

Introduction

Objectives of the white paper

PSLX Consortium published a technical specification in 2003. As a recommendation, the specification defines APS (Advanced Planning and Scheduling) and attempts to promote proper application of IT to current manufacturing industries. The concept of PSLX's APS (which is slightly different from those used in the late 1990s) and its competitiveness has been disseminated and is increasingly understood by certain industries. Practical applications of the specification reportedly have delivered rewarding results. However, in terms of system implementation, it has been argued that the specification has many ambiguous and incomplete descriptions, which need to be made more detailed and practical to users of this specification. In order to satisfy this requirement, and to increase the value of APS for industries, PSLX Consortium started developing a new version of the APS specification in 2004.

This white paper introduces the core concepts and an abstract of the new version of the PSLX specification, which is currently being developed by PSLX technical committees via the Web. The previous specification

succeeded in engendering clear understanding of the scope of APS, of the problems in current industries, and of the need for a way of addressing such problems using Web-based technologies. This new specification is designed to contribute to actual industries that intend to implement APS by clearly defining their business processes and developing new information systems. The effect of the PSLX specification will be to make this process less onerous. In particular, interoperability between software applications, which is one of the main technical aspects of PSLX, will be dramatically increased.

From the point of view of manufacturing practitioners, the new specification will suggest how they can gain significant benefits by implementing APS. They need to lead the project and organize all IT vendors, presenting clear directions and requirements based on the APS concept. The involvement of manufacturing practitioners in the implementation and enforcement of APS is the key to achieving successful results, because only these practitioners have detailed knowledge of their own competitive situations.

The specifications introduced in this paper are incomplete and have not been approved as a standard. The reason for publishing this paper with only partial information on what will become the standard is that we hope to gather valuable input by inviting contributions from many of you who are stakeholders in this area, and who are interested in developing crucial specifications for future manufacturing industries. Since this white paper introduces the essence of the latest discussions in technical committees, and indicates the basic ideas embedded in the new version of the PSLX specification, we hope that it will contribute to your basic understanding of PSLX's APS and stimulate a variety of comments and suggestions for improving the future specification.

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