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Eagle Focuses on Hybrid Approach to Data Management and Downstream Integration

BNY MELLON OWNED Eagle Investment Systems' big news at this year's Sifma was the launch of its new data integration services, which effectively packages together its standard and reusable interfaces into a service layer that sits on top of its hosted Eagle Access data solution. John Lehner, who took over as CEO of the vendor at the end of last year in addition to his role as president, explains that Eagle is attempting to differentiate itself from the competition on the basis of these value adds and its hybrid approach to the data solutions market.

To this end, the vendor has packaged up its current set of standard interfaces to core institutional market data sources, including data around pricing, benchmarks, corporate actions and FX rates, for example. Eagle still offers the option for local deployment for data integration but Lehner notes that the current trend within recent client implementations is for customers to opt for software as a service (SaaS) or application service provider (ASP) models. He indicates that this can bring the duration of a rollout down considerably: one recent

Lehner reckons that Eagle is able to differentiate itself from the crowd, however, by being able



to bring three possible deployment models to the table for clients: ASP, locally deployed software and a full outsourcing solution. "We are unique in that we have been in the ASP business for almost 10 years and we have been in the software business for longer than that. Many other vendors are offering pre-defined solutions as technology packages or SaaS offerings, and a few offer full outsourcing. We offer all three," he contends.

The vendor doesn't offer these three options in a "boilerplate" format, adds Lehner, instead it attempts to match the deployment model to the client, which could mean a combination of one or more of these models. "It is not a 'one size fits all' approach as we come into the process with a consultative approach, which means that often the most suitable approach is a combination of two or even all three of these models," he says.

Much like Netik and MoneyMate, Eagle is also seeing more interest from its customers in the outsourcing option. Lehner qualifies

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The new integration services solution is therefore an attempt on the part of Eagle to bring down the cost, risk and turnaround time in deploying its hosted data management solution, claims Lehner. "We are taking the risk and the effort of client data mapping and integration onto our shoulders; essentially offering a shared service approach to data integration," he says. "A critical element is to make sure we are able to deploy the solution faster and cheaper by using shared services components."

example having taken only two months to deploy.

Of course, Eagle's competition is also taking notice of the trend towards SaaS and ASP, and players such as Netik, GoldenSource and Asset Control have all recently been adding new functionality and add ons to their various hosted solutions. GoldenSource, for example, has recently launched a new data warehouse solution on the market and Asset Control has added an integration solution to its portfolio in the form of AC Connect.

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this, however, by indicating that a full outsourced deployment is not the usual option, rather customers are keen to outsource the basic loading of data and cleansing functions. Customers therefore opt to keep the exception management and final data checks and assessment function in-house, largely as a result of risk management and control concerns. "Outsourcing is typically chosen for the middle and back office data, whereas firms want to be much closer to the data from the front office," he says.

Lehner also indicates that the trend towards ASP deployments that his colleague Danielle Newland, product manager of data management solutions at the vendor, noted earlier this year has continued. "There has been renewed

interest over the last six months in the multi-client SaaS approach. Over half of our new business is coming from the SaaS and ASP side of the business, but one in three of these customers are also asking us to provide outsourcing on top of the ASP service," he adds.

In terms of areas to monitor for the future, Lehner is keeping a close eye on regulatory developments and accounting rule changes. He notes that there is a lot of ambiguity at the moment about the details of these and this will have a massive impact on the data requirements going forward. In particular, he highlights changes to corporate actions processing and mark to market valuations and fair value. "It is clear we need definitions and clarity around how this data should

be treated: frequency of use, sourcing and validation, for example. In terms of accounting regulations, we also need clarity on how long historical data must be retained."

In the meantime, Lehner reckons the phase by phase deployment of EDM solutions will continue, as firms seek to deal with the challenges as they crop up.

The vendor is also working on version 11 of its solution, following the recent release of version 10.1. "We believe we need to continue to add tools and value added components to our solutions. More clients than ever before are also looking to reinvest in their existing Eagle platforms and add new functionality and we want to be able to meet these requirements," concludes Lehner.

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