

Siemens PLM Software's Components Conference: A Critic's Perspective

CIMdata Commentary

Key takeaways:

- *Third party software solution providers attest to their reliance on Siemens PLM Software's technology components, such as Parasolid*

After fighting some brutal rush hour traffic in the greater Boston area on October 11, 2016, I breathed a sigh of relief and took my seat at the first Siemens PLM Components Conference in Boston's trendy Aloft Seaport hotel to see Mr. John Whetstone, Director of Product Management and Marketing at Siemens PLM Software welcome a select audience of attendees. While most software product conferences target end users, this unique gathering focused on the technical and business leadership of solution providers that build and deliver those products—software products, built using Siemens PLM Software's components.

Just looking around the room, I concluded it was a potential paradise for anyone seeking possible employment with an innovative, high tech PLM or BIM solution provider. The room was peppered with industry notables representing some of the leading mechanical and architectural, engineering, and construction (AEC) providers from around the world. I anticipated that conference breaks would be very interesting, networking with the range of attendees from North America, Europe, and Asia.

To kick off the conference, Mr. Whetstone introduced Mr. Jim Rusk, Senior Vice President, and CTO of Siemens PLM Software. Mr. Rusk delivered a keynote address setting the tone and spoke of the technology forces driving product and process innovations around the globe. His message resonated with the audience in that each of them faced the challenge of those same technology forces in their own companies and products. They all need to deal with the dramatic emergence of the Internet of Things (IoT) and a 300% increase of connected devices over the past five years. The cloud and mobile technology are proliferating and forging new business models. 3D printing technology is revolutionizing the product development and manufacturing process. Toss in the advances in knowledge automation and advanced robotics—and the impact on both the technical and business process directions all these companies face, as well as their customers, is daunting.

Mr. Rusk's advice was summed up as: "Software solutions must rapidly comprehend and adapt to technological transformations in order to drive innovations." And what better way than to leverage existing, world class foundational components in 3D modeling, constraint solving, path planning, interoperability, and graphics. Many of the day's speakers attested to their software solution's reliance on Siemens components and being able to focus on delivering their own brand of application expertise.

Next, Mr. David Mitchell, Siemens PLM Software's CTO of Cloud Services, took center stage to expound on a myriad of innovation approaches and the impact of cloud technology. The variations were somewhat mind boggling, proving that today's entrepreneurs were trying a vast number of strategic ways to deliver value. The most eye opening topic he addressed was the "Unicorn Club" of companies—software companies started since 2011 that are now valued at over \$1 billion by public or private market investors.

The day continued with presentations from a range of industry leaders such as Mr. Jon Hirschtick, Founder and Chairman of Onshape, Mr. James Dagg, CTO at Altair, Mr. Jon

Stevenson, Senior Vice President of Global Software, Stratasys, and Mr. Sean Flaherty, Chief Strategy Officer of Nemetschek. Each discussed their company's products and technology in the context of today's driving trends. One was struck by the challenge of weaving all the varied technologies together into an innovation solution that would meet customer expectations. At the end of the day, it was apparent to me that while the richness of any one technology component be it for 3D geometry, graphics, or constraint solving was important, the interplay between components and application domain expertise was critical for a successful solution.

Siemens PLM Software's leadership in the components market and the dynamic content of this first PLM Components conference showcased that interplay. Going forward, I see the significant role it can play to help shape the future of PLM and BIM solutions.

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