses momentum at the latest when new products are added.
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In *sustainable variant management*, on the other hand, the focus is first on recognising and analysing the existing product diversity. This is followed by the clear structuring and planning of the variance of one's own products. And only at the end should there be the - often already automatically resulting - use of this efficiently controlled variety of variants by means of a product configurator.

With **Vulcan**, **classix** provides all the tools for sustainable variant management.
A **variance analyser** is available for the detection of variants, a **part specifier** for planning and a **product configurator** for the subsequent use of this variance.

1. Variant detection with the Vulcan variance analyser

The Vulcan variance analyser from classix enables you to detect variants in an existing parts master and to group them with each other.

The parts master of any ERP or PDM system is analysed by means of the textual description of its individual parts. This multilingual analysis of the parts texts, supported by a dictionary, leads to a semi- or fully-automatic grouping of the parts via the terms used in common in the description text.

The groups of parts found in this way are refined further and further in the dialogue by using the shared textual terms as factual characteristics of the parts to define one group each.

Finally, you get groups of parts with a defined characteristics bar, where each part of a group has its own specific characteristics.

The part groups with parts of the same characteristic strip are defined in Vulcan as so-called variant parts. The parts belonging to such a variant part are then subordinated to it as a subpart.

2. Planning variants with the Vulcan parts specifier

The diversity of a product range forces a correspondingly large number of parts in a classic parts master. This also results in a large number of parts lists, routings, etc., with a resulting very high maintenance effort.

With the **Vulcan parts specifier**, you can avoid this high level of maintenance. The parts specifier consists of a number of individual apps with which the parts master, parts lists and routings are edited.

All these apps make use of the definition of attributes or characteristics, which are used to describe the characteristic strips of variant parts already mentioned, but also the rules for variant bills of material and variant routings.

In Vulcan from classix, the variability of the master information of parts, parts lists or routings is described only with intelligent characteristics, as well as their possible characteristics and restrictions.

It is then concretely selected characteristic features that represent the real part, the associated parts list with its routing - without concrete storage of this feature in the respective parts, parts list or routing master.

3. Use of variants with the Vulcan product configurator

A product configurator is used to configure complex, variant-rich products. The focus is usually on the technical plausibility and feasibility of the products - based on the entered, desired characteristics of its features.

In addition, product configurators enable you to calculate prices and costs in a targeted manner in order to arrive at an offer quickly and comprehensibly.

A direct integration of a quotation created in this way into an order flow up to a production order is not always consistent when conventional product configurators are connected to classic ERP systems.

With conventional product configurators, the part numbers to be taken into account are selected from the parts master via rule systems, i.e. each configuration can only be carried out to the extent that corresponding parts can be found in the parts master.

classix goes one step further here. The control system is defined in the Vulcan product configurator in such a way that only configurations that are not possible or not desired are prevented.

This means that parts which - as configured - cannot be found in the parts master are nevertheless permitted. The scope of configuration options is drastically expanded, while at the same time the number of concretely defined parts in the parts master can be greatly restricted.

Efficiency through sustainable variant management

With Vulcan from classix, you control the variance of your products as far as possible through characteristic strips and the characteristics of their characteristics. Extensive extensions in the parts, parts list or routing master can usually be omitted.

A simple example will illustrate this: a power supply unit is installed in a product which, depending on the country of delivery, must be designed for the voltages of the power supply system applicable there. In the Vulcan part master, the power supply is defined only as a variant part whose characteristic bar consists of the characteristic „Voltage“. The characteristic „Voltage“ can take the values 220V/110V/300V.

Depending on the configuration, the „voltage“ characteristic of the variant part is defined.
With the respective value of the „Voltage“ characteristic, the variant part thus uniquely represents the power supply unit to be actually installed, without the power supply unit having to be specifically defined in the part master with all its possible characteristics.

Sustainable variant management with Vulcan from classix leads to sustainable efficiency in managing your product diversity. **For the benefit of your customers.**

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