Executive Summary

Connect 2023 is a wrap.

385 attendees gathered to share and discuss a wide array of data-related themes – and to have fun while doing so. 26 countries were represented, more than 60 sessions were held, and more than 18 customer stories were shared.

> I feel humbled and grateful to represent a company that, despite being much smaller than even our smallest customers, can still make a significant contribution to the efforts of large enterprises. This is how we should interpret and imbue meaning into the phrase "Better data, better business, better world," which we have integrated into the fabric of our business.

Stibo Systems is owned by a foundation with a mission that involves giving back to society and investing in innovation. This unique ownership structure places Stibo Systems in the position to be both socially responsible and innovative simultaneously, as our commitment is for the long term. Being a conscientious business is ingrained in our narrative, and so is the continuous evolution of our platform to enable others to go beyond, which was the theme of Connect 2023.

I want to express heartfelt gratitude to our customer speakers who chose to share their stories with this remarkable community of like-minded individuals. I also extend appreciation to our partners and sponsors who do an outstanding job supporting customers and added significant value to the event."

Adrian Carr, CEO, Stibo Systems

"It was really good to see what other companies are doing with STEP, what their setup is and what business cases they use it for. That can help us to get new ideas that we hadn't thought of. It's also important to learn what Stibo Systems is going to do in near future and in the long term.

Jan Ramajzl, BayWa AG

"It was a wonderful experience, both because I got a much better understanding of the system's functionalities and capabilities, and also because of meeting so many Stibo Systems colleagues. It was also great to meet other company representatives who have worked on the MDM journey for longer and see that they are satisfied with the system and the support they are receiving.

General manager of a cargo company

"I learned a lot from the conversations with other companies because we are all facing the same problems. We can learn so much from each other. Very important for me to connect with people doing the same thing as myself.

Fabienne Bohr, Application Manager, Fissler GmbH

"I think it's my third time visiting a Stibo Systems conference. It's always been great to work with Stibo Systems, and I've been involved in the master data management since I started at Conrad. We're using STEP all the time and there is always something new to learn. And of course, a lot of interesting people to meet here so that's basically why I keep coming back. I enjoyed a lot of AI sessions and also the roadmap and UX sessions because that's what my team is working with, so I'm always keen on getting to know the latest development in that area.

Stefan Münch, Conrad Electronic SE

"The most important reason for me to be here is to hear about the inventions that are coming from Stibo Systems and to get insight into the roadmap about the upcoming software modules and solutions. And, of course, make connections to other customers. It's very interesting to get a look inside of companies that have huge STEP installations and to learn how others are working, which kind of systems they have connected, which kind of dataflows they use and just to learn from each other.

Hans-Peter Rapp, Julius Blum GmbH

CO$_2$ Emissions Report & Compensation

TOGETHER WITH THE EVENT PARTNER, **WELCOME**, STIBO SYSTEMS IS COMPENSATING FOR CO2 EMISSIONS GENERATED BY CONNECT 2023. THE EMISSIONS WERE CALCULATED BY ATMOZ CONSULTING.

This compensation supports the Gold Standard solar power project Bhadla and is in alignment with Stibo Systems' commitment to being a **business with a conscience**.

Transportation
4441,4 kg CO2e

Energy consumption
786,7 kg CO2e

Accomodation
19860,0 kg CO2e

Food and drinks
4457,0 kg CO2e

Waste
499,7 kg CO2e

TOTAL
30045 kg CO2e

TOTAL per participant
78,04 kg CO2e

Main Stage
DAY 1

The main theme of Connect 2023, **"Go Beyond,"** was exemplified in various ways during the two-day conference. The first day's host, Chief Executive Officer Adrian Carr, posed the existential question: Why do we do business? For growth and profit, certainly, but we can go beyond and be a business with a conscience. In fact, we have a responsibility to use our capabilities to help others make the world a better place. Carr highlighted

Stibo Systems' three approaches: Innovation, partnerships and sustainability.

Culture of innovation: Emphasizing the need to keep moving and innovating, Carr discussed the challenges of building a culture of innovation, including:

- Continuing the cloud journey to shift responsibility from customers to Stibo Systems, making solutions more adaptable and future-proof.

- Integrating AI, such as Augmented MDM, and for the purpose of obtaining higher data accuracy.

- Evolving Multidomain MDM to manage assets beyond product information, placing a responsibility on Stibo Systems to develop capabilities accordingly.

- Focusing on customer-centric experiences. Stibo Systems has an obligation to help businesses execute on omnichannel as this requires unification of master data.

Neda Nia, Chief Product Officer, and Søren Lundtoft, Director of Product Management, presented the next innovation: PXM, a tool for enhanced content. Retailers delivering enhanced content, including sustainability information, can boost revenue by 40%, addressing information needs and preventing returns. PXM utilizes templates to construct product content that can be scaled and syndicated to retailers. Generative AI aids in content creation based on product specifications. Atop the solution, a Commerce IQ analytics tool is employed to bridge the gap to actionable insights.

Robust partnerships: Carr emphasized the importance of building partnerships, as no single company can do it all. Partnerships add immense value to the complete solution with their complementary knowledge, skills and local presence. This was testified by the 25 partner sponsors at Connect 2023.

Sustainability: Carr underscored the significance of sustainability in business, emphasizing the environmental impact and the economic responsibility. Businesses need to grow while doing the right thing, and data plays a key role in combining environment, economics and society.

In a fireside chat between Mette Kaagaard, General Manager/CEO, Microsoft Denmark and Iceland, and Adrian Carr, the benefits of a robust partnership became tangible. The partnership between Microsoft and Stibo Systems aligns with shared values, with Stibo Systems' apps seamlessly fitting into the Azure cloud platform. Both companies are on a common journey towards providing cloud-based solutions. Kaagaard highlighted the evolving cloud as a place for innovation and Microsoft's

forefront position in AI. Kaagaard saw AI as fundamentally transforming our work. The experience from Microsoft shows that using AI the right way, it can increase efficiency with 30-50% faster on core processes.

Microsoft's commitment to carbon negativity by 2030 contributes to a trusted cloud with built-in compliance, supporting enterprises in their own sustainability programs.


Day 1 – Topics, highlights and key takeaways from the breakout sessions

AI/ML

There was considerable interest in maximizing the potential of AI and its role in enhancing productivity. Sessions featuring AI demonstrations and practical experiences drew full audiences. With businesses facing attribute explosion across industries, regulatory pressures and a demand for transparency, AI becomes crucial for handling repetitive tasks, such as auto-classifying products. Generative AI showcased its ability to aid the match-and-merge function, creating golden customer records and improving both productivity and data accuracy.

Data Syndication and Data Onboarding

Data syndication emerged as another hot topic. Manufacturers and suppliers seek alternatives to emails and
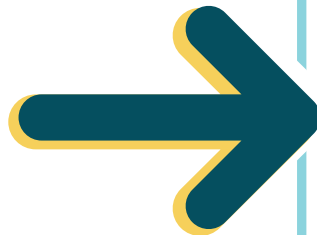
spreadsheets for distributing data to retailers, while retailers grapple with managing numerous products and channels daily for digital shelf and endless aisle strategies. Standardized data onboarding is crucial for establishing a seamless data flow, particularly when dealing with a large number of vendors with varying digital maturity. Automated product data onboarding reduces risk and enhances transparency, especially for global supply chains.

Sustainability

The Digital Product Passport (soon to be implemented in the EU) was a new topic, aligning with the broader sustainability discourse and emphasizing the role of

data in sustainability efforts. Collecting data related to product environmental profiles, supplier information and manufacturing processes is crucial for generating ESG reports, contributing to overall transparency and accountability. Navigating hundreds of ESG standards and managing ESG data across multiple systems present a challenge across the board.

Data as a Service (DaaS)

The DaaS extension to Stibo Systems MDM is gaining significant interest as companies seek ways to expedite time-to-market. DaaS offers an alternative to the common and sometimes cumbersome API approach for delivering real-time master data.

Roadmap for STEP, SaaS, DaaS

The presentation of Stibo Systems' platform roadmap emphasized the vision of continuously enabling customers to easily implement, govern, scale and broaden their use of master data. The roadmap stands on four pillars:

1. Software as a Service (SaaS)

2. Open platform and data exchange (including DaaS)

3. Data governance

4. Technology and security

For the further SaaS development, it is important to continue to provide productized cloud services without infrastructure or upgrade worries. Other key focus areas include improving data processing efficiency, API extensions, launching accelerators for specific industries and enabling ESG data management.

Product Information Management

Managing product data is evidently a pervasive topic for large enterprises. An intriguing observation that resonated across the room was how product data transforms as it moves through the organization and how it impacts the data management teams. On the procurement side, the system enables suppliers to input product information in a standardized manner, detailing aspects such as the consuming unit and packaging hierarchy. On the sales side, the system manages internal data relevant to how the company intends to market and sell the products. Whether dealing with a lawnmower or lettuce, the fundamentals of product data remain the same, and a centralized team can become experts in managing that data.

It was also emphasized how creating better customer experiences and enhancing operational efficiency requires a vision for better product data quality. The solution on display included standardizing master data processes and enriching product data with GDSN data.

Managing product content across several markets, languages and product categories poses a particular use case that requires strict data governance and a tight focus on core principles, such as simplicity and transparency. It was highlighted how master data management can be an important aid in that process by providing the necessary golden records and a single source of truth. Building on that foundation, retailers can start nurturing an omnichannel mindset and develop channel-specific content.

Multidomain MDM

While many companies have an immediate need for managing product data, there's a growing realization of using the STEP platform as a single source of truth for all data, including location, customer, asset and party data. Leveraging a common platform for all data can create new insights and facilitate ESG reporting by collecting data from disparate sources.

Roundtables

Roundtables play a central role in the Connect conferences, serving as a key institution where customers, partners, and Stibo Systems' product and industry experts can exchange experiences and address issues, fostering mutual learning. These sessions aim to bring peers together in an often intimate setting that allows for in-depth conversations on specific themes, including:

SaaS: The attendees were curious about effectively managing ongoing updates and quarterly testing
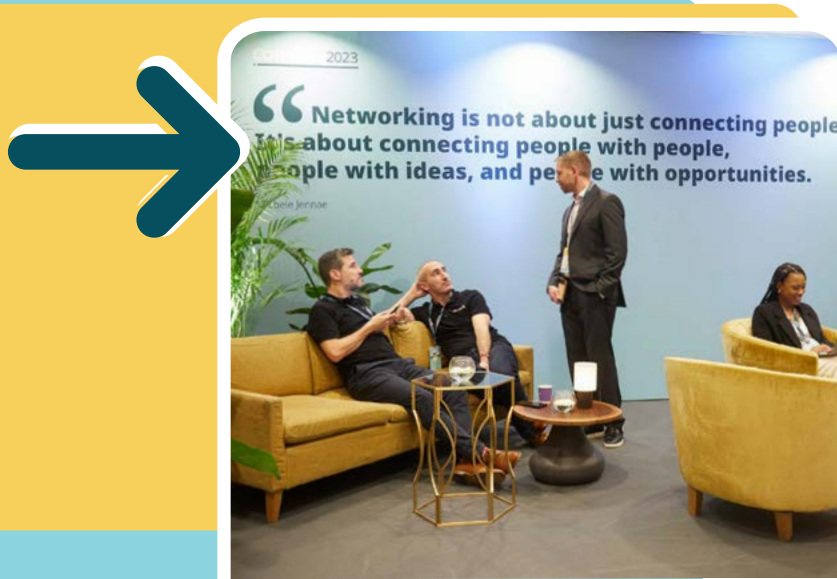
with new releases when moving from on-premise solutions to Software as a Service. The suggested approach involved smaller, more manageable tests, emphasizing the importance of change management and adapting SaaS procedures to existing processes.

Retail: Discussions revolved around enhancing the omnichannel experience.

CPG: The participants delved into conversations on managing the data operations of a global consumer goods company. The challenge identified was that a strictly centralized or decentralized approach is too generic due to variations in market maturity among brands. The consensus was to centralize as much as possible but permit each brand or region to leverage regionalization with tailored language and tone for specific markets.

Onboarding: Stibo Systems offers different solutions for product data onboarding. At the Onboarding round-

table, there was a need to understand the differences. In summary, the Supplier Item Portal is an accessible starting point, situated on the Product MDM platform, whereas PDX Onboarding emerged as a faster, more automated option with greater integration of standards.

Sustainability: This roundtable highlighted the universal interest in participating in the sustainability effort. However, navigating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards was likened to a journey in the jungle.

The advice offered was to prepare data for compliance by maintaining its cleanliness and utilizing master data management as an enabler for sustainability efforts.

Manufacturing: At the roundtable session for manufacturers, the discussion revolved around the question of digital transformation – which data solutions that can help futureproof the manufacturing industry, support agility, growth, new initiatives and ultimately protect companies against disruption.

Genius Bar

The Genius Bar stands out as a major attraction at Connect, serving as the go-to hub for obtaining precise information about Stibo Systems' products, addressing concerns and gaining insights and tips directly from product experts. Given its role, the Genius Bar is consistently bustling with activity. The Genius Bar is a place to explore ideas and seek advice. New customers primarily sought information on the use cases addressed by Multidomain MDM, while existing customers inquired about possibilities within their current solutions.

The booths covered various topics, including User Experience, PIM/Product Data, Customer/Supplier/Location Data, Data as a Service, PDX Onboarding/Syndication, PXM, SaaS Migrations and General Questions.

A significant focus was on implementing AI/ML-driven content generation, especially regarding image handling and master data classification. Visitors, ranging

from those curious about how to leverage AI to those seeking refinement tips for implemented solutions, engaged in discussions.

SaaS migration conversations spanned from basic architecture inquiries to more intricate details.

The introduction of the new PXM solution for enhanced content generated considerable interest, particularly from retailers who could clearly see the value of rich and easy content population.

PDX solutions for syndication and data onboarding attracted attention, with many seeking insights into how this solution can help overcome challenges regarding data exchange. Numerous inquiries centered around understanding the interactions between PDX and PXM. To those interested in PDX, the key advice was to engage in conversations with digital shelf teams (for syndication) or data onboarding teams to identify pain points, challenges and areas of value.
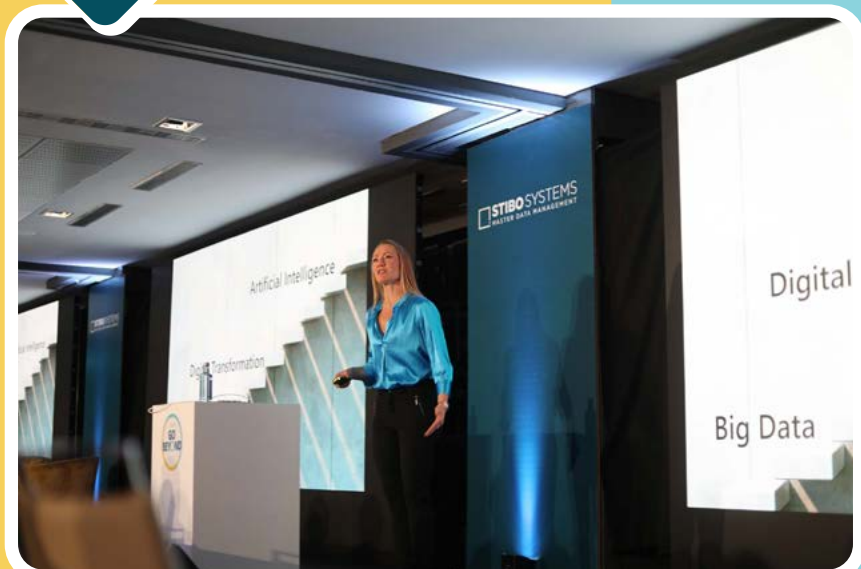
Main Stage
DAY 2

On the second day of Connect 2023, hosted by Stibo Systems' Chief Sales Officer, John Tully, the main stage presentations delved into the themes of AI, Multidomain and Sustainability.

Keynote Elin Hauge, AI and Business Strategist, explored the intersection of AI and sustainability. She questioned the nature of AI, emphasizing that it is rooted in mathematics rather than magic. Highlighting tools like ChatGPT for democratized AI, she noted its proficiency in creating text but emphasized its lack of human-like feelings. Hauge discussed the applications of AI in areas such as IoT, voice recognition and high-resolution image creation. The presentation underscored the misalignment between human values and AI, emphasizing the need to address biases in datasets. Hauge highlighted the importance of transparency and data ownership, pointing to the EU's AI Act. AI, seen as the natural next step, was positioned as a toolbox, the responsible use of which depends on humans, and data quality as the key to trustworthy AI.

Neda Nia, Chief Product Officer at Stibo Systems, discussed the increasing need for Multidomain Master Data Management (MDM). Stressing that data is the

B/S/H/

tionality, showcasing cross-functional data elements such as location, equipment and contact information.

A fireside chat between John Tully and Ulrich Lutz, Vice President Data Management & MDM Program Manager at BSH Home Appliances Group, delved into Lutz's 20-year experience as a pioneer in master data. The discussion highlighted MDM as an ongoing process and an enabler for various initiatives, including ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance). Sustainability data was addressed as an additional layer of data.

Josh Derrett, also from Stibo Systems Pre-Sales, conducted another live demo, focusing on the ESG data management approach in the MDM platform. The demonstration showcased the platform's flexibility in connecting product, supplier and location data for sustainability reporting. The concept of a Digital Product Passport was introduced, acting as a template for capturing sustainability data and contributing to a company's environmental score.

backbone that enables businesses to apply AI, Nia emphasized the necessity of accurate reports and access to cross-functional data.

Tom Grosch from Stibo Systems Pre-Sales provided a live demo illustrating the creation of a 360-degree view of supplier information through match-and-merge func-

Day 2 – Topics, highlights and key takeaways from the breakout sessions

The second day of Connect 2023 once again showcased an impressive array of master data management use cases.

Centralization

A notable takeaway from day 2 emphasized that process and system integration are essential for reducing time to market. Siloed systems create roadblocks, which can be eliminated with a centralized data foundation that connects disparate information into a coherent highway.

Large retailers spanning thousands of stores across Europe have significantly benefited from centralization of data management. Transitioning from localized, siloed and manually operated systems to a centralized approach enables fast and efficient store expansions. It also empowers various enterprise departments, such as demand and supply planning, online shops, apps and reporting, with reliable master data.

To meet the growing demands of partners and customers digitizing their processes, manufacturers must view data as a business enabler. Managing data surpasses the capabilities of IT, stressing the need for clear ownership and a data ecosystem built around a single Product Information Management (PIM) system as the authoritative source.

The importance of maturity in handling master data and continuous improvements in data quality and completeness were highlighted as key elements in becoming data-driven. A centralized PIM system, standardized governance and collaboration across diverse business entities were frequently emphasized as requirements for efficient global product information management.

Streamlining customer service

Manufacturers dealing with numerous customers and a complex product portfolio often find themselves grappling with frequent customer inquiries about specific product features. Stibo Systems' MDM was therefore utilized as a knowledge management system to streamline support processes. This improved information accessibility for service teams and external touchpoints like websites and customer support, thereby reducing the need for manual searches.

Migrating to SAP S/4HANA

For many presenting companies, the consolidation of master data played a pivotal role. During migration from legacy SAP systems to the new SAP S4/HANA, the flexibility of the data model in the MDM platform proved crucial. The platform's ability to integrate with both legacy SAP and new SAP systems ensured the smooth transformation of enterprise applications without disrupting business operations.

Compliance

In the regulated medical care industry, the MDM platform was showcased for facilitating the implementation of regulatory (UDI) reporting for various countries. It also aids in incorporating regulatory declarations and instructions for use.

Accelerators

In terms of product updates, significant interest was expressed in Stibo Systems' further productization of its master data management platform into accelerators for different industries. These accelerators, standardized solutions based on industry insights, offer quick time-to-value with customization options. The newest version of accelerators also includes ESG data management capabilities.
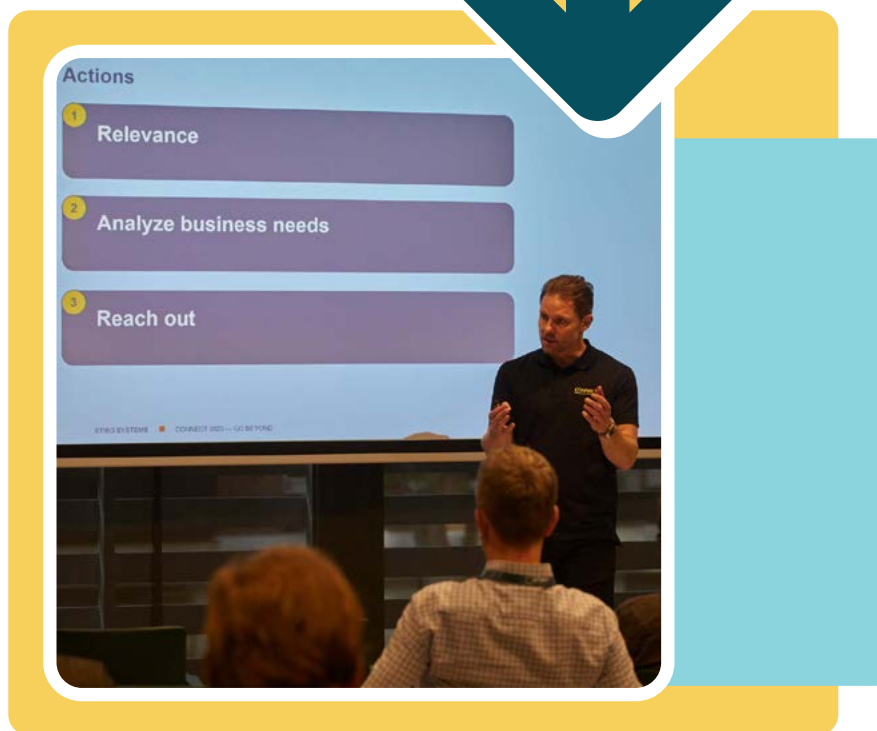
Bruce Dickinson

Connect 2023 concluded its main stage events with a captivating and thought-provoking keynote delivered by Bruce Dickinson, the lead singer of Iron Maiden.

In a room filled with 400 data enthusiasts, Dickinson stressed the importance of belief over data. He highlighted the power of believing in others, emphasizing how it can inspire greatness. Dickinson reflected on the notion that our actions in childhood can either come back to haunt us or serve as inspiration. This philosophy guided him beyond being the lead singer of one of the world's most renowned rock bands to becoming a pilot, an airship investor, an entrepreneur and the proprietor of a beer brewery. Dickinson delved into existential questions, pondering why we exist and why people attend concerts (and conferences, one may add). His answer was rooted in the idea that human connection and mutual appreciation are at the core of our existence. According to Dickinson, when people gather in a room, ideas naturally proliferate, creating an environment where collaboration and innovation thrive.

Thank you!