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## **CloudSME project brings SMEs closer to cloud computing**

Computer simulation can significantly improve the competitive position of manufacturing and engineering companies by helping to achieve efficiency gains in development, production, procurement, logistics and financial processes, and thus reducing costs. However, the take-up of simulation by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) has until now been low due to high barriers to entry that include hardware prices, licensing costs and lack of technical expertise.

The CloudSME project will develop a cloud-based solution with the goal of lowering these barriers by providing a scalable platform for small or large scale simulations, and thus enabling the wider take-up of simulation technologies in the manufacturing and engineering industry of Europe. The CloudSME Simulation Platform will help end-user SMEs utilize customized simulation applications delivered in the form of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) via the cloud. Moreover, simulation software service providers and consulting companies will have access to a Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) solution that enables them to quickly assemble custom simulation solutions in the cloud for their clients.

The project kick-off meeting took place in the University of Westminster, London, where the basis for future work was established under the leadership of Dr. Tamas Kiss, the project coordinator. CloudSME will last for 2 and a half years and will receive 4.5 million Euros funding from the European Commission. The project has 16 partners, including 12 SMEs. At the KO meeting partners put forward their plans and expectations for how cloud computing will help develop their businesses.

Simul8 is a software provider that uses simulation in the analysis of process-based systems in engineering and manufacturing, such as factory scheduling, transportation networks, logistics and supply chains. The company expects to deliver a cloud platform version of their leading Simul8 simulation package as a service within CloudSME. One of their business partners is the simulation consulting company Saker who will develop a Simul8-based PaaS within their consultancy business.

Ascomp is a software company that provides computational fluid dynamics (CFD) software. CFD applications are highly computationally demanding, but typically high-performance computing (HPC) resources are too expensive to be purchased outright by SMEs. CloudSME will offer Ascomp an alternative model based on the use of cloud HPC resources to power to their simulations on demand, and which can be offered to SME users at more affordable rates. Eurobios, a client already using Ascomp simulations are partners in the project, and will help guide the development.

INGECON is another software provider in the project who have developed a software application for the footwear designer company Podoactiva. INGECON and Podoactiva will

develop a portal whereby 3D image scans may be uploaded anywhere in the world to the cloud service-based (SaaS) version of the application, for validation of the scanned images within the global design process.

2MoRO Solutions is an IT aerospace software company. Their business model is based on the aircraft in-service data to assist customers in analyzing and planning maintenance activities. In CloudSME, 2MoRO will use a cloud-based solution to offer customers results of data-mining and calculation in real-time in which a high volume of data must be sustained.

Finally, CTOOLS is a traditional manufacturing company who develop precision cutting machinery and tools. CTOOL's main goal is to take advantage of simulation solutions in logistics, process simulation and business process management in order to reduce costs, waste, and downtimes and to speed up production.

Additional use-cases will be provided by a further 10 partners who will join the project following an open call in Spring 2014. The CloudSME Simulation Platform will change the way in which manufacturing and engineering SMEs utilize simulation solutions, and will provide new business opportunities not only to end-user SMEs, but also to simulation software and cloud service providers.

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