

Insight

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Offshore Industry

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Sinopec Corp.

SEEING GREEN

in our plant information technology practices

■ By **Joe Morray**



It is clear that the industry imperative to continue to reduce the carbon footprint, minimize waste, proactively improve air and water quality

and minimize energy consumption is quite compelling. I frequently wonder what the precise steps are that we, as software developers, users and consultants, can now take to support this drive.

Looking at the fundamentals, we can respond in two broad areas:

- Improving energy usage and efficiency from the computing infrastructure
- Providing the required tools that will enable us to simulate and optimize process performance and output.

I am struck by the first area, an internal perspective, as a chance for each of us to make an impact. Among the acknowledged focus areas that fall under this header, as described by Forrester Research, are efforts to:

- Improve data center energy efficiency
- Reduce commuting CO₂ with telecommuting technology
- Reduce paper use
- Extend the life of IT assets
- Alleviate data center out-of-space and power concerns
- Ensure safe e-waste disposal and recycling
- Improve PC energy efficiency
- Increase server utilization.

Each of these areas is manageable and lends itself to measured performance improvements. What is also striking is that each item represents a reduction in operating costs and therefore contributes to improved corporate profitability.

As we embrace green initiatives, the scope to be addressed will expand progressively, moving from the data center and distributed IT to broad business processes and, finally, to public policy.



From a plant design perspective, green initiatives reinforce the need for the integration between process simulation, logical and physical design and, most important, the ability to generate rapid iterations of design parameters to optimize environmental factors.

There is a need for our industry to support rapid variational analyses which can support optimization routines for cost, safety and environmental factors.

For technology suppliers like Intergraph, the packaging of functions to achieve these optimization capabilities will become increasingly important. Forrester described the moving dynamics of the green market as follows:

- **Regulatory** – From voluntary to mandatory
- **Efficiency** – From interesting to mainstream
- **Green product designation** – From nice-to-have to must-have
- **Strategy** – From niche to core business.

So, as we support our various corporate initiatives, whether they are IT-related or the product of IT systems, we must ensure we are increasingly seeing green in all of our efforts.

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