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SIMATIC IT Manufacturing Excellence Days for Life Sciences 2011

Siemens and Microsoft recently held the SIMATIC IT Manufacturing Excellence Days Toulouse France. The event attracted around 150 participants.

Ralf-Michael Franke, CEO of Siemens Automation Systems, reassured the audience that his role as CEO of the Drives Technology division as of April 1st, will not affect the Siemens MES strategy. He said Siemens' president Mr. Loescher is committed to innovative software solutions to improve client's profitability. IT in conjunction with automation is a big trend; in particular software in product and process definition and the fast and efficient transfer of definitions to manufacturing. The economic pressure in life sciences plus challenges in regulation and adaptation to social and market changes require more efficiency as a response from the industry.

Expecting to relieve some of this and pressures across industry sectors, Siemens invests hundreds of millions Euro in software, and this will be strengthened in the future. Mr Franke depicted a seamlessly integrated space of Siemens applications ranging from product and process definition, through operations management to automation and clearly indicated the company has no plans in providing enterprise resource management, in contrast to ERP players who intend to provide operations management software. Based on experience in implementing this space within IA's own plants, Mr. Franke underscores the fact that not only applications and systems need to collaborate but all and foremost people working with them. ARC strongly endorses this view.

The main take away for users and integrators is that the first phase of the program to port Elan's XFP to the SIMATIC IT platform is almost completed. An XFP user said he was satisfied that the functionality ported for the first release, planned for summer, contains more than initially announced. He mentioned while that migration from XFP to SIMATIC IT is to be defined, he is confident in the future. A second release will address other functionality. Jean-Pierre Amadio, head of MES Life Sciences confidently invited users and integrators to start projects with the beta releases of the software, and not to wait for the release. Under leadership of Richard Lasjunies, teams in Genoa and Toulouse have visibly worked with enthusiasm to make the vision real. A major step is the graphical workflow configuration engine, built on Microsoft's Workflow Foundation Server,



used for assessments during the project phase, in defining master batch records, and finally to execute the workflow. From a palette of activities, automated or manual, and control tasks such as conditional routing, the user chooses tasks for the workflow and connects them graphically. A good surprise was that the workflow engine is already integrated in SIMATIC IT R&D Suite for definition of preliminary process steps during specification management. These recipes can be imported and detailed in Production Suite.

The demonstrations were very convincing, ranging from native integration with Siemens batch automation, through creating master batch records graphically and real weighing operation, to operator guided execution, review and release. Also the demonstration of SIMATIC IT Intelligence Suite, an Enterprise Manufacturing Intelligence (EMI) solution, made an impression of ease of use and fast response when putting data in context into scorecards, and analyzing their trends and comparing them with a benchmark. The product makes use of recent Microsoft developments supporting software in manufacturing, such as SQL-Server Integration Server (SSIS), enabling Extract-Transform-and-Loading (ETL), and the SQL-Server OLAP engine for on-line data analysis.

Of the detail presentations, the highlights were Laurence Sauvetre's explanation of what it takes in terms of risk analysis and documentation of use cases, to come to a pre-validated, configurable software, that enables to use the GAMP V, category 4 validation procedure for validation, which is considerably simpler and cheaper than category 5 used for custom applications. Many details on the product, the life sciences and asset performance management libraries were given that the reader can find in ARC's White Paper

(http://www.automation.siemens.com/mcms/mes/en/industry/life_sciences/Pages/Default.aspx). Very to the point, it was mentioned that COMOS, the Siemens software for plant life cycle engineering have an installed base and experience in batch processes, and are well complemented by SIMATIC IT R&D Suite for product and process engineering. In this area, there is still potential for further analysis of use case and integration. Finally, using the graphical workflow engine in pre-project analysis to define workflows and documenting them, drawing upon libraries of standard use cases, complemented with custom cases made a very efficient impression. Reusing the workflows in configuring the application and doing part of the

validation work will show to be a considerable cost saver in project execution.

In conclusion, an impressive amount of work is materializing in an efficient and effective set of software, tools, methodologies and services for life science manufacturing and adjacent business processes.

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