

Siemens and Autodesk Team Up and Users Win

CIMdata Highlight

On 1 March 2016, Siemens PLM Software and Autodesk jointly announced they will take steps to improve interoperability between their respective product lifecycle management (PLM) software solutions. In the agreement the companies state they will “share toolkit technology and exchange end-user software applications to build and market interoperable products.” They did not specify which software, but by providing access to their respective toolkits each company will have available the other’s official programming interfaces to read and write native data files. While not groundbreaking, since most solution suppliers already reverse engineer data access, the sharing of official interfaces should result in solutions built on more stable and upgradeable data interoperability. CIMdata welcomes this cooperation and views it as indicative of a growing acknowledgement by solution providers that their clients live in a multi-CAD, multi-solution world.

By exchanging end-user applications, Siemens and Autodesk hope to improve on the larger issue found in geometric modeling software. Namely, competing geometry implementations interpret and use the exact same data differently in their base algorithms. One solution may use a hard coded tolerance value in an iterative computation; another may solve the same calculation using a very different algorithm—resulting in slightly different answers. Both data and the software that uses that data are necessary to test and improve true interoperability.

The industry is changing. For decades, solution providers have used their proprietary databases as defensive weapons to keep their client base captive, making it difficult to fully translate existing data files between disparate applications. While numerous data exchange solutions provided by third-parties and the CAD solution providers themselves have eased the burden somewhat, data exchange has remained a nagging problem. CIMdata believes that the revitalization of direct modeling techniques in CAD together with the evolution of technology platforms upon which PLM solutions are now being built has fostered the need for cooperation. Today, no one solution provider can expect to isolate themselves and their solutions and still provide the flexibility in design applications that users require. CIMdata believes Siemens PLM Software and Autodesk are showing true leadership in the evolving landscape of open platform PLM solutions.

About CIMdata

CIMdata, an independent worldwide firm, provides strategic management consulting to maximize an enterprise’s ability to design and deliver innovative products and services through the application of Product Lifecycle Management (PLM). CIMdata provides world-class knowledge, expertise, and best-practice methods on PLM. CIMdata also offers research, subscription services, publications, and education through international conferences. To learn more about CIMdata’s services, visit our website at <http://www.CIMdata.com> or contact CIMdata at: 3909 Research Park Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, USA. Tel: +1 734.668.9922. Fax: +1 734.668.1957; or at Oogststraat 20, 6004 CV Weert, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 (0) 495.533.666.