

SAP-Centric EAM 2007 — A Great Time Was Had by All!

By Sid Snitkin, ARC Advisory Group

Simply put, last week's **SAP-Centric EAM 2007** conference in Huntington Beach, California (aka "Surf City, USA") was excellent. Close to 600 attendees, the majority being active SAP EAM users, shared experiences and learned about new developments during two information-packed days of keynotes and breakout sessions. Everyone this author spoke with felt they had learned something of value and had met some great people that they could draw upon for help after the event. This view was clearly universal, as evidenced by the rousing applause given to one track chairman who summarized the event with a parody of MasterCard's famous ads — Room at the Hyatt. \$214, Airfare from Cleveland. \$579, Conference fee for SAP-Centric EAM. \$1,695, Networking with all of you. Priceless!

Fulfilling the conference theme of "*Inspiring Individuals — Empowering Enterprises*" the event keynote speakers provided a blend of future trends, practical advice and inspiration for attendees to apply what they learned. SAP (Peter Goebbels, VP, Service and Asset Management, SAP AG; Len Harms, EAM Solution Manager; and Michael Wendell, VP Manufacturing Solutions, SAP Americas) kicked off the first day with two excellent keynotes outlining their future roadmap for EAM. Drawing upon an interesting model from Geoffrey Moore's "*Living on the Fault Line*", they explained how use of their Enterprise Services Architecture (ESA) will enable SAP to weave together product enhancements and partner solutions to satisfy two critical user needs: innovation through composition to enable top-line growth, and productivity and efficiency improvement through consolidation and standardization to drive bottom-line growth.

James McMahon, of **Shell Oil Products US**, presented the closing keynote for the first day and offered solid advice to attendees on how to improve their performance by "Socializing their EAM Solutions".

The author provided the morning keynote on the second day of the conference. I discussed ARC's Design, Operate, Maintain (DOM) view of Asset Management, the challenges created by "functional islands and archipelagos", the role that DOM Interoperability can play in resolving these issues and the current/future state of DOM Interoperability with respect to solutions and standards developments. Terry Wireman, VP **Vesta Partners** and a well-known author in the field of maintenance, closed the day with a very inspirational keynote presentation calling on all attendees to adopt the lessons learned by Jim Collins in his Best Seller, "*Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . and Other's Don't*".

Breakout sessions were another impressive aspect of the event for the author. This conference included five simultaneous tracks of interesting sessions during each day, covering six key areas of asset management including: EAM Process Efficiency Improvement; Maintenance Effectiveness & Reliability; Usability & Information Access; ROI From EAM Projects; Vendor Solutions; and SAP Solutions. Presentations were given by users, vendors and SAP personnel. They addressed both practical concerns in using SAP EAM as well as more general topics like analytics. The author attended several sessions and found them both interesting and helpful. I was particularly impressed by the free exchange of ideas between the speakers and the many users in attendance. (cont.)

Apparently, many attendees also took advantage of workshops before and after the official conference to improve their skills on SAP EAM solutions. And, sessions were offered for everyone — from beginners to power users.

Following the conference I had some discussions with the event producer, Steve Sinkoff, CEO of **Eventure Events**, to find out how they had achieved such an excellent blend of keynote presentations, breakout sessions and networking activities at this conference. Their explanation reflected the professionalism that I had seen in every aspect of the conference — they conducted focus groups to learn what people were really interested in, recruited the right track chairmen for these topics and then focused on making sure that the plans were executed flawlessly. No wonder that this conference has become the “must-attend event” for anyone involved with SAP’s Asset Management solutions. Using the same charge that several speakers offered to the attendees, the team that put this conference together should “Celebrate Your Success!”

I have already marked next year’s SAP-Centric EAM 2008 conference on my calendar and encourage you to do the same. And don’t wait! Attendance at this conference has grown substantially each year and I won’t be surprised to see next year being an early sellout.