Numetrics measures 45-nm IC project schedule risk

Software measures schedule risk of 45 nm IC projects, delivers enhanced staffing and schedule estimates, and interfaces with enterprise tools.

By Ann Steffora Mutschler, Senior Editor -- Electronic Business, 3/24/2008

Extending top-down project planning and risk measurement capabilities, Cupertino, Calif.-based semiconductor design schedule predictability software company Numetrics Management Systems Inc today detailed its NMX-ERP 3.0 enterprise resource planning (ERP) software for IC design organizations, which handles chips designed in nodes down to 45 nm.

Aimed at boosting customer's revenue, profits and market share, with projects finishing on-time, within budget and with competitive cycle times, Numetrics said 6 of the top 10 semiconductor companies are using the software, with NXP Semiconductors today discussing its 3-year, multi-million Euro licensing agreement with Numetrics for the software and services, following a year-long evaluation of Numetrics.

This next generation release of NMX-ERP includes a new graphical user interface, a new project plan synthesis engine, an XML interface to integrate with other enterprise tools, and Numetrics' 8th generation IC design complexity calculation engine.

Ron Collett, Numetrics' president and CEO explained in a statement, "The semiconductor industry misses product development 89% of the time, and when they miss, they miss big, with the average chip design taking 6 to 9 months longer than anticipated."

"The cost to cost to semiconductor companies is staggering, and increasing design complexity threatens to make the problem worse. NMX-ERP 3.0 is a culmination of nearly two years of effort by our development organization and a significant leap forward for our customers," he continued.

"Our solution is truly unique because it is the only one that accurately measures IC development schedule risk and exposes overly risky project plans by benchmarking their underlying assumptions against industry norms and past performance," Collett added.

Features of the tool include:

1) Complexity Calculation Engine: 8th generation of Numetrics' patented complexity calculation engine leverages in-depth data mining of past generations of process technology nodes to establish a quantitative relationship between process node maturity and chip design complexity. The engine is calibrated on Numetrics' full industry database of 1,200 IC projects and support

design styles including SoC, analog and mixed-signal, RF, ASICs, ASSPs, and advanced processors.

2) Project Plan Synthesis. New project plan synthesis engine generates estimates of duration and staffing required in each major phase of the IC development cycle. Users can perform "what-if" simulation on each phase, modulating either the duration or staffing to see the impact on the other.

3) XML-interface: NMX-ERP 3.0 now offers enterprise-wide integration options for collecting, reporting, and archiving customers' valuable project data. With the newly released XML schema, customers are able to rapidly exchange data between NMX-ERP 3.0 and their internal systems.

4) New GUI: New Java-based, rich-client, graphical user interface further enhances the usability of Numetrics tools. Dozens of new features were added in this release to allow users to customize reporting and viewing of the data.

Pricing ranges from $35,000 to $95,000 per IC project, depending on the project's complexity and size. NMX-ERP 3.0 is delivered as "software as a service," or for users who prefer a pure turnkey engagement, Numetrics also offers professional services

Rene Penning de Vries, NXP's CTO noted, "Numetrics tools give us an objective assessment of schedule accuracy and staffing levels on our active projects every quarter, together with an industry benchmark of our product development and planning performance."

NXP also said its partnership with Numetrics has resulted in an extensive and mature design performance database which NXP applies extensively to project planning processes, which allows the company to close the loop between actual and planned project development performance and provides us with very high confidence in achieving on-time delivery, first-time-right, for customers.

"Fact-based project planning enabled by Numetrics is now consistently embedded in our project management process and is applied to over 100 projects at any given time across all our sites,' de Vries added.

Numetrics' quantitative approach to schedule risk measurement gives customers a powerful tool for early identification of unrealistic targets, reducing schedule slip and increasing both revenue and profitability, Collett concluded.

About Numetrics Management Systems, Inc.

Numetrics provides a unique suite of enterprise resource planning (ERP) software to semiconductor companies that enables unprecedented predictability of development schedules, reliably measures project schedule risk, and benchmarks development performance against the industry's best-in-class. In use by six of the top ten semiconductor companies, the solution leverages Numetrics' patented IC design complexity calculation engine, which is calibrated with statistical data from more than 1,200 benchmarked chip projects compiled from nearly 40 semiconductor companies. The Numetrics' NMX-ERP™ solution enables superior project schedule estimation, risk

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