



### National Instruments Achieves Dodd-Frank Compliance with Inspirage Conflict Mineral Solution

National Instruments (NI) equips engineers and scientists with tools that accelerate productivity, innovation, and discovery to meet not only grand but also daily engineering challenges in an increasingly complex world. A graphical system design approach leverages productive software and reconfigurable hardware platforms, along with a vast community of IP and applications, to simplify system development and arrive at solutions faster.

#### Challenges

Section 1502 of U.S. Dodd-Frank Act includes a special section requiring publicly listed U.S. companies to disclose whether any of their products included minerals from mines controlled by armed groups in or around the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Companies were given until May 31, 2014 to make their first disclosure about whether the minerals they use are “conflict free.” While Dodd-Frank does not explicitly ban corporations from using conflict minerals, proactive companies are concerned about being linked with what is arguably the world’s worst humanitarian disaster and they are now working diligently to understand the source of all materials going into their products.

National Instruments (NI) has been well aware of the pending Dodd-Frank Conflict Mineral reporting requirements since 2010. As a business-to-business company, NI was not overly concerned about consumer backlash over their conflict mineral policy; however, they did believe it is their corporate responsibility to eliminate conflict minerals in their products. Given this lack of consumer demands coupled with tight budgets in the current economic climate, NI looked for a straightforward, cost-effective Conflict Minerals solution.



“The support from Inspirage was awesome and the team was very, very helpful. They are truly experts in Oracle Agile PLM. They helped us not only to become compliant with Dodd-Frank, but they also helped us figure out a few other things we were struggling with and better realize a return on our investment in Agile.”

Tyler Shanks

Environmental Program Manager

## Solution

As a company committed to ethical business practices, NI fully-funded a program to address Dodd-Frank compliance and tasked their environmental program manager to lead the project. The program sponsor was the VP of Global Manufacturing and key stakeholders included the General Counsel, the inside legal counsel tasked with environmental issues, the director of procurement as well as representatives from supply chain management, finance, engineering and R&D. Once the project team and stakeholders were assembled, NI worked to build both business processes and a technology solution that would streamline the reporting process.

While the EICC has developed a simple Excel spreadsheet that suppliers can send to manufacturers to report all of their smelter data, this can be an overwhelming amount of data to review if you have thousands of suppliers. So for large public companies, the key is to get these data into a robust system that can analyze the data and identify suppliers who are not compliant. Given that NI was already using Oracle Agile PLM for the past eight years and added PG&C in 2012, Agile was the logical place to start. But they needed to figure out how they could adapt Agile for Conflict Mineral reporting. With a Conflict Mineral solution already developed for Agile PLM, NI quickly realized that Inspirage would be the ideal partner.

It took about two weeks to install the Inspirage solution onto Oracle and being an engineering company, NI has a very thorough multiphase testing process that lasted about two months.

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## Lessons Learned

NI's Environmental Program Manager Tyler Shanks offered a few lessons learned from this initiative: "First of all, like any project, one of the most important ways to ensure project success is to identify all the key stakeholders and get them on board early. Moreover, we learned that Conflict Minerals is not just a process change, and it's important to involve someone from IT to the project team to help manage technical aspects of the project."

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## Learn More

Find out how the **Inspirage Conflict Minerals Solution** can be quickly and easily implemented to help you to reduce reporting costs, protect revenue and mitigate brand risk. Contact us at [info@inspirage.com](mailto:info@inspirage.com) or visit [www.inspirage.com/conflictminerals](http://www.inspirage.com/conflictminerals).

## Results

- Streamlined systems and process for Dodd-Frank Conflict Mineral reporting
- Ability to quickly identify which data are good and which are not
- Ability to apply smelter data to "take back" (recycling) program to understand the status of a product
- New insights into the entire process through new documentation

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Inspirage is the integrated supply chain specialist firm solving business critical challenges from design to delivery. The company delivers end-to-end consulting and implementation solutions that link Innovation Management, Supply Chain Management and Logistics Management. Inspirage partners with their customers to break down information silos and optimize performance to accelerate innovation, fuel growth and achieve operational excellence.

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