IBM Partner Engagement Manager (PEM)

Efficient, automated onboarding and management of partners, suppliers and customers

Highlights

- Automated partner onboarding
- Partner self-service capability
- Visibilty of onboarding process
- Single repository of partner data

For companies operating in today's hyper-connected global economy the performance of their business depends on connections with partners, suppliers and customers. How well they manage these relationships, from selecting the right partners to effectively collaborating, can directly impact revenue growth and profit margin. Today, for most companies, these relationships are orchestrated across multiple systems, tools, and networks, and involve a heavy reliance on resource-intensive and error-prone manual processes. As the global and digital nature of business intensifies, companies face pressure to move towards a more digitized, centralized, unified infrastructure for their [business] ecosystems.

IBM Partner Engagement Manager (PEM) is a software as a service (SaaS) based engagement system that enables faster on boarding, collaboration, interaction, monitoring, management, and visibility into the activity flows between companies and their partners, customers, and suppliers. PEM significantly reduces the time and resources required to onboard new partners while enhancing ability to manage and maintain existing partners. By standardizing and automating processes, PEM helps to limit costly manual errors and increase efficiency, by enabling partners to maintain their own records.

Centralize the B2B Ecosystem

68% of companies regularly exchange critical information with 250 or more partners, suppliers, and customers. And 53% of these companies report a lack of visibility into these relationships as a primary concern with existing business-to-business (B2B) integration solutions. IBM Partner Engagement Manager (PEM) helps address these challenges by providing a centralized point of control to manage and monitor onboarding as well as ongoing interactions with the B2B community. PEM can leverage existing Systems of Record (SOR) and provide a SOR for partner details that are essential to various systems involved in B2B integration and managed file transfers. PEM is configurable and extensible, enabling each business to design and direct the interaction experience for their partners, suppliers, and customers. Through simple drag and drop functionality, business users can create new processes and activities, easily customizing and defining the tasks and approval steps required in a given process. Activities may include validating contact information, onboarding to a new service, broadcasting messages and receiving validation from partners, answering questions and uploading documents to verify compliance with industry regulatory requirements.

Improves Visibility

With these controls, PEM gives companies better visibility across, and monitoring of, their partner and supplier communities. PEM eliminates both isolated and paper-based management and provides central visibility into the partner community and processes, as well as provides the information necessary to more easily perform ongoing monitoring and analysis.

Faster Onboarding

Onboarding a new partner, whether it is a supplier or a customer, is one of the most time-consuming and challenging tasks in B2B integration. More than 70% of companies report that their IT staff struggles to support the volume of trading partners their organizations needs to onboard and manage – or cannot support technical onboarding requirements. PEM gives businesses powerful capabilities to onboard and provision large numbers of trading partners at once or in one-off fashion, as needed. PEM reduces onboarding time by as much as 75% with workflow-driven processes, by reducing errors and delays for both sponsors and partners, and by helping to build a foundation for a positive relationship.

Enable Self-Service

A key function provided by PEM is self-service. Partners, who can be suppliers or customers, are empowered to provide their own information directly into the B2B system – and can be automatically notified whenever their input is required. Business users can customize alerts and reminders to let partners know when they're about to miss a deadline and PEM monitoring capabilities ensure that partners fulfill all the necessary requirements for doing business with the sponsor organization. This frees up IT staff time to focus on other priorities.

Reduce Errors and Risks

By standardizing processes and activities, enabling self-service, and providing greater visibility, PEM also helps companies reduce errors and risks. Specifically, PEM addresses governance and risk issues through secure means of handling partner configuration values and implementing processes such as dual approval prior to provisioning to production environments.

Reduce Costs and Accelerate Time to Revenue

With the benefits described above, PEM sets a solid foundation to reduce time and costs associated with B2B integration and ecosystem management. PEM reduces onboarding time across applications, helps manage partner relationships across the organization, and fosters greater collaboration with partner communities with an extensible self-service platform.

PEM also accelerates ROI and when onboarding customers, the time to revenue, by accelerating the onboarding process. Typically, a new partner can be onboarded in a week or less with PEM, as contrasted with onboarding times of 10 weeks or more with manual or other solutions. That translates into a few months of savings and additional possible revenue with each new relationship.

B2B Transformation and Migration

IBM Partner Engagement Management (PEM) is the ideal solution to help businesses complete a B2B system migration. PEM can help a customer migrate their partner community from one system to another by helping partners contribute to the migration process capitalizing on PEM's self-service capabilities. All of this is completed while also providing complete visibility into a partner's progress to help to facilitate a migration.

PEM Features
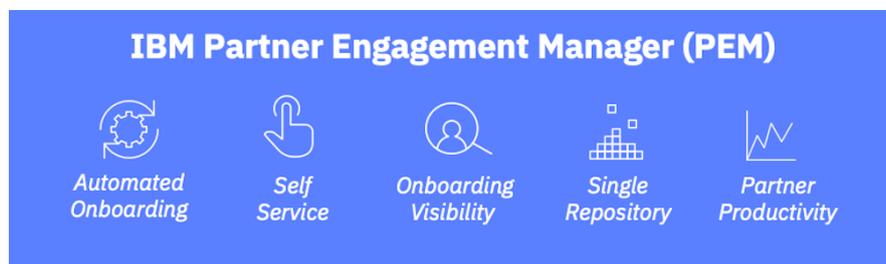
PEM Capabilities

IBM Partner Engagement Manager (PEM) provides the capabilities needed to enable the efficient, automated onboarding and management of suppliers and customers – and engage them in collaborative workflows. PEM also provides capabilities to define and customize processes and activities and set the steps and approvals for those activities or processes. PEM provides the capabilities and framework to enable companies to:

- **Centralize Onboarding** through an extensive workflow with role-based control and user delegation capabilities. PEM can manage both upstream partner onboarding tasks (e.g., contractual and legal processes) as well as downstream departmental document exchanges (e.g., promotions and or targeted initiatives). PEM uses RESTful APIs to load on-boarding data that is collected into IBM B2B Integrator, IBM File Gateway or other REST-capable applications. PEM also offers testing and migration capabilities for connections to production environment.

- **Leverage Visual Business Process design** for developing internal and external workflows and processes.

- **Provide Trading Partner Self-Service** through a portal where both business users and partners can self-onboard and self-administer related communications profile information without IT involvement. PEM offers out-of-box flows and the ability to custom define flows for onboarding and maintenance plus centralized monitoring of activity progress across the B2B community.

- **Create and Manage Campaigns** and activities to roll out to partners or clients, with visibility into the status of activity completion. Activities can be deemed self-service, allowing partners to interactively execute activities on an as-needed basis. Businesses can manage partner relationships and set campaigns by adding partners to particular groups, with a defined collection of individual attributes, or via individual attributes. PEM provides customizable notification and alerts for expiring certificates, keys, passwords and other information, as well as reusable templates for repeating routine maintenance activities. PEM offers the flexibility to roll out an activity to one partner, groups or the entire community**.**

- **Visibility** where PEM allows data to be downloaded to be imported into a spreadsheet or integrated into REST API capable reporting tools. These, like other parts of PEM, are connected through RESTful APIs.

- **Flexible Deployment Options** where PEM allows you to choose from private, public and local cloud options that permit you to host PEM on cloud or behind your firewall depending on your IT strategy and data security requirements. PEM's modular architecture leverages RESTful APIs to enable extensibility while the inclusion of Docker container support offers a degree of portability, allowing a given instance of PEM to reside in a Docker container. IBM and PEM work with other solutions and partners, with APIs and workflows flexible enough to work with other RESTful API solutions.

- **Support multiple endpoints** and provide a consolidated view of a partner's different transmissions and endpoints. Individual partners may have more than one endpoint, for example, a bank customer has a mortgage file, credit file and checking account. PEM can manage each of these endpoints individually or as a group and provide a consolidated view.

- **Support third-party processing** allowing companies to maintain relationships with suppliers or partners using such third-party processors and services.

Why IBM?

IBM offers efficient, automated, self service onboarding and management of partners, suppliers and customers. IBM Partner Engagement Manager eliminates manual processing and costly errors by providing simplified, automated, self service onboarding with a central repository

For more information

To learn more about IBM Partner Engagement Manager (PEM), please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:

https://www.ibm.com/us-en/marketplace/trading-partner-onboarding-solution