

# ASPECT ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS

## TRADING MADE FASTER AND SMARTER



Brigette Gebhard



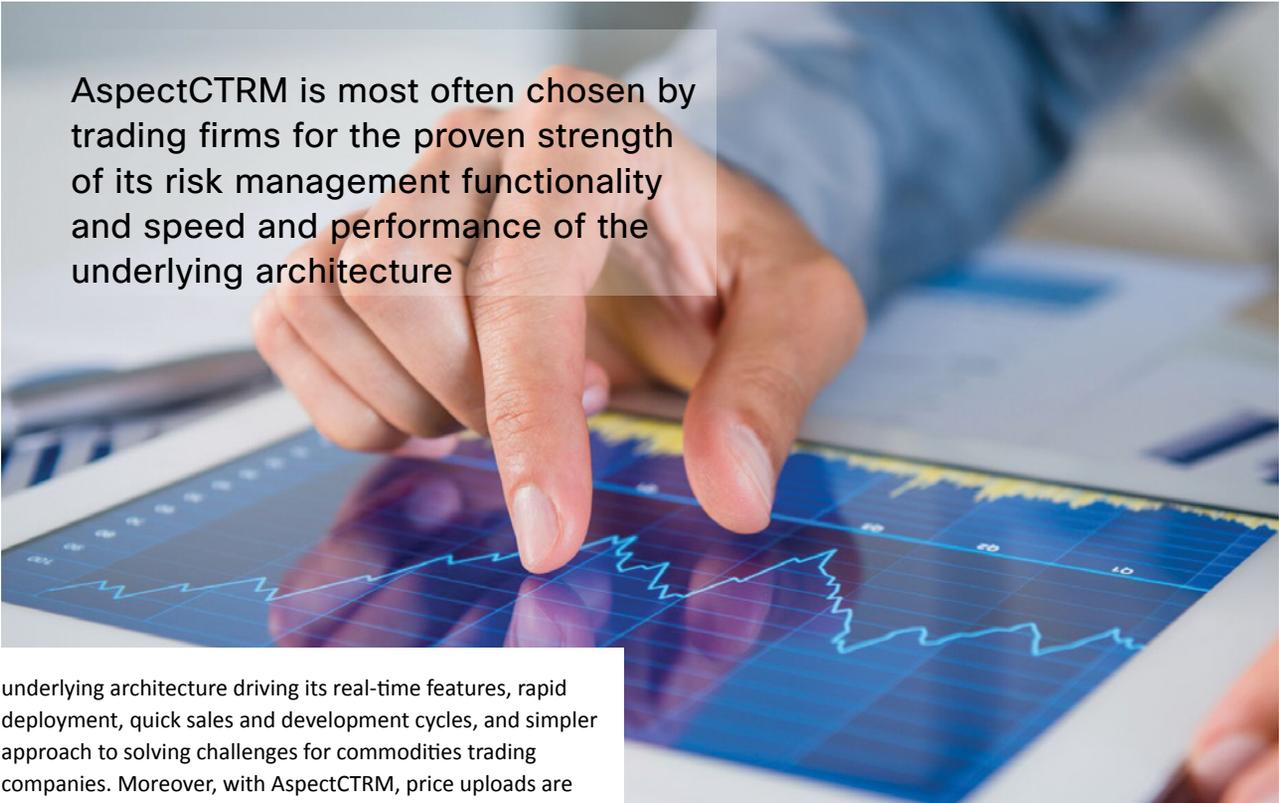
software due to the need for consultants and large IT teams to install, integrate, and maintain the hardware and software. With the advent of cloud, the timeline has reduced to a considerable extent, and much faster and better with the Houston-based Aspect Enterprise Solutions that deploys cloud-based trade management solutions in a matter of weeks through rapid deployment. It's the quickest "go-live" in the industry, offering the lowest total-cost-of-ownership (TCO).

About two decades ago, Aspect first introduced its AspectCTRM software-as-a-service (SaaS)—the only multi-commodity SaaS trade and risk management solution for energy and commodity traders, risk managers, operations staff, and back-office personnel. AspectCTRM is flexible and adapts to the functional needs of CEOs, traders, risk managers, operations managers and financial managers in the oil, refined products, metals, biofuels, coal, LPG and other bulk commodities sectors. It's deployed quickly out-of-the-box and expanded as requirements grow within an organization, allowing companies to solve challenges over time and as the needs of the company change.

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**S**uccess in trading requires real-time visibility of trade portfolios across global supply chains. To align the organizational strategies with today's fast-moving world, organizations have to quickly move away from spreadsheets to advanced

solutions for managing operations more efficiently and better understand risk exposure across their front, middle and back-offices. However, this transformation is not quite as easy as it seems. Most vendors can take more than eight months to years to deploy traditional client-server

A close-up photograph of a person's hand pointing at a tablet. The tablet screen displays a blue line chart with a grid, representing financial data. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a desk or office environment.

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underlying architecture driving its real-time features, rapid deployment, quick sales and development cycles, and simpler approach to solving challenges for commodities trading companies. Moreover, with AspectCTRM, price uploads are instant from the company's Market Data solution, eliminating the need to enter them manually. Price corrections by sources in the market are also automated, so trades are always accurate and in real time. The ability to continuously update profits and losses (P&L) after each deal is captured, and as markets change is precisely what makes AspectCTRM stand out from other commodity trade risk management software that don't run in real time. It also assists traders in making smart and informed deals.

"Cloud is our differentiator. Our features are the same as our competitors, but our technology is more modern, and our costs are lower," says Brigette Gebhard, Aspect's VP of Product Management and Marketing. Aspect's cloud solutions are always up to date. Customers get updates with new features and enhancements in every release, eradicating the need for a rebuild or "end of life" product and the burden to keep software current.

With a solution like Aspect, teams of professionals maintain a clear view of cash, profits, and product, which are critical to the trade process. The system powers through large volumes of data within AspectCTRM's suite of components: trade, risk, operations, finance—and across integrated disparate systems. In achieving this, Aspect's performance relies on an in-memory database, wherein the system holds data in the computer's memory instead of a disk. This enables the calculation of all positions and profits and losses (P&L) both in real time during the day and when closing books at the end of the trading day. In

a nutshell, memory is three orders of magnitude (1,000 times) faster than disk. It takes just seconds in contrast to the multiple hours required by other older solutions. The high-speed feature of an in-memory database also allows overcoming challenges in security, operational risk, regulatory requirements, and market and credit risk.

That's not all. Aspect also devises a faster route to customization. The company's innovative scripting tools allow continuous configuration, rather than costly, time-consuming code customization, which further allows for rapid response to user feedback, without altering the underlying instance of the software.

Midsized and regional energy and commodity companies were often the first adopters of the industry's first, fully integrated true cloud risk management solution. Today some of the largest companies in the world rely on Aspect. The company's development team is driven by a roadmap geared to enhance the functional and technical experience of all clients, not multiple instances of software geared to individual needs. And this is where Aspect's unique scripting language comes in. According to Brigette, "Our roadmap is focused on innovation and speed. We've always been out front beginning with the decision to develop a CTRM solution that was web-based when there was no such thing in the market. And performance is critical in trading, every millisecond counts when the buy or sell decisions made are worth millions of dollars." **EC**