



# SIEMENS Listens to “Voice of Customer” to Devise Content Strategy

*Siemens has grown to be a global icon, with market leading operating companies spanning Energy, Healthcare, and Industrial Sectors and consolidated revenues in excess of 77 billion Euros, by listening closely to the “voice of the customer” and delivering the solutions in demand by a global customer base.*

No exception when it comes to the internal customers of Siemens’ Global Shared Services organization, numbering over 430,000 employees worldwide. In North America, Siemens had been up and running with an SAP SRM e-Procurement platform for over two years, but Global Shared Services’ procurement customers were expressing dissatisfaction with the content available in the system. The Procurement Committee was requesting a more user friendly content management solution, or would look elsewhere. Users were increasingly frustrated with static, local catalogs that were often out-of-date and did not meet the expectations of the corporate users. They had increasingly come to expect the ease-of-use afforded by consumer on-line shopping from business-to-business applications as well.

*Siemens’ goal for the new content initiative was to ensure that “if you can shop online at home, you can shop online at Siemens.”* — **Drake Paben**, Siemens Global Shared Services in North America

The new content strategy would have to satisfy users’ demand for a shopping experience with simplified navigation, access to rich product descriptions and images, and comparative shopping and other usability features, with procurement’s need to efficiently manage and control the shopping environment. The Shared Services group decided to “get out of the business of managing local catalogs,” – an inherently manual process that took as much as a month for data to be loaded and approved. This led to outdated catalog content by the time the local catalogs were deployed, given the frequency of item changes. Moreover, by requiring suppliers to create an Excel version of their online catalogs to be loaded locally, all the rich product content available at the supplier’s website was lost. Adoption suffered as a result, with confused users executing searches on their own at the supplier’s web site outside of the system and placing “off-contract” orders at “list” prices instead of Siemens’ negotiated rates. Siemens selected the Vinimaya SmartSearch Catalog solution to accomplish the goals of gaining compliance while driving user adoption.

**SIEMENS**

*Drake Paben*





**SIEMENS AG** (Berlin and Munich) is a global powerhouse in electronics and electrical engineering, operating in the industry, energy and healthcare sectors. The company has around 430,000 employees (in continuing operations) working to develop and manufacture products, design and install complex systems and projects, and tailor a wide range of solutions for individual requirements. For over 160 years, Siemens has stood for technical achievements, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality. In fiscal 2008, Siemens had revenue of €77.3 billion and a net income of €5.9 billion (IFRS). Further information is available on the Internet at: [www.siemens.com](http://www.siemens.com).

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In what Paben describes as “one of the easiest implementations I’ve ever been involved with – three months from start to full production roll-out,” the difference in the “before” and “after” picture could not be more stark in contrast. In Siemens’ view, the Vinimaya solution has been a Win/Win/Win for Users, Procurement, and Suppliers alike:

#### **Users Win**

Single user interface, accessible in local language, to simultaneously search and compare products, pricing, and availability from multiple vendors.

#### **Procurement Wins**

Proactive contract price compliance reporting to preemptively isolate price discrepancies before they create re-work in Accounts Payable on the back end, or as Paben says, “before little mistakes become costly mistakes.”

#### **Supplier Wins**

Non-invasive, no-cost connectivity to their web catalog content that leverages their existing investments and eliminates the need to re-format and diminish the quality of their unique content, by populating Excel files or other data extracts for loading into local catalogs.

#### **Hearing the “voice of the customer” loud and clear, Siemens has implemented a best practice content strategy resulting in:**

- Increased usability and user adoption; reduced maverick spend
- Maximized used of supplier web catalog content (80% of all catalogs – 20% local are small suppliers with no web presence)
- Drastic reductions in PO/Invoice price discrepancies
- Globally scalable solution with fixed, predictable costs even as user/catalog volumes grow
- More time to focus on strategic activities due to minimal internal support needed (~ 1 FTE to manage global solution)

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