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US Media Contact:

Khyati Shah
Edelman
800 West El Camino Real Ste. 400
Mountain View, CA 94040
USA
www.edelman.com
Telephone: 650-429-2769
Fax:: 650-625-1468
Email: khyati.shah@edelman.com

Corporate Media Contact:

Elisa Davies
Altium Limited
Level 3, 12a Rodborough Road
Frenchs Forest, NSW 2086
Australia
www.altium.com
Telephone: +61 2 9975 7710
Fax: +61 2 9975 7720
Email: elisa.davies@altium.com.au

Altium Designer 6.0 simplifies deployment across enterprises

Strengthened component data and document management, and streamlined migration for legacy designs

SYDNEY, Australia – December 5, 2005 – Altium Limited (ASX: ALU), a leading developer of Windows-based electronics design software, today announced that Altium Designer 6.0, the latest version of its unified electronic product development system, includes new and upgraded data management capabilities designed to make it significantly easier to integrate with company parts and document control systems. Migration of legacy designs created in other design tools has also been significantly streamlined. Altium Designer 6.0 will have immediate benefits for medium and large-scale engineering organizations by reducing the complexity of software deployment and maximizing the return on investment in electronic product design software.

Database-driven component information system

In medium and large-scale engineering organizations, management of component information is typically handled centrally to ensure standardized component use, efficient part procurement and streamlined manufacturing. Altium Designer 6.0 includes support for full database-driven component libraries that delivers easy integration with company ERP, MRP and PLM systems, and native support for interfacing to OrCAD® CIS parts databases.

With Altium Designer 6.0, designers can select and place parts directly from a central database library. The database library links all component information, including internal part numbers, pricing and part stock levels, and dynamically extracts this information as components are used in a design. During bill of materials (BOM) generation, component data extracted from the design is synchronized with the database and combined with database-specific information to create a comprehensive BOM. This ensures accurate and up-to-information is flowed through to procurement and assembly, and eliminates

production delays and cost overruns caused by specification of incorrect or out-of-stock parts, or the inadvertent use of identical parts from different suppliers within a single design. It also allows companies to maintain product quality by limiting design to parts from preferred suppliers.

Enhanced support for document version control

Increasingly, engineering organizations are using version control systems to manage the huge flow of documents created and edited by design teams. Altium Designer 6.0 offers enhanced support for linking to Subversion-based document control systems. From within Altium Designer 6.0 users can easily link local folders to folders in Subversion repositories, including folders that are not directly within the project hierarchy, and non-project documents can be put under version control. Setting up Altium Designer 6.0 for use with Subversion-based systems has also been made significantly easier.

Altium Designer's strengthened support for version control also makes it easier for design teams of any size to work collaboratively on projects. With Altium Designer 6.0 organizations can streamline the processes of revision control, change management and document backup, and fully-integrate the design process with organization-wide document management.

Streamlined project migration

Many larger companies are looking to lower software and IT support costs by moving from disparate collections of design tools to a standardized solution across the organization. One problem encountered in this process is the need to migrate legacy designs to the new system. Altium Designer 6.0 makes this process easier with a new, unified design import system that consolidates and integrates the import of design documents from a variety of sources.

The import system handles the import of both schematics and PCB designs from a wide range of third-party tools, as well as managing the relationship between them. This allows complete externally-created legacy projects to be quickly brought into and continued within Altium Designer. The system also allows the batch import of multiple projects to facilitate rapid migration of large sets of legacy design data. The import engines themselves have been strengthened to intelligently handle translation and object mapping during import, and a new Import Wizard guides designers through the integrated import process.

At a design level, Altium Designer 6.0 adds native support for the popular PSpice® syntax for mixed-signal circuit simulations. This allows users to directly use simulation models from virtually any source within Altium Designer, and provides seamless migration from PSpice-based legacy systems.

More flexible licensing

With the release of Altium Designer 6.0, Altium has introduced new purchasing and deployment options, including a new time-based licensing scheme alongside the more traditional perpetual license rights. Time-based licensing is gaining popularity with organizations of all sizes as it provides for a lower initial

capital outlay and streamlines ongoing software budget expenditure. It also allows companies to more easily control their design software inventory in response to changing personnel and project needs.

"*Altium Designer is increasingly becoming the solution of choice for medium-sized and larger-scale electronics engineering companies, and Altium Designer 6.0 makes the integration process for these companies significantly easier,"* says Nick Martin, founder and CEO of Altium. "*We've focused on providing organizations with the features and capabilities they need to successfully integrate Altium Designer with their company design management systems, while minimizing the overheads associated with deploying and maintaining the system and maximizing their return on investment."*

Deployment and integration-focused highlights in Altium Designer 6.0

- Support for full database-driven component information system and database part libraries.
- Full synchronization of part information with database libraries during BOM generation.
- Ability to include database part information directly in generated BOMs.
- Unified project and design document import system with batch import facilities.
- Additional import support, including: Protel 99 SE, CircuitMaker 2000, P-CAD, OrCAD®, PADS®
- Improved import and export of 2D and 3D CAD files.
- Enhanced integration with version control and easier linking of local and repository directories, particularly within Subversion-based systems.
- Support for direct use of PSpice® models during circuit simulations.
- XML-based reports engine for easy formatting and sharing across an organization.
- Enhanced documentation features – data can be copied from a wide variety of internal and external sources including Excel, Word, PDF, the web etc. and included in schematic sheets.
- Better support for design reuse with the ability to store 'Snippets' of schematic or PCB circuitry and reuse them within or between designs.
- Web-based automatic update capabilities for easier deployment of services packs and hot fixes.

Availability and pricing

Altium Designer 6.0 is available for immediate purchase through Altium's sales and support centers worldwide. For pricing and information about Altium Designers flexible product licensing options, customers should contact their local Altium sales and support center.

About Altium Limited

Altium Limited (ASX: ALU) is a global developer and supplier of electronics design software for the Microsoft Windows environment. Founded in 1985, Altium released the world's first Microsoft Windows–based printed circuit board design tool in 1991, and continues to provide advanced, easy-to-use and affordable software design tools for complete electronic product development to electronics engineers, designers, and developers worldwide.

Altium is headquartered in Sydney, Australia, with sales and support offices in Australia, the United States, Japan, China and Europe – as well as maintaining a large reseller network in all other major markets.

For more information please visit www.altium.com.