

March 20, 2015

Aspect Broadens Its Focus: Successfully Expanding Into Metals And Agriculture

Global solutions provider, [Aspect](#), helped to pioneer ETRM software delivered in the cloud 15 years ago. The company continues to add customers and functionality to its product and has successfully expanded into supporting metals and ags. The company had a bumper year in 2014 and seems set to replicate that in 2015. Joanna Finnigan, Product Management Director at [Aspect](#), briefed me recently regarding recent product enhancements and overall product strategy. The company will release its new v. 15.1 release at the end of this month.

A lot of Aspect's recent efforts have gone into adding further support for metals with significant investment particularly in supporting concentrates. As the software is already used by a number of customers for refined base metals, it has significant LME-specific functionality, including support for calendars, the LME forward prompt structure and data uploads. However, Aspect has now added a range of additional functions specifically around concentrates including;

- the ability to support moisture content and track wet and dry quantities,
- the ability to capture and track multiple payable metals contained in the concentrate, allowing each metal to be valued & marked-to-market using a separate price curve & quotational periods,
- support for anticipated assays and real assays,
- the ability to record and track treatment charges and value them against their own forward curve,
- complex pricing and penalties,
- Mark to market for treatment charges, refining charges, penalties and more,
- Drill down PnL reports to identify changes in PnL.

All of the new functionality has been developed together with a trading house and has been tested.

The software can also now support Iron ore, which also requires the capture of moisture.

Aspect also significantly enhanced its logistics module specifically with ease of use improvements, improved reporting and mapping capabilities (can now track logistics costs through the logistics chain for example), Added a Russian user interface (via a language independent UI), improved usability and added additional security features such as the ability to hide certain PnL data on screens where the operations team is outsourced, for example.

Version 15.1 is now being readied and it too includes significant enhancements. According to Ms. Finnigan, the company has included 72 major improvement areas in the release including;

- Refinery nominations providing the ability to capture nominations and production planning to create buy/sells based on open position,
- Added basic ags functionality to support basic physical transactions and to support options for various agricultural commodities in the grains area,
- Made improvements to the user interface allowing a fully customized menu structure, hide screens and much more,
- Simplified historical price curve reporting,
- More granular read/write field access for custom fields,
- And much more.

Many of the UI and usability improvements are a direct result of the AEsthetics program that Aspect has been running for some time and that continues to make strides in terms of streamlining how a CTRM is used in support of aspect's vision of a fully scalable, configurable, multi-commodity platform that can be sold and deployed by indirect channels. Aspect claim differentiation in that "no other E/CTRM system today can be deployed without a deep understanding and expertise of the specific product, and can usually only be sold and implemented by the product vendor's team, or by very few, large, costly, identified consultancies." According to its website.

Today, Aspect has customers using its software for Oil, Metals, Steel, Coal, Marine Fuels, Biofuels, , [Natural Gas](#), and Agriculture/[Softs](#). [IT](#) has moved a long way beyond oil and liquid hydrocarbons ETRM in the cloud and can now boast a truly multi-commodity CTRM platform that supports an increasing number of commodities and customers.