Innovation Optimism

by Bill Poston

I spent a couple of days recently in Las Vegas at the 3DExperience Forum hosted by Dassault Systemes. Dassault Systemes is a French software company that specializes in the production of 3D design software, 3D digital mock-up and product lifecycle management solutions. You may know them as the firm that makes the SolidWorks CAD tool or the Enovia PLM solution. These are their workhorse products.

The sexy stuff I saw demonstrated is what gives me great hope for the future of innovation. The ability to mock-up, model, simulate, iterate, and manage product designs in three dimensions on an end-to-end basis is fascinating. The ability to collaborate virtually in 3D across time zones and company lines is powerful stuff that has the potential to accelerate innovation, increase speed, improve hit rates, and significantly reduce the cost of bringing a product to market. The possibilities make my mind race.

While these 3D capabilities are impressive when applied to existing businesses, it is the potential to enable entirely new business models that provides the most optimistic view of the future. One can only imagine what can be done with the combination of these tools, consumer driven design, connected products, mass customization, and 3D printing. An era of smart and truly personalized products may soon be upon us.

Technology is moving faster than our ability to fully exploit it. It will take some imaginative entrepreneurs to take advantage of these technologies to enable new business concepts. This is a great example of alternative commercial applications of existing technology. Just because it was built to design commercial aircraft doesn’t mean it can’t be used to make the perfect backpack just for you.

The case for optimism is strong.

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For the past 30 years, Bill has helped executives in technology-driven industries transform their competencies to deliver results. He is a highly regarded consultant, speaker, and writer on the topics of innovation strategy, product development, portfolio management, technology commercialization, and the software systems that enable innovation. Keep up with Bill's latest research and thoughts on innovation and the rising role of the Chief Innovation Officer at www.TheChiefInnovationOfficer.com.