

MEMORANDUM

Date: 26 November 2018
To: VMP Community
From: Marjo van der Sman/Henk Zwinkels
Subject: VMP Community working methods
Ref.nr.: HZ16010v6

1. Introduction

The Virtual Marketplace Standards (VMP) support the business processes of businesses in the floriculture sector. These standards are drawn up in close consultation between the parties involved, including Royal FloraHolland and software companies from a range of trading companies.

The 'VMP Community' was established in 2011 when the the implementation guide and completion instructions were issued for Floricode's VMP standards.

This memorandum describes the role and tasks of the 'VMP Community' and was adopted by Floricode's Working Group on Standards on 7-7-2016. (The memorandum on The Management and Maintenance CC VMP of July 2012 thereby expires.)

2. What is a community?

A Community is a user group of companies that use one or more applications in which Floricode standards have been implemented in order to support their business processes, in accordance with the implementation manual and completion instructions drawn up by the Community. The business rules that have been agreed play an essential role in this; these relate to the completion instructions for the relevant messages.

As soon as the implementation manual and completion instructions have been compiled, participating companies may decide to set up a 'Community' to manage and maintain those documents and to handle issues in the implementation and the use of standards to be implemented collectively under the banner of Floricode.

A Community is established by the Working Group on Standards, but does not operate under the direct control of the Working Group on Standards.

For example, Floricode has communities for:

1. Community for auction EDIFACT standards
2. Community for CLIENT Export Standards
3. VMP Community

The following roles are designated within a community:

1. Member: a company participating in the community
2. Contact person: the person who acts as a contact for Floricode on behalf of all community members
3. Community manager: the Floricode employee who acts as the manager for community standards

3. Requirements for participation in the VMP Community

- a. The 'VMP Community' is a user group that includes representatives of (floricultural) applications from various software vendors and/or their users.

- b. A minimum of five software vendors support the VMP standard. Collectively, these companies must serve a substantial part of the sector with their software products, which means that these standards make a real and substantive contribution to the digitization of floriculture.
- c. (Software) companies may join the 'VMP Community' provided they comply with the guidelines and requirements of Floricode; i.e.:
 - a. they subscribe to the Message standards
 - b. the test scenarios of the VMP standards have been successfully completed in the Floricode TestCentre and they have therefore obtained the 'Statement of Conformity'.
- d. The list of members of the 'VMP Community' is published on Floricode's SDK website.
- e. The 'VMP Community' is open to all companies and software vendors in the sector.
- f. The 'VMP Community' has its own (secured) page on Floricode's SDK website, where VMP documentation is published, for example.
- g. The 'VMP Community' approaches the introduction of the community standard or a new release on a project-based method of working together with Floricode, in accordance with Floricode's change and release process.
- h. For new developments, the Community is prepared to set up a detailed pilot with Floricode to test and implement the standards developed - community interpretation.

4. Change and release process

For Floricode's change and release process, reference is made to the document on the Floricode website. Additionally, with regard to the change and release process for the Community, the following applies:

- a. The Community manages its own business rules, implementation manual and message completion instructions.
- b. Issues and RFCs are submitted to the Community Manager by the members.
- c. The Community is itself responsible for compiling, supplementing and amending Community documentation; the Community Manager may (also) be asked to complete these activities.
- d. Floricode carries out the review on community documentation; Floricode's quality criteria are to be used for this purpose.
- e. The Community proposes when (the new version of) documentation is published, implemented and put into use.
- f. The Community proposes which business rules and guidelines for the VMP standard are to be included in the Floricode TestCentre; the software of participants will need to comply with these standards (minimum requirements).
- g. In order to deploy a new version of the VMP standard, participants in the Community must test their application with the Floricode TestCentre in order to obtain a 'Statement of Conformity' for the relevant version of the VMP standard.
- h. The Community Manager acts as mediator in case of disputes between members involving the implementation and interpretation of Business Rules, etc.
- i. Floricode communicates on behalf of the Community to the user group and other stakeholders concerning the publication (of new versions) of documentation or the VMP standard.

5. Handling of issues and RFCs by the Community

- a. Members can submit issues and RFCs to the Community Manager.
- b. The Community Manager manages the secretariat and logs the issues and RFCs submitted.
- c. RFCs are published on the RFC page of the Floricode website.
- d. Community members can receive alerts via a RSS feed regarding changes/reports on the RFC page.
- e. The contact person will, at Floricode's request, provide the necessary answers to questions, as well as information on the suitability of the standard in practice.
- f. A workgroup can be set up consisting of active members out of the Community and the Community manager to handle the issues and RFCs.
- g. Such a workgroup has the following tasks:
 - a. Handle issues submitted regarding the use of the VMP standards in practice;
 - b. Handle the RFCs submitted;
 - c. Make proposals regarding changes and revisions to the documentation and the standard;
 - d. Decide about changes and adjustments in the documentation of the standard
 - e. Evaluate the new version of the documentation and the standard;
 - f. Submit the new version of the documentation and the standard to the WGS for approval;
- h. Decisions made by the working group are:
 - a. Confirmed as a practical solution or directive and/or;
 - b. Incorporated into a new version of the relevant VMP documentation and/or;
 - c. Submitted as official RFC for the VMP standard.
- i. Depending on the subjects, the composition of the workgroup may be modified out of members from the whole VMP Community.
- j. Reports and other information from the workgroup will be published for the whole VMP Community on the VMP Community webpage on Floricode's SDK website.
- k. Speed is essential for the Community; for this reason, practical solutions and guidelines are prioritized over official RFCs and an official new version of the VMP standard, provided there is general approval among the community and provided these serve the collective interest.

6. Decision-making

Proposals from the Community are assessed by the Floricode Working Group on Standards (WGS). This applies to, for example, activities to be carried out by Floricode for the Community. The WGS evaluates proposals and applications on the basis of the standardization policy adopted (CLF model etc.), as well as their usefulness and urgency for the sector and importance in relation to other priorities. The WGS provides its opinion to the management of Floricode. Additional and revised versions of the VMP standards are submitted to the Working Group on Standards on behalf of the Community. After confirmation, the relevant documentation will be officially published and this will be communicated to stakeholders by Floricode.