

Desktop Engineering

June 10, 2009

Note: This article is divided into (2) parts.

- Part 1: Tony Lockwood, Desktop Engineering's editor-at-large provides an introduction as to why he picked Akoya as his Pick of the Week.
- Part 2: Mr. Lockwood's write-up of Design Workbench

Part 1

Desktop Engineering's Editor's Pick of The Week

Dear *Desktop Engineering* Reader:

Amid all the hype that you read about compressed design cycles, faster time to market, and improved ROI, there's always a paean to a "better product." Generally, from this we are to infer that you'll get your money back faster with a high-quality, more robust design optimized for its function that people will love. Good stuff. But is your design optimized for cost-effectivity for your business as well as for function by your customers? In other words, can you compress the time spent waiting to improve ROI by reducing the amount of money you spend developing a product without sacrificing high-quality designs? Those questions Akoya's Design Workbench Product Suite helps you answer.

The Design Workbench provides companies in such industries as automotive, aerospace, defense, and heavy equipment insight into more cost-effective designs by determining what it calls the "Competitive Band." This is defined as the most efficient price range you can expect when acquiring a component from its producer using any combination of variables that can affect its price. The idea here is to obtain a quicker time-to-market by eliminating cross-functional bottlenecks and to lower product costs by improving design cost visibility across product platforms.

I know what you're thinking: it's a cost estimator. Well, sure in part. But that's not it. Design Workbench marries information sciences and high-level analytics to help you determine the price a supplier is likely to charge for a component at an annual demand level. Where it cuts from the pack is that it recognizes that there is a lot of information about a given part that affect its cost and ultimately yours. Design Workbench helps you determine, collect, analyze, and share this data so that you can evaluate and optimize design, supply chain, and manufacturing processes from the

individual component level on up and through out the process at any point in your design cycle. Armed with this information, you can make informed design, build, and purchasing decisions that minimize overhead while expediting time to market.

I confess that by bringing together information sciences and analytics Design Workbench and its Competitive Banding concept offers a different, albeit highly logical, approach to monetizing product cost and product design management. I also have to say that I wish there were more things like white papers, product demos, and so forth on the company's website that I can direct you to, but I know that they would be happy to share those directly with you if you are interested. Right now, Akoya selectively targets the companies with whom they work.

But what seems clear to me is that Akoya and its Design Workbench are working to help you introduce new products or updated versions of existing products that are as close to profitable at the moment of release – when you start your vigil for ROI's arrival -- as possible. And that is really good stuff. Check out today's Pick of the Week write-up then contact Akoya to see how the Design Workbench can fit into your situation.

Thanks, Pal — Lockwood

Anthony J. Lockwood
Editor at Large, *Desktop Engineering Magazine*

Part 2

Cost-Effective Designs Boost Profits

Design Workbench uses analytics to make designs more cost-competitive.

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Cost-Effective Designs Boost Profits

Akoya Inc. (Rosemont, IL) says that its Design Workbench product suite is intended to help product designers in heavy equipment, automotive, aerospace, and defense companies develop more cost competitive products and increase profits in new product introductions by up to 15 percent.

The Design Workbench advances lean product development practices by giving companies insight into more cost-effective designs through what the company calls the Competitive Band – a determination of the most efficient price range in which a manufacturer can acquire a product component in the market from an effective producer for any combination of design variables. This is said to result in quicker time-to-market through the elimination of cross-functional bottlenecks as well as lower product costs resulting from improved design cost visibility across product platforms.

The Competitive Banding process accumulates a manufacturers' current purchase price, production and detailed component attributes, applies advanced information science and analytics to evaluate competitive drivers, and determines the actions required to achieve a more competitive cost for the product components.

"We have seen that 80 percent of the design cycle can be spent re-working a product to meet cost parameters because they were not known when the critical design decisions were made," said Brett Holland, Akoya's president, in a press statement "With Akoya's Design Workbench, designs can be evaluated for cost-effectiveness at any time, from concept through production. Additionally, the Competitive Banding information we use promotes more effective dialog between product design, supply management and manufacturing."

For further details, visit the Akoya website.

Read why DE's Editors selected the Design Workbench Product Suite as their Pick of the Week.