Current Articles | Archives

Finally, Digital Twins Get Their Own Consortium

Michael Alba posted on May 21, 2020 | Comment

Ansys, Microsoft, Dell, and Lendlease are founding members of the Digital Twin Consortium.

(Image courtesy of Digital Twin Consortium.)

"A digital twin technology explosion is about to occur," says the Digital Twin Consortium, a newly formed open membership organization that intends to tame the often-muddy concept of digital twins.

Ansys, Dell Technologies, Lendlease, and Microsoft are all on board as founding members of the Digital Twin Consortium, bringing some serious industrial clout to the new organization. The initiative is spearheaded by the Object Management Group (OMG), also behind other consortiums including the Industrial Internet Consortium and Consortium for Information & Software Quality.

Why The Consortium Exists

What is a digital twin? In the succinct words of the Digital Twin Consortium, digital twins are "virtual models of a process, product or service that allow for data analysis and system monitoring via simulations."

Software companies have been pushing for digital twins for years, promising users the moon (and its twin) if only they would come on board. But many remain unclear on the specifics.

"Most definitions of digital twin are complicated, but it's not a complicated idea," said Richard Soley, Executive Director of the Digital Twin Consortium. "What makes a digital twin difficult is a lack of understanding and standardization."

What Will the Digital Twin Consortium Do?

The Digital Twin Consortium aims to clear up confusion about digital twins by implementing industry standards—but not directly. The Consortium will develop industry guidelines and best practices and submit their recommendations to international standards development organizations like OMG, ISO, and IEC.

Founding members Ansys, Dell, Lendlease, and Microsoft will govern the Consortium, organizing working groups of member representatives.

Of the founders, Ansys has been the most vocal about digital twins, launching a product called ANSYS Twin Builder back in 2018. Microsoft has also pushed for digital twins on its Azure IoT platform, and teamed up with Ansys for a digital twin collaboration last year. Dell Technologies is an active player on the IoT side of things, providing hardware for edge computing. The fourth founder, Lendlease, is an interesting wildcard—neither a software nor a hardware company, Lendlease is a property developer that's pursuing digital twins in construction.

Members and Membership

Other early members of the Digital Twin Consortium include Air Force Research Lab (US), Bentley Systems, Executive Development, Gafcon, Geminus.AI, Idun Real Estate Solutions AB, imec, IOTA Foundation, IoTIFY, Luno UAB, New South Wales Government, Ricardo, Willow Technology, and WSC Technology.

The Consortium is open to new corporate, non-profit, or government members. Membership information is available on the Digital Twin Consortium website

| Recommended For You