

SolidWorks and the 3DEXPERIENCE Platform

CIMdata Commentary

Key takeaways:

- *Dassault Systèmes' strategy is clear—make value extensions, additional solutions, and capabilities offered by the 3DEXPERIENCE Platform available to the SolidWorks' community*
- *SolidWorks Mechanical Conceptual and SolidWorks Industrial Conceptual significantly enhance the SolidWorks community's ability to collaboratively develop conceptual and industrial designs with partners and for internal product development teams*
- *These new solutions offer capabilities that can provide significant benefit, especially during collaborative product development efforts*

The 16th annual SolidWorks World conference was held January 26-29, 2014 at the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, California, USA. A large and enthusiastic crowd of approximately 5,600 SolidWorks users cheerfully attended the conference in sunny San Diego, where the average daily temperature (according to Google) is a comfortable 70.5° F (21.4° C). Given that much of North America has been dealing with one Arctic blast after another, it felt much warmer; perhaps this was one of the reasons why the crowd was so cheerful.

Like past SolidWorks World conference's, Mr. Bertrand Sicot, CEO, SolidWorks, Dassault Systèmes kicked off the event. His message was simple, but powerful—"Inspired people create inspired designs." This message would be echoed many times by the speakers who followed. Mr. Sicot emphasized how SolidWorks had grown from one product to a portfolio of innovative products over the years. He commented that there are now 2.3 million SolidWorks users globally and that SolidWorks Electrical, introduced in August 2012, has been the fastest growing solution that SolidWorks has ever released. More importantly, at least in CIMdata's opinion, he focused on a number of 3DEXPERIENCE Platform solutions that are being made available or are already available to the SolidWorks community—SolidWorks Composer, SolidWorks Mechanical Conceptual, and SolidWorks Industrial Conceptual—the last two being announced by Mr. Sicot. Mr. Bernard Charlès, CEO of Dassault Systèmes, further expanded on Dassault Systèmes' 3DEXPERIENCE Platform offerings targeted at the SolidWorks' community by illustrating the use of the Exalead OnePart search-based application and how it can help enable reuse of parts, designs, specifications, standards, and other product related data for multiple business activities, including engineering, manufacturing, and procurement activities.

Dassault Systèmes' strategy is clear—make value extensions, additional solutions, and capabilities offered by the 3DEXPERIENCE Platform available to the SolidWorks' community. A few years ago there was a significant disturbance in the community when many believed that Dassault Systèmes was interested in replacing their beloved SolidWorks with a new cloud-based platform, one based on Dassault Systèmes' 3D modeler—Convergence Geometric Modeler (CGM). Based on recent actions, it appears that Dassault Systèmes is more interested in extending the 3DEXPERIENCE Platform to the SolidWorks community and continuing to significantly enhance SolidWorks' capabilities and ease of use, rather than replacing the community's much-loved solution. Things are changing, as Mr. Charlès noted during his keynote, the age of experience is upon us, we have moved beyond 3D and digital

mockup (DMU), the world of making products is changing, the Internet of Things is emerging, and Dassault Systèmes is moving forward and providing new solutions that allow its clients to innovatively develop inspired designs.

The introduction of SolidWorks Mechanical Conceptual and SolidWorks Industrial Conceptual significantly enhance the SolidWorks community's ability to collaboratively develop conceptual and industrial designs with partners and throughout internal product development teams. It will be interesting to follow the speed at which the SolidWorks' user community adopts these new socially-oriented, CGM-based conceptual design solutions. The SolidWorks user community is well adapted to using an individually focused, individually priced and purchased design solution, but not necessarily a cloud-based, monthly subscription-based (\$290/month list price) one. Given the lighthouse companies Dassault Systèmes has engaged, some of which presented at the conference, a number of the use cases are clear, but only time will tell if the community is ready in significant numbers to make some fundamental changes to the way their designers interact. CIMdata believes that these solutions offer capabilities that can provide significant benefit, especially during collaborative efforts with customers, development partners and suppliers as well as within distributed design teams, but in the past, adoption of similar social product development solutions have been slow.

As with past SolidWorks World conferences, the keynotes were followed up by a series of notable presenters. This year was no different. A few of note included: Mr. Hugh Herr, the head of Biomechatronics Research at MIT's Media Lab; Mr. Jonathan Tippett from the eatART Foundation (an education charity that fosters art research and energy awareness); Mr. Geoff Bodine and Mr. Bob Cuneo representing the Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project (developer of the 2014 US Olympic bobsled); and Professors Max Lizarraga and Miranda Jerry from Mt. San Antonio College, where the Certified SolidWorks Associate certification test is the final exam. These were all inspirational stories that highlighted a few of the inspired designs being produced by SolidWorks users.

The conference also included demonstrations of recently launched SolidWorks portfolio solutions, including 3D CAD, Simulation, Product Data Management, Technical Communication, and Electrical Design. The break out sessions offered customer stories from multiple industries ranging from industrial art and medical devices to consumer electronics and renewable energy solutions. The conference's 5,600 attendees also had the option of attending sessions that showcased, as stated by Dassault Systèmes, "...modeling essentials, design automation, productivity applications and other topics designed to help users work faster and be more efficient." The event also offered more than 200 technical training sessions, many of which included hands on time, and a sizable "Partner Pavilion," which featured more than 100 hardware and software providers who work with SolidWorks (e.g., PLM and PDM solution providers, implementation partners, manufacturers or 3D printers, compute platforms, CAM solution providers, and others).

In the end the message was clear, Dassault Systèmes' 3DEXPERIENCE Platform is available to the SolidWorks community and solutions are being delivered that can add additional value to the companies that adopt them. We have no doubt that additional capabilities will be exposed to this sizable and growing community at next year's conference.

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