



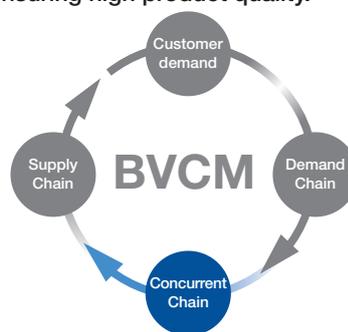
We take customer opinions as the starting point of our business activities and deliver products and services that meet customer needs.

## Concurrent Chain: the stage of creating value

The Brother Group practices an original management system called the “Brother Value Chain Management” (BVCM), and delivers superior products and services to customers based on the “At your side.” spirit.

In the Concurrent Chain of BVCM, the product concepts created in the Demand Chain are given a concrete shape. Product simulations and focus group testing by intended users are run again and again before and after prototyping. Through this process, we develop and design our products speedily while ensuring high product quality.

The production engineering department designs optimal production lines to deliver our products at the right time for our customers. Respective departments concurrently work toward the commercialization of products while sharing information with each other to swiftly address customer needs with our products.



### Case Example Development of printers which small-office users all over the world can use without stress

Based on customer demands received and a thorough analysis of our competitors’ products, we formulated the product concept of “black-and-white laser printers which small-office users all over the world can use with no stress.”

Demands from customers across the world vary, including high-speed printing, high-capacity toner cartridges, multipurpose trays, and printing in hot and humid conditions. To embody these demands, we decided to newly develop 14 key element technologies and also launched a working group composed of only several members to concurrently develop these technologies and make swift examinations and decisions. These efforts helped to incorporate user-friendliness into the process of the development. Employees who did not belong to development departments also joined and supported the working group and conducted many operability tests with the aim of developing products that satisfy customers.

Adding those many functions in a compact body, a strength of Brother’s existing models, was a challenge. To solve this challenge, the working group downsized the basic mechanism of Brother’s standard models and optimized its position to create a new space inside a product body, and designed a high-capacity toner cartridge and a functional unit for a multipurpose tray which fit into that space. They thus succeeded in developing models that have new functions and are yet compact in size. Although the compact body with many additional features required a more effective cooling system than that equipped with the existing models, the working group was able to develop an effective one by running visualized air flow simulations in cooperation with related departments. This system enabled continuous full-speed printing under high temperature and humidity conditions.



Operability test



Visualized air flows