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ETRM Software House of the Year  
**Aspect Enterprise Solutions**

## Aspect Enterprise Solutions

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While much of the push towards reform of the global over-the-counter derivatives market is coming from Europe and the US, it is also having a marked impact on Asia-based energy traders. As a result, many smaller energy trading firms are frantically searching for energy trading and risk management (ETRM) systems that can help them become compliant with the new rules, as well as being cost-effective to implement and run.

London-based Aspect Enterprise Solutions distinguishes itself from its competitors by offering both data management and ETRM using a single platform, with a database that is stored in random-access memory, rather than being saved externally. The firm's software also takes full advantage of the flexibility of cloud computing – the fortunate result of a decision made at its inception in 1999, according to Steve Hughes, Aspect's president and chief executive.

"We were built for the internet community from day one, which was quite a bold move back in 1999," he says. "I predict we'll be the only company doing this for the next five to 10 years. This isn't something you can easily bolt on later."

By delivering its software using the cloud, the firm has substantially sped up implementation time. While implementing large ETRM systems might typically take energy trading firms six months or more, putting the AspectCTRM software in place takes just four to six weeks on average. The application is delivered via the software-as-a-service business model and there are no client set-up costs.

The use of an in-memory database confers the benefits of speed, meaning data can potentially be retrieved much faster. This results in exponential time savings for risk management processes. For example, an oil and gas major might process



Steve Hughes

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Steve Hughes, president and chief executive

around 2.5 million trades every time it runs a risk evaluation – and in total, that evaluation could take six to eight hours, says Hughes. "Even for smaller companies, the process often takes around 35 minutes. The equivalent, using Aspect's system, takes four seconds," he says.

Aspect's customer and revenue growth figures are certainly positive. During the 12 months to August this year, it added over 300 users and nine new clients for AspectCTRM. Meanwhile, it saw revenue growth of almost 10% thanks to the software. Approximately 130 new users were added in Asia at existing clients, including Netherlands-based trading house Trafigura, Singapore-based marine

fuel supplier Chemoil, Russian oil and gas firm Rosneft and oil trader Petro Singapore Trading. Total users in Asia now stand at around 760 from 165 different companies – these figures are up around 20% and 12%, respectively, since the end of 2012.

In February this year, the firm scooped a particularly important deal, when Singapore-based trader Concord Energy chose Aspect's software to replace its existing ETRM system. "This was gratifying, especially as we learned that each vendor was tested on the same criteria, and our solution was seen as handling the trading and risk scenarios better," says Hughes.

Aspect implemented its solution in just three weeks and two days,

he says, while subscription and deployment came in at just 22% of the cost of Concord's previous ETRM system. "By not having to pay for hardware, and business and database analysts to maintain it, our client was able to achieve significant savings... No other vendor can compete with us in terms of implementation time and cost savings."

Lynne Yeo, Singapore-based risk manager at Concord Energy, says the firm is "very satisfied" with Aspect's product, including its cost, implementation, functionality and ease of use. "It satisfies our requirements very well," she says. "It was very easy to roll out, is extremely user-friendly and very quick." ■