

Aspect continues to build market momentum

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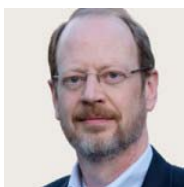
We visited this week with Aspect to get an update on some of their recent activities and developments as the company (which started as OILSpace) marks its 15th year in delivering cloud-based solutions to the energy and commodity trading markets. Brigette Gebhard, the company's VP of sales and marketing, noted that Aspect has signed a record number of customers this year for their trading and risk management solution, AsepectCTRM and continues to see the size of those deals increasing.

Though the company's products have traditionally been thought of as solutions for small to mid-size commodity traders, over the last few years Aspect has made significant investment in expanding the functional footprint of AspectCTRM. These new capabilities, combined with a growing market awareness of the company and its products, has seen Aspect now competing for, and winning, a number of deals in the upper-tier of the market, and across all major geographic markets, including the US, Europe and the AsiaPac region.

With a record number of new global-scale customers signed this year, Aspect is now competing with head-to-head with the largest vendors in the space. Among the wins this year are a couple of global chemicals manufacturers/marketers and several regional and global oil companies; and in a few of these deals, AspectCTRM has displaced incumbent systems from the top 5 vendors.

With the market's growing acceptance of cloud-based software for mission critical applications, Aspect recently rolled out their Any Cloud strategy – a new offering that adds the public cloud (which uses third party cloud providers such as Amazon, Microsoft and Google) as an optional choice of where Aspect's customers can host their CTRM platform and data and designate who manages their operations. This new option will undoubtedly prove popular as companies are increasingly concerned with having their data stored in particular geographies for various reasons.

Though falling energy and commodity prices have slowed the market for many of the CTRM vendors, with Aspect's traditional sweet-spot in the oil, oil products and petrochem markets, the company has actually benefited. These companies that utilize oil and products as feedstocks are seeing reduced costs and improved margins. With improving returns, they are seeking to upgrade their systems and software, and Aspect is increasingly on the shortlist for these deals. Ms. Gebhard did note that the markets in other commodities that they service, including ags and metals, have not been as robust – mirroring the results of most of the other CTRM vendors in those markets.



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About the Author: Mr. Reames possess a deep understanding of the energy and commodities markets, developed through hands-on experience and managerial oversight of energy and commodity operations, including exploration, production, gathering, plant and pipeline operations. Additionally, he has 5 years of energy commodity trading, transportation, and risk management experience with Hess Corp. (formally known as Amerada Hess), a Fortune 100 integrated energy marketing company. Over the last fifteen years, he has been focused primarily on information technology serving energy and commodity trading, marketing, and risk management. Prior to founding Commodity Technology Advisory, he led the CommodityPoint division of UtiliPoint International, providing expert CTRM market analysis and advisory services to dozens of clients in North America, Europe and the Asia/Pacific region.