NDR 2019 Conference Summary

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The National Data Repository (NDR) Conference 2019 was held in Utrecht, Netherlands in October. One hundred and fifteen delegates congregated from all corners of the globe, to share their current NDR status or development of one. The theme highlighted by our host TNO, was to discuss Challenges in Managing NDRs. This was done through several organisation and country presentations as well as more subject-specific break-out sessions.   An NDR was not present in every country.   However, it was interesting to follow how those countries placed management systems and business processes to cater to data management needs, as well as compliance demands, compared to NDR-led ones. Recurrent issues appeared to be experienced across the board and; therefore, it was a beneficial meeting.

 TNO graciously hosted the NDR Conference at the Hotel Mitland, where delegates had a meet and greet over friendly plays of bowling. This was a lot of fun for everyone, and a great chance to network and catch up informally before the conference started the next day. The lobby of the alley was garnished with scrumptious foods and refreshing drinks, as delegates met with colleagues and met new faces. By the end of the evening, everyone was ready get started in the morning with the first day of the conference.

 Country presentations kicked off and we learnt of the state of play from Australia, Denmark, Ghana, Greenland, Ireland, Kenya, Netherlands, Norway, Nigeria, Trinidad, Somalia and United Kingdom. Some countries had an established NDR, whilst others had completely unique structures that function, as an NDR would.

Some NDRs are still developing and described their journey and successes. A few countries demonstrated the difficulties of performing the NDR responsibilities with skeleton staffing levels. That challenge was largely heartfelt, and many questions arose how to tackle such a pressure within teams that are delivering such an essential and valuable national service.

There was a strong spirit of collaboration at the conference, as delegates engaged with one another about emerging industry solutions and innovations on the horizon. The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (NPD) showcased their ongoing support with several African countries in developing their NDRs.   The countries receiving this leadership can be found within the Africa Petroleum Data Management Forum (APDMF).   Namely Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda. A presentation by the APDMF offered delegates an update on developments and challenges from member states. It was a memorable experience to view successful NDR leadership, mentorship and development in progress.

As the NDR conference continued, several breakout sessions were held. Technological advances in data integrity, security and scalability, were discussed. Best practices and cloud applications were shared. The Capabilities Breakout explored ways in which, learning about Data and keeping up with developments can be a challenge to the NDR community. A few proposals on what to do with that arose, including the possibility of exposing future delegates to a Slack channel and a Hackathon at the next NDR Conference in 2021!

The Cultural and Regulatory framework breakout session learned that having an NDR has been beneficial to the United Kingdom, as data is now open and accessible for its users. The Standards breakout session by Energistics discussed how standards can be applied by submittal, delivery and

storage formats to improve processes. The PPDM Association's interactive breakout session looked at various challenges such as the Regulatory Stack, Asset Identification and the significance of Data Trust, amongst many others.

The Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) breakout session explored who is responsible for the data and where does an NDR's responsibility stop.   The Target presentation highlighted the regulatory challenges in the oil and gas Industry and an explanation of UNFC framework. An intriguing presentation about NDR services and vendors occurred and topics such as data sharing, data security and the accessibility of AI/ML were covered.

Johan Krebbers presented the Open Group's new platform, the Open Subsurface Data Universe (OSDU). The OSDU is a platform that focuses centrally on data. Any kind of data, structured or not, upon receipt is separated from applications. For example, it can be as varied as seismic data, drilling logs, Big Data and proprietary databases plus so much more, and all received on the public cloud.

This service can still operate in a non-cloud environment, which is a great benefit for areas without cloud services or countries that do not permit subsurface data to leave the country at all.   This promotes and facilitates access to Data, even metadata and its storage; whilst maintaining essential concepts of the Data Life cycle and simultaneously delivering value to business processes.

Many questions arose about how OSDU handles the distribution of data to end-users in relation to data security, but; it was explained that all features of information security were ensured to be intact on the platform. The collaboration between OSDU and PPDM is significant. It is an innovative and beneficial leap forward in terms of continuing to deliver the very Mission of PPDM, which is to support interoperability of people, processes and data.

Many thanks to the NDR Conference 2019 sponsors: CGG, Target, Schlumberger, Dell Technologies, The Open Group, Stephenson Associates, Kadme, PPDM, Energistics, Troika, Diskos, NPD and TNO. TNO was not only a sponsor but also the Host of the Conference, so a special thanks to TNO for catering to all the conference delegates' needs.

The link to all Presentations and Breakout Sessions are available on the NDR Conference Website https://ndr2019.org/