

PRODUCT PLATFORM STRATEGIES

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planned so that a number of derivative products can be efficiently created from the foundation of common core technology. We call this foundation of core technology the "product platform," which is *a set of subsystems and interfaces that form a common structure from which a stream of derivative products can be efficiently developed and produced*. A platform approach to product development dramatically reduces manufacturing costs and provides significant economies in the procurement of components and materials because so many of these are shared between individual products. Perhaps as important, the building blocks of product platforms can be integrated with *new* components to rapidly address new market opportunities.

An outstanding example of a product platform architecture that has been constantly renewed with improved technologies to upgrade particular subsystems may be found in Hewlett Packard's ink jet printers (see Figure 1). This platform design, created for the original Deskjet printer, has remained largely constant through successive generations of