

## Performance improvements for IMDS – “local client” solution in preparation – Interview with Frank Loydl (EDS)

As we explained in the last Newsletter performance is a very complex issue. Although trouble tickets in the CRM system have decreased significantly, EDS is working on improving performance further. What exactly is EDS doing in this area? Frank Loydl is responsible for the Supply Chain practice at EDS, where the IMDS is operated, and member of the Steering Committee. IMDS Newsletter interviewed him in Frankfurt (M.) / Germany to discuss the current development of the application IMDS.



**Ilona Pollok:** Mr. Loydl, the performance of the IMDS has been one of the most discussed issues in the past three years. What is EDS as the developer of the application going to do about this?

**Frank Loydl:** Yes, discussion about the system performance has been around since the IMDS started being on-line. EDS has been doing a lot of development work on the IMDS during the past few years. We have our specialists on the IMDS team who have contributed to the IMDS quality as it is today, and there have been considerable improvements. If you look at other internet applications on transaction basis you can see that the performance is at least comparable. Our benchmark for performance testing is a common PC with a 64 Kbit/s ISDN internet connection. Our results have shown it operates at 100% response performance. Also, since the last server upgrades we did not get above 30% load for the backbone although the number of users and the load per day have been growing significantly. We are receiving fewer complaints but some users unfortunately have the subjective perception of bad performance.

Keeping that in mind, we have been concentrating on better hardware, improvements of the operating system, new access lines to the internet and last but not least, improvements in the application itself some of which were based on suggestions from last year's questionnaire.

**Ilona Pollok:** I think that in such a complex application, there is always room for improvement...

**Frank Loydl:** You are basically right. However, don't forget that when it comes to security, we cannot make any concessions. For example, when data are sent over the internet, encrypting is necessary which can slow down the data flow.

**Ilona Pollok:** Do you see any other options for improving the IMDS?

**Frank Loydl:** Not with regards to the core system. However, we can shift some functionalities from the application to the client PC connected through the internet to the IMDS. The first step in this direction is a so-called “local client”. This is a locally installed small software package which directly connects to the IMDS data bases but works faster because e.g. all the picture frames etc. do not have to be loaded into the browser. With such a client installation, we could reach up to 30% speed improvement.

**Ilona Pollok:** This would improve the performance for every company installing this small software package, then?

## IMDS History

**June 2000**  
IMDS goes online.

**July 2001**  
Fiat joins the IMDS.

**September 2001**  
10,000 user registered.

**December 2001/January 2002**  
A questionnaire is put on-line about users' requirements – the results are available at <http://www.mdsystem.com/imds/html/admin/quest/questonnaire.jsp?language=en>.

**July 2002**  
Toyota joins the IMDS.

**July 2002**  
Online registration goes productive. Until today there were 2,598 users from 1,319 companies who have used this registration system.

**September 2002**  
Mitsubishi joins the IMDS.

**October 2002**  
Mazda joins the IMDS.

**Today**  
37,042 users registered from 13,246 companies in 52 countries

**Frank Loydl:** Yes, theoretically it could. However, if the internet access in a company is slow, data will still have to pass through this bottleneck. So, a guarantee for a considerable improvement in terms of a certain percentage cannot be given.

**Ilona Pollok:** Why is EDS suddenly developing such a solution now, after three years?

**Frank Loydl:** Well... As you know, EDS develops and operates IMDS on behalf of the Steering Committee. Within the last few years, there have always been discussions within the committee about what is best for the system but at the same time financially feasible. As we at EDS pursue a Service Excellence Policy, it was important to us to speed up the development of the system. That is why we suggested to introduce a second phase in IMDS functionality.

**Ilona Pollok:** And what will this look like?

**Frank Loydl:** Our concrete offer is that the first version of this "local client", the small additional software package, with the functions of displaying and entering data can be tested by 15 companies in February 2003. Companies that would like to participate in this beta testing can send an email to the Newsletter Team and apply for participation.

For the present it is very important to point out that the functionalities offered are only the first step – because of the articulated needs we decided to release the software step-by-step to help as fast as possible while the software development will continue during the next weeks with further functionalities such as e.g. releasing the MDSs directly.

**Ilona Pollok:** When will this be available? This sounds to be a very good solution – where is the rub in it?

**Frank Loydl:** The rub is: it will not be for free. Only for the 15 beta testers will the software package be free of charge. However, we will try to offer it at a price that it is not too big a burden to the suppliers. Although I do not have final details yet, I can tell you that the price will be below 1,000 € per client installation. The answer to the time frame question: this package will become available after the successful completion of beta testing, at the latest at the beginning of the second Quarter 2003.

**Ilona Pollok:** Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Frank Loydl:** We are currently working on partner programs planning an application programming interface for in-house systems to enable direct connections.

**Ilona Pollok:** What is the time frame for this solution?

**Frank Loydl:** This is not so easy to answer, although we are working hard on reaching significant progress this year. However, none of these solutions have been in the time frame of the original IMDS and we first need to facilitate appropriate commercial frameworks with all participants in IMDS which will take most of the time.

**Ilona Pollok:** Thank you very much for this interview.

## **Keeping email addresses up-to-date: user data in IMDS**

We are glad to have reached 90% of the users with our first Newsletter. However, 10% of the email addresses were wrong or non-existent.

## **Who to contact?**

- Commercial and strategic IMDS issues → Steering Committee
- Operational technical issues → Helpdesks
- Operational content related issues (e.g. how do I report a certain material) → Contacts of OEMs as published on public pages:

### **BMW**

Frau Dr. K. Oldenburg-Nazaruk

### **DaimlerChrysler**

Dr. H. Traiser

### **Fiat**

Frau Dr. C. Berruti

### **Ford**

Dr. B. Schmitz

### **General Motors**

Frau A. Heymann

### **Mazda**

K. Okazaki

### **Mitsubishi**

T. Isogai

### **Porsche**

Prof. Dr. D. Gruden

### **Toyota**

Frau Dr. M. Desaegeer

### **Volkswagen**

H. Lüssmann-Geiger

### **Volvo**

J. Lundström

Dear Client Managers, could you please check the user data of your company – since Release 1.8.4 you can maintain this data yourself without having to call the Help Desk. Thank you very much in advance for keeping the entries up-to-date. From this Newsletter onwards, you will have the possibility to unsubscribe on our web pages. You can do this by following the link in the email we sent to you to announce this Newsletter.

## **IMDS Use Conditions**

Since January 27, 2003 the General IMDS Use conditions have been in effect. On first log-on after this date you receive a screen with the use conditions for acceptance. These and the new General use conditions can be found on our Public Pages in the News section:

[http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home\\_en.htm?category=news](http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home_en.htm?category=news)

The general use conditions cover the transaction aspects between OEMs and suppliers. They were developed in cooperation with the OEMs. The reason for introducing these use conditions amongst other liability aspects is the protection of the users' address data. Because these use conditions were developed taking different perspectives into account and had to be adapted to the different requirements of the respective parties the discussions had

## **IMDS Steering Committee meets suppliers – combined Up- and Down-load licenses**

On November 06, 2002, the members of the IMDS Steering Committee met with representatives from supplier organizations in Europe and North America. The meeting was very constructive with both sides expressing their will to co-operate. Common future activities were planned as well as the decision on one important supplier request was made: the combined Up- and Download licenses for all suppliers at the cost of 15,000 Euros per year.

Concerning the Upload of data into the IMDS: EDS can assist IMDS companies with integrating your current systems with IMDS. The IMDS Upload feature uses XML (Extensible Markup Language). As there will be adjustments necessary in terms of programming etc. your company could make use of the Upload license.

**From now on, one Up- and Download license contains 5 user IDs (instead of one).**

**EDS is currently working on an automatic bulk sending of the up-loaded MDSs to the respective recipients.**

**This combined Up- and Download license costs 15,000 Euros per year (as announced in our last email to the Client Managers).**

**Also see Users' Echo for more information.**

## **IMDS Changes in the next Release 1.9.1.**

In the next IMDS **Release 1.9.1.**, the following enhancements are integrated:

- ✓ **MDS Follow-up:** Under the menu "Received", the users can assign an MDS of any status to a list. For each MDS the user may enter a comment and reminder date. On this date, the user will be reminded on checking this specific MDS.
- ✓ **Company substance list filtering:** According to the different lists the basic substances of concern for the different companies will be highlighted in the structure tree, e.g. for Ford Motor Company the RSL substances.

- ✓ **Complete Data Down-load:** Until now this feature has only been used by OEMs. While the Classic Data Download only contains MDSs that have been “published”, “accepted” or “internally released” by your own company, the Complete Data Download also allows downloading received MDSs in the status "not yet browsed", "browsed" and "cancelled by sender". Due to this fact, a sent MDS may get the new status “in process at recipient’s” in case this recipient uses Complete Data Download. After downloading MDSs in the status "not yet browsed" or "browsed", the IMDS expects the upload of their new status ("browsed", "accepted" or "rejected").
- ✓ **MDS Statistics:** Client Managers can use the statistics function about MDSs for their own company, e.g. how many MDSs were created in total.

Further information is provided in the Release Notes which will be published at the beginning of February 2003 and can be found under [http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home\\_en.htm?category=news](http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home_en.htm?category=news).

## Training

At the moment, class room training is offered in the following countries: Brazil, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States.

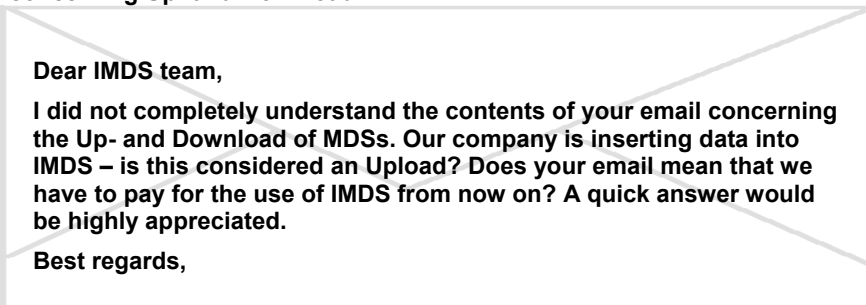
Because of complaints sent to us about the quality of trainings we had to learn that there are offers for IMDS services on the market which we were not informed about. In order to ensure training quality we are currently developing a certification concept for our training partners.

These partner companies will be authorized to provide IMDS professional training – public trainings as well as In-house trainings. Concerning training offered by other companies we cannot guarantee for the quality. In one of the next issues we will publish the list of our certified training partners.

A redesigned Online Training will be available at the end of the second quarter 2003.

## Users’ Echo – emails to IMDS

**We received many questions concerning our email to the client managers concerning Up- and Download.**



**Please help us with your feedback. If you would like to contribute to this Newsletter with articles and comments concerning the IMDS and environmental issues in your company, please send an email to [imds-newsletter@eds.com](mailto:imds-newsletter@eds.com)**

To answer the most important question first: no, the usage of IMDS remains free of charge. Our offer for buying Up- and Download licenses can be interesting for companies which have a very large amount of MDSs to create and/or have them already available in an inhouse-(PDM) system. Then, this interface could enable these companies to bulk upload the data directly into IMDS without having to create each single MDS separately.

Sorry for the misunderstanding.

Best regards,

The IMDS Newsletter team

After our last Newsletter we received many comments on the importance of the information in this Newsletter – thank you very much. Here is one example...

Dear IMDS team,

I consider this Newsletter a very good idea and a good source of background information on the IMDS for us. It took a long time but now the communication with the IMDS users seems to get much better – looking forward to receiving the next one...

Best regards,

Thanks for this comment – for us, this is a good motivation to continue.

Best regards, The IMDS Newsletter team

## News in brief

### November 19, 2002 – hardware break-down

IMDS users might have experienced some difficulties working in the IMDS on Monday morning, November 19, 2002. After the successful implementation of a new system software release there was a hardware failure. Thanks to our EDS application specialists a complete second system was up and running after only 2 hours. Well done, EDS!

### First bundle of recommendations for data entry (IMDS 001) available in FAQs

In December the first recommendation for data entry into IMDS, the IMDS 001, was published by the Steering Committee on the IMDS public pages under FAQs. The first IMDS data entry requirement describes the requested material tree structure. You find these recommendations under:

[http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home\\_en.htm?category=faq](http://www.mdsystem.com/html/en/home_en.htm?category=faq)

→ Are there any IMDS data entry requirements available?

## IMDS Newsletter – next issue

Our next questionnaire is being prepared for an online survey which will be in the IMDS in February 2003. Please help us improve the IMDS with your participation.

Spreadsheet approach vs. Central System approach – the advantages and inconveniences of a global Internet application (this article was supposed to be published in this edition; the interview with Frank Loydl about the development of additional IMDS features was considered to be more important for our users).

## IMDS Help Desk support

**European help desk** – [imds-eds-helpdesk@eds.com](mailto:imds-eds-helpdesk@eds.com)

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. (GMT+1) at +49 (0) 42152 56 666

**Italian help desk** – [imds-fiat@eds.com](mailto:imds-fiat@eds.com)

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. (GMT+1) at +39 (0) 80 38 53 116

**Japanese help desk** – [jpimds@deds.com](mailto:jpimds@deds.com)

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. JST (GMT+9) at +81 3 3797 4212

**North American help desk** - [imds-eds-helpdesk-nao@eds.com](mailto:imds-eds-helpdesk-nao@eds.com)

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (EST) at 248/267-3460

## IMDS Newsletter – your participation

Please submit articles and comments concerning IMDS and environmental issues for this Newsletter. For suggestions, further information and questions, please contact [imds-newsletter@eds.com](mailto:imds-newsletter@eds.com).

## About this Newsletter

The Steering Committee will quarterly provide the Newsletter to all IMDS Users as a source of information about the different IMDS functionalities.

This Newsletter is designed to objectively inform about the IMDS.

If you have any questions or comments about this Newsletter, please send an email to:

[imds-newsletter@eds.com](mailto:imds-newsletter@eds.com)

## Editorial

The collection of the contents of this IMDS Newsletter is carried out on behalf of the IMDS Steering Committee by Ilona Pollok, EDS.

