



MSMUG OMAC Guideline

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Microsoft Manufacturing User Group Endorses *Designed for Windows XP* Logo Program for Plant Floor Software



The Microsoft Manufacturing User Group (MS-MUG) recommends that Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) and manufacturing end users adopt Microsoft's *Designed for Windows XP* logo program as a minimum certification level for plant floor desktop applications. This self-certifying program overcomes obstacles that preclude Windows 2000 certification for virtually all plant floor software and retains some of the key certification attributes originally recommended to Microsoft by the MS-MUG. Dave Bauman of Procter & Gamble and chair of MS-MUG says: "While the *Designed for Windows XP* logo program does not address all of the issues raised in MS-MUG's original input to Microsoft, it does contain enough substance to give manufacturers and ISVs a common platform to ensure stability of desktop applications on the plant floor."

Application Software Stability and Lower Total Cost of Ownership

The *Designed for Windows XP* position statement stems from the ongoing efforts of MS-MUG, a working group within the Open Modular Architecture Controller User Group (OMAC), to address issues faced by manufacturers when applying Microsoft technology to manufacturing automation applications. DLL Hell and software version management were the original flashpoints when MS-MUG first formed in 1999. DLL Hell and its associated system instability occurs when Dynamic Link Libraries (DLLs) employed by applications on an existing system are replaced by updated DLLs contained in new operating system releases or application software upgrades. Version management issues, on the other hand, contribute to higher total cost of ownership (TCO) when the rapid pace of operating system, service pack, and application software releases are all taken into account.

Migration to the Windows 2000 operating system addressed many of the issues that were particular to earlier operating system releases. Microsoft's

further recommendations to the group included installation of Windows 2000-certified programs to minimize the potential for problems with managing DLLs. The problem is that to this day virtually no plant floor application software is certified under Windows 2000. Instead, ISVs report problems in areas such as the prohibitive cost to certify, the need for major software modifications to meet some requirements, and the need to devote costly time to educating the third party testing company on unique features of manufacturing software, particularly driver interfaces. Some application software, such as HMI packages, can contain over one thousand drivers that must be tested and paid for under the Windows 2000 certification program.

MS-MUG responded by proposing a sub-certification that would address the DLL Hell issue but not impose such a burden on plant floor ISVs. Microsoft countered with the *Designed for Windows XP* logo program, a solution that meets many of MS-MUG's application stability requirements and is acceptable to ISVs who can now self-certify to a smaller set of requirements. "The ability to self certify makes this solution even more compelling in a cost-conscious environment," states Miles Hagestad of The Boeing Company.

Make Designed for Windows XP The Plant Floor Standard

Another key contributor to the MS-MUG, Ashok Nangia of the 3M Company, says "while the *Designed for Windows XP* logo program does not meet all of the certification requirements recommended to Microsoft, it does provide a common platform of application stability, install/uninstall procedures, and upgrade predictability. We recommend that ISVs and manufacturing end users alike use this program to achieve a common level of certification for Microsoft-based manufacturing software."

About Microsoft Manufacturing User Group

The Microsoft Manufacturing User Group (MS-MUG) is a working group within the Open Modular Architecture Controls User Group (OMAC) devoted to addressing issues faced when manufacturers apply commercial software technology to industrial applications. Members of MS-MUG include manufacturing companies, Microsoft, and both technology and automation suppliers. Anyone interested in the use of Microsoft technology in industrial automation is encouraged to join the effort. Further information about the MS-MUG working group, including membership information, can be obtained at <http://www.arcweb.com/omac> or by phone at 781-471-1112. Interested parties are also encouraged to join the group's mailing list at <http://www.onelist.com/subscribe/MMU>