Challenges

Locating suppliers with the desired manufacturing capabilities and qualifications is difficult and time consuming.

Typical challenges include:

**Finding the best-qualified suppliers.** Typical supplier interaction is reactive in nature, based on today's sourcing needs. The default suppliers are those that have provided services in the past, even though they may not be the best for the given job.

**Improving the interaction with new and existing suppliers.** Even when a new supplier is identified, there is no consistent way to engage them.

The Solution

**Supplier Discovery and On-Boarding**

This solution leverages the network of known suppliers using a variety of software discovery tools. Profiles of existing suppliers are matched to the needs of the organization. Any data related to supplier performance is also captured as part of the record. The key to supplier discovery is creating a living database of suppliers that provide services to the organization. In addition, a process is implemented to “discover” new suppliers based on the needs of the direct material being sourced. Once suppliers are “discovered,” a repeatable on-boarding process is used to bring them up to speed to enable them to quickly respond to sourcing requests. Links to key organizational “communities of interest” are created to enable problem solving and innovation in a far more effective manner. Finally, a network of “feet on the street” can be created to work with suppliers for key products.

Solution Benefits

The benefits to this solution include:

**Improved supplier quality and on-time delivery**

This solution enables supply chain alignment with the organization. By creating a reproducible process for supplier interaction aligned with organization goals, supplier quality and on-time delivery improves.

**Higher quality relationships with suppliers**

A better relationship with suppliers via collaboration improves two-way communications between the organizations, including supplier ratings that are communicated back to the supplier to make improvements.
Implementation

The Professional Services required to implement this solution are as follows:

- **Phase 1 – Discovery**
  Determine the “as-is” state of suppliers at the organization. It is critical to identify and agree on the key issues that need to be solved.

- **Phase 2 – Design**
  Based on discovery, provide a recommended “to-be” plan designed to address the key issues. Executive Management approves those recommendations.

- **Phase 3 – Implementation**
  Complete the implementation of the approved design in phases. The typical order for implementation is discovery, on-boarding and “feet on the street.”

- **Phase 4 – Staff Augmentation**
  Staff augmentation as needed for direct interaction with suppliers in the field during and after on-boarding.

There is no software required to implement this solution, however, the use of a direct material sourcing software allows the implementation to support larger number of supplier networks.

About the Electro-Optics Center

The Electro-Optics Center (EOC), a proud part of The Pennsylvania State University, is a hybrid between the best components of a university and those of private industry. This relationship allows us access to the university’s researchers and scientists, its state-of-the-art facilities and leading edge research.

Our staff, comprised primarily of former industry and DoD personnel, brings experience in exceeding sponsor and corporate expectations. Through the application of this hybrid model, the EOC is able to provide its sponsors with solutions that combine leading edge research with on-time and on-budget deliveries. Learn more at www.eoc.psu.edu.