

3M Announces Integrated Packaging Tool Version 4.0

- Web-Based Software Enables Compliance And Product Surety; Shortens Time To Market And Lowers Packaging Costs -

3M Global Packaging Services today announced the availability of the next version of the 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M -- a centralized, Web-based integrated packaging management system for companies in the food and beverage, life sciences, chemicals, and consumer packaged goods industries. Version 4.0 of the application includes new features designed to enable compliance with customers, regulatory agencies and internal company policies, speed time to market, manage product surety, and reduce packaging costs.

"Significant feedback from our customers was key in the development of a more intuitive product," said Joal Storm, product manager, 3M Global Packaging Services. "Version 4.0 enables companies to better manage the entire packaging process from development of the packaging specification to integration with the artwork process to routing and approval to delivery for production. The result is streamlined, integrated packaging management, which reduces manual processes and errors, increases effective design and content management, and facilitates substantial cost savings."

The Microsoft .NET based, Web-native software system is completely compatible with existing company data systems," Storm continued. "The centralized approach can be used to create, translate, organize, edit, route, print and archive all the information that makes up the package. The system is unique in that it manages the specification at the data level, integrates with other enterprise systems and the artwork creation process, and feeds production of the final package, all in a Web-based environment."

Version 4.0 of The 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M is more instinctively organized with database content controls, workflow management, reporting and mass-change capabilities. The new version includes an enhanced interface and improved product tracking and tracing components. The software also features a new smart device manager that facilitates two-way communication with packaging line equipment. Another enhancement is the 3M enterprise translation tool, which gives customers the capability to manage translated text in more than 250 languages.

The first 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M was introduced earlier this year, as part of 3M's strategy to offer a version of its internally developed integrated packaging management system. After conducting a study of its own complex packaging processes, 3M discovered a way to save millions in excess annual costs by centralizing its packaging information. With an evident market need, the company drew upon its years of manufacturing and vertical industry experience to create a commercial-grade solution.

"Most companies are required to support multiple databases and disparate ERP systems, which makes packaging a real struggle," said Mike Haldane, business manager, 3M Professional Services. "Mistakes related to packaging errors such as product recalls or non-compliance fines from the FDA, for example, can cost companies millions of dollars. Yet, we found that most companies lack an integrated packaging management system. The 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M was designed to help companies address the problem."

The user interface of the Integrated Packaging Tool Version 4.0 includes friendlier, icon-based repositories, such as my packaging, artwork library, structure library, product data, workflow and reporting. Upgrades to workflow functions allow users to route pending packaging specifications and changes to predefined approvers. An improved reporting function includes a search feature to locate packaging elements and product tracking data. The new artwork importer handles native files from Adobe, Quark Express and others, and the smart device manager provides continuous feedback for troubleshooting and managing printers, labelers and other

manufacturing line devices.

The 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M can be hosted by 3M or installed locally on the customer's network and can be accessed online anywhere, anytime. For 3M's subscription based customers, no capital expenditure is required to get started. Contact 3M directly for more information.

About 3M Global Packaging Services

3M Global Packaging Services, part of 3M Industrial Services and Solutions Division, develops total solutions to help customers around the world optimize their packaging processes. For information about 3M Integrated Packaging Tool from 3M and 3M Global Packaging Services, visit: www.3M.com/packagingservices or call toll free at 1-866-585-9945.

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