THE GLOBAL ICT QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

WHAT IS A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

A quality management system is the set of processes, procedures, and tools that a company implements to ensure that customer satisfaction and quality requirements are met or exceeded. It provides a platform for continual improvement of company performance. ISO, the International Organization for Standardization, developed the ISO 9001 in the mid-1980's as a basic quality standard that companies can use globally to help implement their quality management systems. Choosing the right system for your company is very important. ISO 9001 is a recognized quality standard; however, it is lacking in industry specific requirements. As a result many industry sectors have developed additions to the ISO standard that are geared towards the specifics of their industry. The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) specific standard, TL 9000, allows ICT suppliers and service providers to have a global standard that is specific to the industry. Certification to a quality standard significantly enhances a firm's organizational DNA. TL 9000 empowers certified organizations to enhance their operational efficiency, cut internal expenses, and elevate product quality and customer satisfaction levels, ultimately leading to increased revenue and profitability.

WHAT IS TL 9000?

TL 9000 is a quality management system designed for the ICT industry. It builds on ISO 9001 and was developed by QuEST Forum in response to the call and need for ICT-specific requirements and measurements. The purpose of TL 9000 is to define the ICT quality system requirements for design, development, production, and service. In addition, it specifies measurements for companies to help with improvement programs. The quality system requirements are described in the published TL 9000 Quality Management Systems Requirements Handbook. While ISO 9001 provides the base, there are over 80 supplementary requirements specific to ICT. What sets TL 9000 apart from any other QMS is the measurement performance data requirement. Measurements are collected securely and always published anonymously in real time. The measurement data is intended to identify opportunities for improvement within the supply chain and to benchmark performance against suppliers of similar products. The TL 9000 Quality Management System Measurements Handbook specifies the product and measurements requirements.
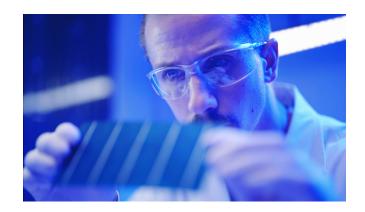
WHY TL 9000?

QuEST Forum pursues the goal of global ICT quality and industry-wide performance excellence through its TL 9000 standard. This goal is accomplished in three ways:

- By providing a measurement system that allows companies to track performance and improve results.

- By eliminating the need for multiple quality management standards which reduces the cost of doing business and ultimately results in better products and services to consumers.

- Provides a common language, audited by a third party, which allows suppliers and customers to focus on improvements rather than debating results.

"Infinera has greatly benefited from TL 9000 benchmarking performance data. The ability to compare our progress to industry average and best in class metrics has supported our continuous improvement process toward world class quality."

Nancy Patterson
Director of Quality and ESG, Infinera

WHO BENEFITS?

Buyers benefit from assured consistent quality across all products and services by using TL 9000 certified suppliers, along with significant cost savings of on-site inspections. Moreover, the Measurements Repository System (MRS) provides regular performance data for analysis against industry benchmarks and objective product and supplier purchasing decisions. Suppliers profit by conformance to TL 9000 standards through the reduction of costs associated with quality audits and the creation of customized performance reports for current and potential customers, thus validating the promoted quality of products, services, and customer care.
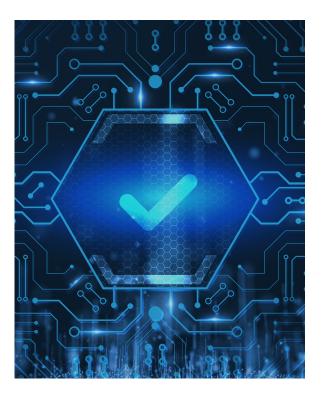
ABOUT QUEST FORUM

QuEST Forum is a unique collaboration of service providers and suppliers dedicated to ICT supply chain quality and performance. We unify the global ICT community through the implementation of TL 9000, collaboration in our work groups and regional hubs, emphasis on learning and sharing industry best practices, and creation and delivery of reports and benchmarks.

TL 9000 provides value and benefits across all the supply chain disciplines (buyers, suppliers, and service providers) by providing a consistent set of quality expectations that parallel rapid technology changes and customer expectations. It is equally applicable to both large and small enterprises. The result is a unique and robust quality management system that drives continual improvement and business excellence.

HISTORY OF QUEST FORUM

In 1998, QuEST Forum developed the TL 9000 quality management system, which is tightly linked to ISO 9001. The ISO 9001 standard creates intrinsic value by establishing a solid framework for quality management based on leadership, management commitment, fact-based decision-making, risk management and other basic quality principles. With the Information Communication Technologies (ICT) specific "Adders", TL 9000 truly becomes an industry standard. The performance data requirement of TL 9000 sets it apart from other QMS since it allows companies to see statistics, such as best-in-class and worst-in-class, and enables QuEST Forum members to identify opportunities for improvement as well as compare themselves to their competitors.