

AVEVA World Summit: Focus on the Digital Asset

CIMdata Commentary

Key takeaways:

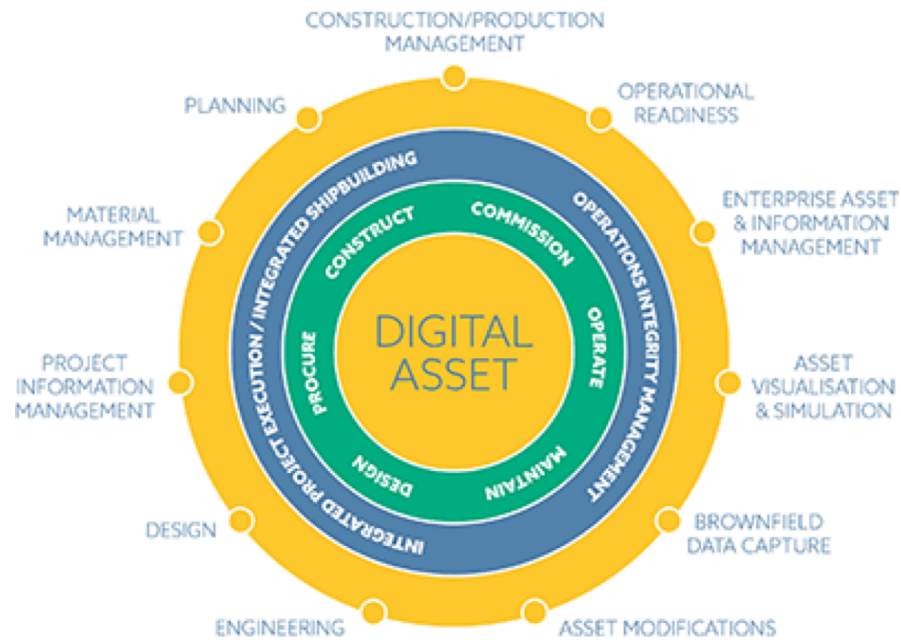
- *The AVEVA World Summit drew a global audience of senior leaders and decision makers from the AEC and shipbuilding industries*
- *AVEVA has made great progress on their AVEVA Everything 3D™ (E3D) offering, and now claim over 170 customers*
- *AVEVA also demonstrated exciting new cloud and mobile technology to help their customers build and leverage their “Digital Asset,” a central concept in AVEVA’s vision, messaging, and offerings*

CIMdata was pleased to attend the AVEVA World Summit in Berlin, Germany on October 16-18, 2014. AVEVA is one of the AEC market leaders tracked by CIMdata in our annual PLM Market Analysis Report series. The AVEVA World Summit is a business meeting focused on influencers and decision makers, with presentations by AVEVA and selected customers. This Summit attracted over 300 delegates; 61% from EMEA, 29% from Asia-Pacific, and only 10% from the Americas. Nearly 80% were managers or higher level, so key stakeholders and decision makers were well represented.

Richard Longdon, AVEVA’s CEO, kicked off the event and provided the context for much of what followed. He asked the audience to consider the problems facing their industry: increasing production costs relative to oil and gas output, margins under more scrutiny by customers, the need to be more agile to meet demand, and knowledge loss from an aging workforce (e.g., the average age of a U.S. oil and gas worker is 50). Imagine being asked to reduce both time and cost, an increasingly common request in these economically challenged times. According to Mr. Longdon, AVEVA’s solution must help their customers overcome complexity, while providing a unified information source they call the “Digital Asset,” which is at the heart of everything their customers do. This concept, as shown in the figure below, helps AVEVA position the asset lifecycle, AVEVA’s various solutions, and how those offerings serve their major constituents: Engineering, Procurement, and Construction companies (EPCs); Owner-Operators (O-Os); and Shipbuilders. This graphic was everywhere and used in nearly every AVEVA presentation to reinforce the message. Many of the graphics in the meeting rooms and on digital screens around the venue repeated the message, providing additional details on how customers might use combinations of AVEVA solutions to address common business problems. Driving home a message is critical to good marketing and this approach worked well.

The various talks from leading customers and AVEVA staff showed how the AVEVA solutions support this concept, to the benefit of their customers and various asset stakeholders. In the opening keynote, Colin K. Fairweather, Applied Technology Director (Europe) at AMEC, a large EPC customer, got right to it with his talk “Digital Asset – Myth or Reality?” While he had some criticisms, most of his comments were positive, and it was clear that AMEC relies on significant elements of the AVEVA portfolio and is rapidly introducing more into their work processes. Mr. Fairweather would like more support from AVEVA in the conceptual design phase and for vendor data collection since 50% of documents on their large projects come from vendors. His conclusion: the digital asset is not a myth, and is almost a reality.

One reality that AVEVA and their competitors must confront is a highly heterogeneous computing environment. RasGas, a Qatari liquid natural gas (LNG) company, claimed “data is



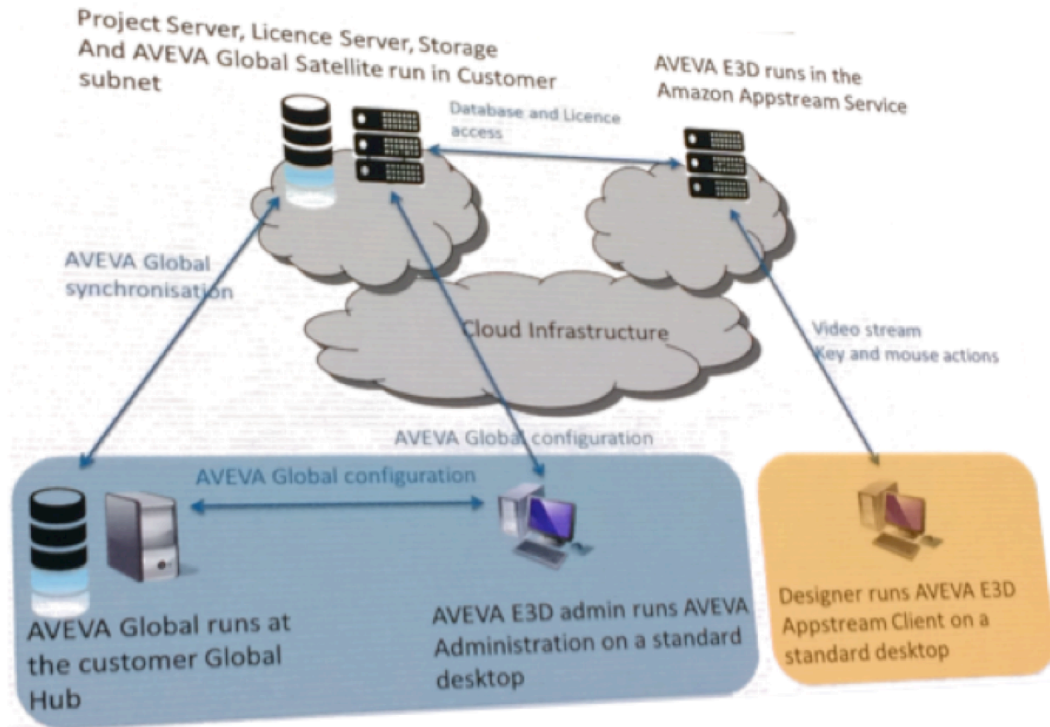
AVEVA's Digital Asset Messaging
(Courtesy of AVEVA)

the new oil,” and while they seek a “single source of trust,” their computing environment includes AVEVA offerings, SAP, Documentum, SharePoint, and many homegrown systems. In this IT complexity they are not that different from companies in the broader PLM market.

Large user events are often where new solutions are introduced, and AVEVA did not disappoint. In fact, they held the session by Dave Wheeldon, their CTO, early during the first day to get more feedback from the crowd. In January 2013 AVEVA announced their AVEVA Everything 3D (E3D) offering and now claim more than 170 customers. AVEVA has also made great progress with their AVEVA Activity Visualization Platform, based on gaming technology, which they introduced in September 2013. (PLM leaders like Dassault Systèmes and Siemens PLM Software have used this approach to great effect.) The main stage boasted a huge high-resolution display, perfect for showing off their products. The highly complex ocean platform model used in the demonstrations, provided by Shell, a big AVEVA customer, was impressive and illustrated the strong performance for doing common visualization functions, like zoom, pan, and sectioning. AVEVA also showed how laser point cloud scan data, from their LFM software, can be readily combined with 3D CAD data to provide true “design in context” for brownfield efforts, an essential capability for many customers.

This year the big announcements focused on new ways to implement and use these offerings. AVEVA has been working with Microsoft (Azure) and Amazon Web Services (AWS) for several years, looking to bring their offerings to the cloud. AVEVA demonstrated their work with AWS using Amazon AppStream, a “flexible, low-latency service that lets you stream resource-intensive applications from the cloud.”¹ This small download (about 7 MB for

¹ <http://aws.amazon.com/appstream/>



Combining AVEVA E3D On-Premise and Cloud
(Courtesy of AVEVA)

Windows) effectively puts the app inside the user's Web browser. AVEVA showed a side-by-side comparison with their existing desktop virtualization software and the performance was impressive. Eventually they said they could offer the whole AVEVA suite this way. Of course, this is not a native cloud app, but as long as the performance is good and security concerns are addressed, users will not care. This approach also lets AVEVA readily combine on-premise and cloud users across the value chain, as suggested in the figure above. This is still the early days and there is much work to do, but they claimed to have started with the hardest problem first. How to handle customizations in their cloud instance is another big issue, one they are just beginning to investigate. AVEVA has two beta customers lined up and are looking for more input. CIMdata believes AVEVA's approach has merit, helping to address many user concerns while supporting the on-premise/cloud mix that exists in companies today.

The other impressive demonstration focused on touch screens and a new UI code-named Voyager. The AVEVA booth sported a large touch screen display (from Microsoft) that was deployed on stage as well. Anyone with a smartphone or tablet knows that touch is everywhere. What we also know is that our personal devices spoil us: touch response has to be almost immediate. It took them some time in development, but the AVEVA team showed how touch-based manipulations were immediately reflected when mirrored on the big screen. Then they added support for point clouds, a must for brownfield developments. AVEVA NET provides access to all of the managed data, and now touch provides a new opportunity to put "information at your fingertips." The Voyager UI does indeed let your fingers do the walking through multiple layers of information, quickly served up in context. This new UI was clean and very responsive, and it provides a visual cockpit for both novice and expert users. The AVEVA team suggested that a large touchscreen might prove valuable on the job site, as a

central information hub for the digital asset. CIMdata believes this to be the case because it has observed similar techniques being used in a few manufacturing facilities today.

What should we make of all this? AVEVA's customers have a large set of complex problems. Unlike the use of many PLM applications, the designer, builder, end user, and maintainer may be different organizations that must each contribute to the digital asset, and must rely on it as well. When realized, the digital asset could provide that "single source of truth," or "single source of trust," mentioned by customers as needed to support their collaborative efforts across the asset lifecycle. Based on CIMdata's discussions with customers at the event, AVEVA is delivering on that vision. In many ways they are ahead of their customers with their cloud and mobile work, but not by much. Having a good IT partner with a vision that can pull your organization along is the goal for many companies, in this market or others. If AVEVA continues delivering and providing needed value, then their digital asset will truly be at the core of their customers' products, powering their efforts and helping deliver superior value to their customers' stakeholders.

About CIMdata

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