SolidWorks 2013 Launch Event

CIMdata Commentary

Key takeaways:

- *SolidWorks 2013 contains significant enhancements.*
- *eDrawings is now available on the iPad.*
- *SolidWorks is not being rearchitected at this time.*

SolidWorks held a launch event for the 2013 version of its flagship SolidWorks CAD solution set on 6 September 2012. The event was attended by a number of analysts and press members who cover CAD and related topics. In addition to functional updates and fixes to SolidWorks itself, the announcement included the introduction of a number of new features and capabilities included in SolidWorks 2013, as well as a pre-announcement of a new product from the company.

Highlighted additions to SolidWorks that were presented include:

- Addition of true conic curves.
- Surface texture mapping using the computer's GPU to increase mapping performance.
- Use of multi-core processors to improve speed when generating drawing views, processing multiple views on a drawing in different cores.
- Perform analyses (meshing and simulation) on local "parts" of an object and allow selective re-meshing of part of a model.
- A web-based administrative tool that monitors users' computers to provide administrators with information on performance of users' hardware, users' system configurations, failed sessions (and what failed), how well CAD users are following company design standards, and other factors that affect users' productivity.
- eDrawings markups can be viewed directly in SolidWorks.

New products that were introduced include: SolidWorks Plastics, SolidWorks Electrical, and eDrawings for iPad.

SolidWorks Plastics is intended to support both designers of molds and of molded parts, providing injection part and mold design, as well as validation of both plastic parts and molds. It is a simulation-based product and helps part designers with information on part filling, weld line analysis, air trap discovery, and appropriate gate locations. For mold designers and moldmakers it provides guidance on filling stages, multi-cavity mold layout, and runner placement.

SolidWorks Electrical provides a BOM that combines electrical and mechanical components. It helps product designers in three areas: 1) Electrical designers can work with 2D schematics. 2) Mechanical designers can see electrical information in the context of their mechanical design, create wire harness paths, and can view 3D models of electrical parts to help with interference detection. 3) People who do both electrical and mechanical design can use the Pro version to do all of what is included in both 1) and 2).

eDrawings for iPad provides all of the standard eDrawings features, including model and drawing viewing, examination, and markup from the mobile iPad..

Perhaps the most interesting and least understood announcement built on past hints of a new product. There has been much speculation that SolidWorks was going to replace the SolidWorks CAD software with a new version rebuilt on a kernel other than Parasolid. However, Mr. Bertrand Sicot, SolidWorks' CEO announced that the new product will be complimentary to SolidWorks—not a replacement. It will be targeted at conceptual mechanical design needs and allow data to be moved to SolidWorks for detailed design. The product, apparently not yet named, is targeted to be available in May of 2013.

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