

Siemens' Active Workspace – PLM Next Big Thing?

PLM is a lot of lifecycle. It is a very important characteristic of PLM to support product access the multiple lifecycle phases. As a result of this PLM forced to be focused on integration. The nature of PLM to live between all other enterprise systems in manufacturing organization. How many times you've seen a slide presenting PLM capturing product from early requirement phases and until final disposal. Over the past few years, I've seen the trend of PLM vendors to delivery more vertically integrated systems. It was demanded by customers, since it answered on the requests to integrate multiple enterprise products and information. About a month ago, I posted Total Integration and the Future of PLM (<http://beyondplm.com/2011/08/12/total-integration-and-the-future-of-plm/>). This blog post resonated. You can see a long history of discussion came together with this blog. It was clear to me "integration" became a key word.

Dassault System was a company that experimented with the vertical integration too. Coming with their revolutionary V6 release and 3DLive concept, Dassault introduced the environment "pulling dots" together. You can find corresponded materials on YouTube (like this (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8SXWCYmIMY>)) presenting how V6/3DLive supposed to provide a complete integrated working environment.

I first heard about Siemens PLM plan to deliver so called HD-PLM and HD-3D environment last year. I've seen examples of HD-3D. I liked a clean UI. However, I've seen some correspondence between ideas of 3DLive and HD-3D. Here is my blog about it from the last year – 3DLive, HD-3D, 3D UI and Efficiency (<http://beyondplm.com/2010/07/27/3dlive-3dhd-3d-ui-and-efficiency/>).

Earlier this year, I started to get some information about Siemens PLM plan to deliver something called – Active Work Space. E The first time I've heard about it was a blog by Desktop Engineering called- Siemens PLM Connection: Clues to Active Workspace (http://www.deskeng.com/virtual_desktop/?p=3653). It was interesting enough. I noted the following passage:

"What we're trying to do," said Bruce Feldt, Siemens PLM Software's VP of Open Tools, "is to provide access to information, that complex PLM information, though a transcendent user interface …"

The end product, revealed Feldt, "is intended to be a new client [with which] PLM workers of all classes will start their work day. Active Workspace will know who the workers are, what's on their work list, what kind of things they're working on. It's all centered around the notion of improved decision-making … It is a search-based application. Do not consider it as a search engine … the user interface has to be very simple to use … it's a highly visual environment. Going through lists of texts, product structures, and information presented in hierarchical ways is useful, but we think if we present them in a more visual way, it would be more useful and easier to understand."

Below is a slide from the presentation shows what Active Workspace is and what is it NOT.

What Active Workspace IS	What it is NOT
a search-based client application	a search engine
a highly visual environment	an authoring application
capable of text- and shape-based search	
for collaboration	
for navigating complex PLM relationships	
a single entry-point to	
frequently accessed databases	

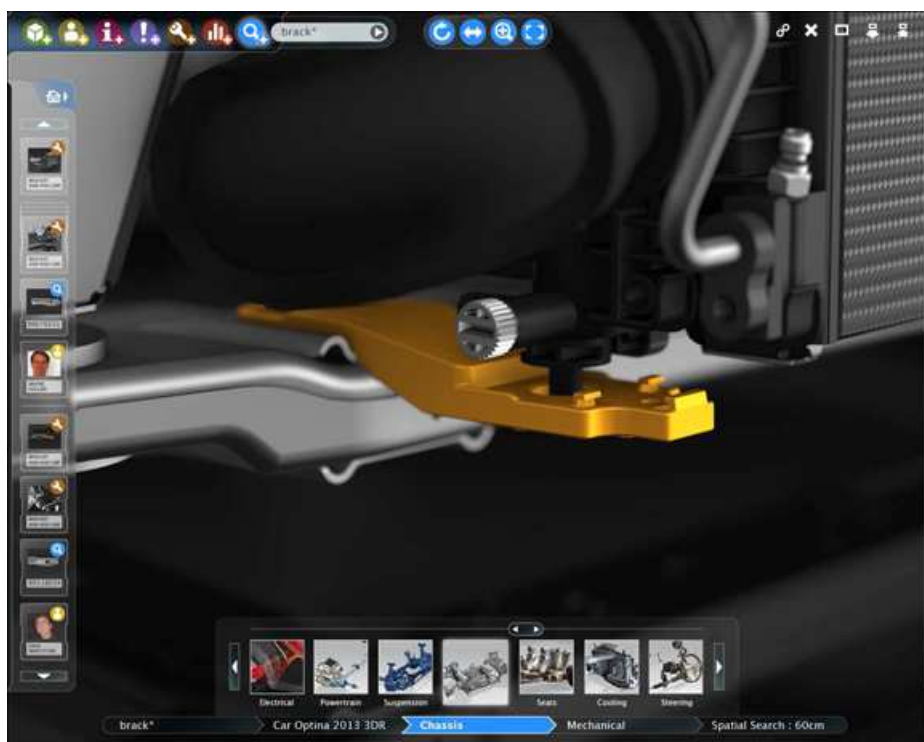
Snippets of info on Siemens PLM Software's upcoming product, Active Workspace.

(<http://beyondplm.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/what-is-siemens-plm-active-workspace.png>)

Another piece of information about Active Workspace came later this year from Siemens PLM conference. Jim Brown of TechClarity was talking about HD-PLM and Active Workspace in his blog post – [Siemens PLM: Progress Report 2011](http://tech-clarity.com/clarityonplm/2011/siemens-progress-2011/) (<http://tech-clarity.com/clarityonplm/2011/siemens-progress-2011/>). Here is the quote from Jim's post (<http://tech-clarity.com/clarityonplm/2011/siemens-progress-2011/>):

HD-PLM – This is where “smarter decisions” becomes real. The most tangible progress here is with Active Work Space (AWS). Active Work Space is a central solution for Siemens PLM that aims to bring all of the information, tools, and product context together in one place for a user. This holistic view of the product is intended to serve as the central location that decision makers access product information and the tools to create and share it. One of the key points Siemens makes is that this should put all of the tools Chuck talks about above in the context of the product and the decisions being made. At a minimum, it simplifies the view into the products for a user and provides a fresh interface to the PLM solution suite. Over time, this has the potential to develop into much more (I will share more of that as plans are made public).

Finally, Kenneth Wong of Desktop Engineering published an article earlier last week – [Siemens PLM: Active Workspace in code...](http://www.deskeng.com/virtual_desktop/?p=4315&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=siemens-plm-software-active-workspace-in-code-solid-edge-free-for-students) (http://www.deskeng.com/virtual_desktop/?p=4315&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=siemens-plm-software-active-workspace-in-code-solid-edge-free-for-students) where he placed the following picture previewing future Active Workspace UI. According to information provided by Kenneth, Active Workspace supposed to come later in November.



(<http://beyondplm.com/wp->

[content/uploads/2011/09/Siemens-PLM-ActiveWS.jpg](#)

What is my conclusion? I think, vertical integration and decision-making are two important trends in PLM these days. Ultimately, PLM value prop is going more and more towards “smarter product decisions”. The only way to have a smarter decision is to provide a complete and efficient tool connecting information to be used by decision makers. I sort of like Siemens PLM Active Workspace idea. However, obviously, I have many questions not answered. Cost of implementation and openness to other tools in manufacturing organization are two most important. In my view, customers' demands are towards cheaper tools and faster implementation timelines. Is it achievable? I don't know... I didn't find information about how to Siemens is planning to implement Active Workspace. Hope to see it in the future. These are just my thoughts and guesses...

Best, Oleg

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2 Responses to *Siemens' Active Workspace – PLM Next Big Thing?*

Aurelien Blaha says:

[September 30, 2011 at 8:53 am](#)

Hi Oleg, nice article. Just wanted to mention there's a dead link in the second paragraph, should be <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8SXWCYmIMY>, not <http://youtube.com/w/?v=i8SXWCYmIMY>. Cheers.

olegshilovitsky says:

[September 30, 2011 at 8:34 pm](#)

Aurelien, thanks for notice about the link. I fixed that. tell me if this is okay. -Oleg

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