Digital Twins

state-of-the-art, use cases, and new trends

Carlos Canal - ITIS Software, University of Málaga Sergio Laso - Quercus SEG, University of Extremadura

SummerSOC 2025

Hersonissos (Crete), June 16th - 21th, 2025

Digital Twins Part I

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Contents

Introduction

- the hype of Digital Twins
- Definition & Properties
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- Architecture of Digital Twin Systems
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 - some examples
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 - Fidelity Assessment
- Technologies & Platforms
 - OpenTwins



The Hype - News

NVIDIA Unveils 'Mega' Omniverse Blueprint for Building Industrial Robot Fleet Digital Twins

New framework enables next era of industrial AI and robot simulation through software-defined testing and optimization to factories and warehouses.

January 6, 2025 by Madison Huang



BIOTECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH

Digital twins of human organs are here. They're set to transform medical treatment.

The models can be used to plan surgeries and in the future could be used to help trial new drugs.

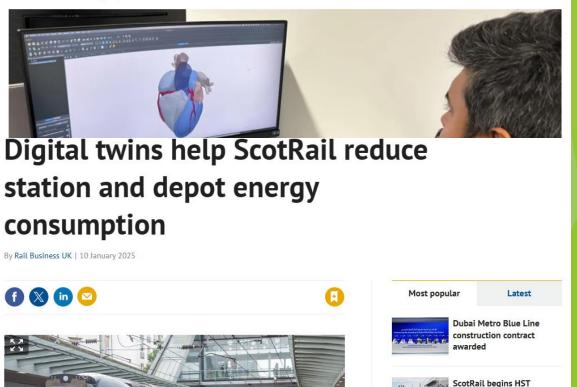
by **Jessica Hamzelou** December 19, 2024 A healthy heart beats at a steady rate, between 60 and 100 times a minute. That's not the case for all of us, I'm reminded, as I look inside a cardboard box containing around 20 plastic hearts—each a replica of a real human one.

Why 'digital twins' could speed up drug discovery

13 December 2024

Share < Save 🕂

MaryLou Costa Technology Reporter



Research works in DBLP

2025

 Sunil Gupta, Ravi S. Iyer, Sanjeev Kumar: Digital Twins - Advancements in Theory, Implementation, and Applications. Springer 2025, ISBN 978-3-031-76563-6, pp. 1-196
 Changhua Hu, Zeming Zhang, Chuanyang Li, Mingzhe Leng, Zhaoqiang Wang, Xinyi Wan, Chen Chen: A state of the art in digital twin for intelligent fault diagnosis. Adv. Eng. Informatics 63: 102963 (2025)
 Sergio Infante , Julia Robles , Cristian Martín, Bartolomé Rubio, Manuel Díaz: Distributed digital twins on the open-source OpenTwins for Eng. Informatic Peng Zhu, Lei Deng Press

Le la compute sation network mbalanced 2001
Le compute sation network

 Eng. Informatic
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 2025 (50)

 2024 (1,854)
 2023 (1,721)

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 2022 (1,157)

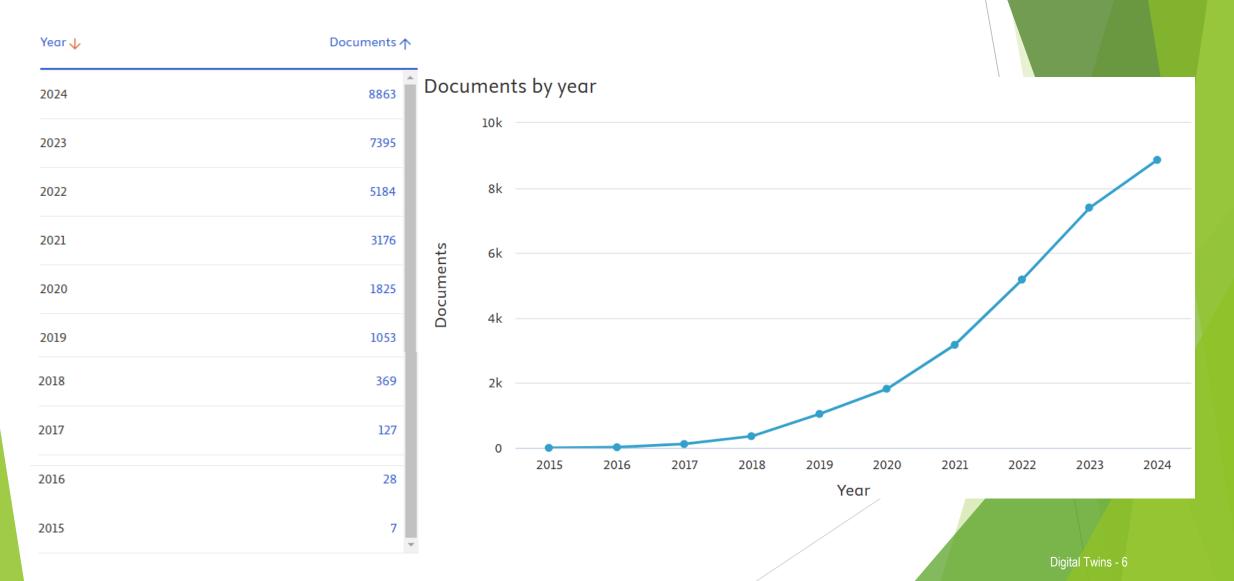
 2021 (671)
 2020 (349)

 Veb3 techn
 2019 (195)

 2018 (77)
 2017 (16)

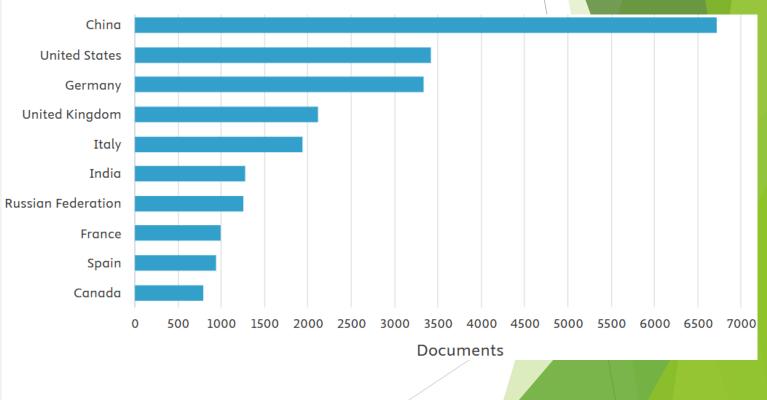
 2016 (4)
 3 more options

Research works in SCOPUS



Research works by country

Country/Territory ↑ Documents 🗸 China 6712 United States 3419 Germany 3328 United Kingdom 2109 🔳 Italy 1937 🔳 India 1269 **Russian Federation** 1250 France 992 Spain 936



Definition / Concept

- What is a Digital Twin?
 - what are its main features?
 - and its required components?
- Let's ask someone informed...

An answer - ChatGPT

Good morning, what is a digital twin?

Good morning! A **digital twin** is a virtual representation of a physical object, system, or process that is continuously updated with real-time data. It mirrors the physical counterpart as accurately as possible and is used to monitor performance, predict outcomes, and support decision-making.

Key features of a digital twin:

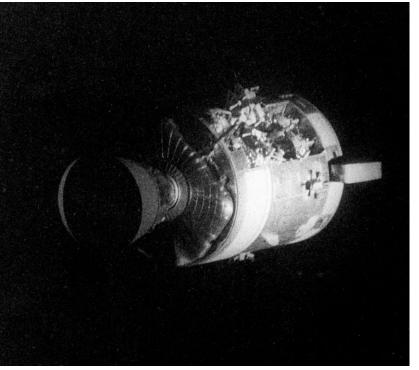


- **Real-time data:** It uses sensors or other data sources to stay in sync with the physical version.
- **Simulation:** It can simulate different scenarios to predict how changes will affect performance or behavior.
- Analytics: Uses AI and machine learning to analyze data and generate insights.
- Lifecycle integration: It can track the full lifecycle of a product—from design to operation and maintenance.
- Gemini, Copilot, DeepSeek, and <u>Wikipedia</u> provide very similar answers.

A brief history of Digital Twins



► The Apollo 13 Mission (1970)

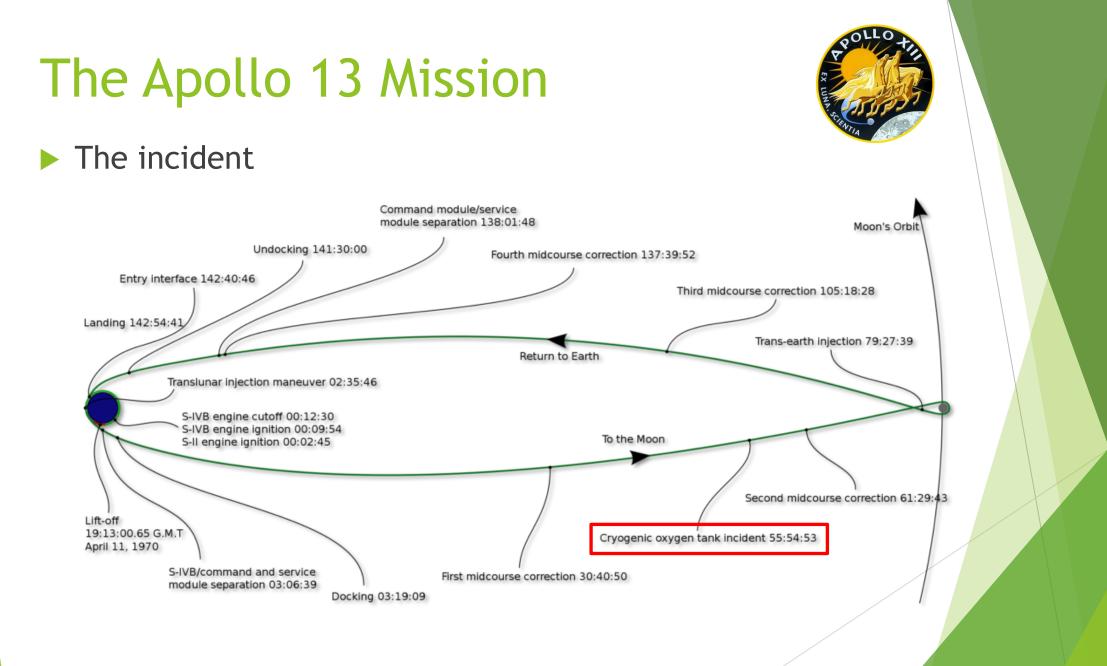


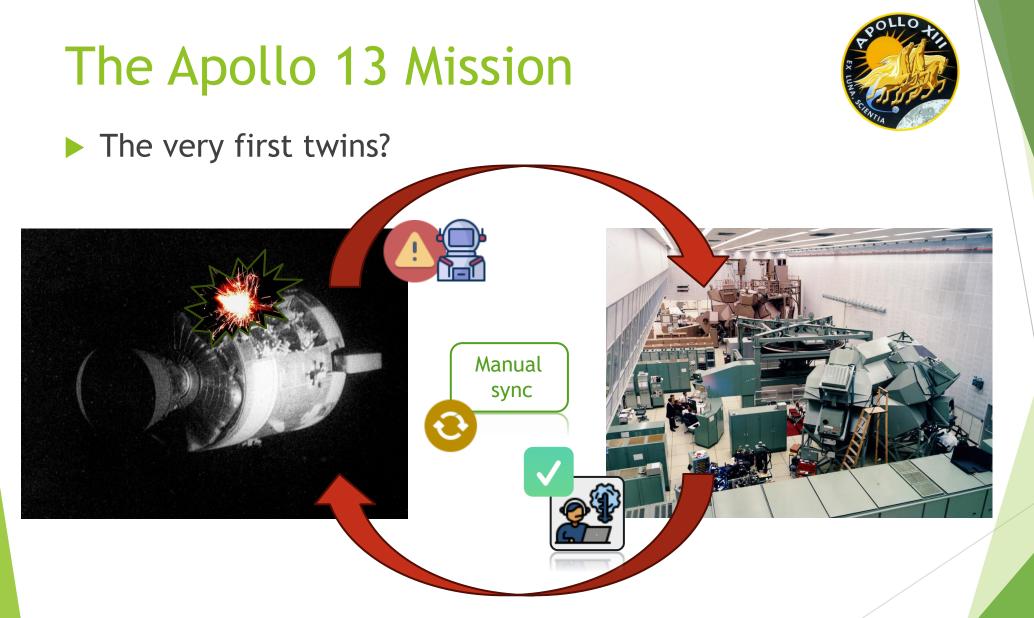
The Apollo 13



Its "Digital Twin" on Earth

https://blogs.sw.siemens.com/simcenter/apollo-13-the-first-digital-twin





but synchronization was performed manually.

First definitions of a Digital Twin



The concept was first established by M. Grieves:

- within a course on Product Lyfecycle Management in the Univ. of Michigan (2003)
- though instead of DT, he used the term Mirrored Spaces Model G
- ► The first definition comes from M. Shafto et al:

A **digital twin** is an integrated multi-physics, multi-scale, probabilistic simulation of a vehicle or system that uses the best available physical models, sensor updates, fleet history, etc., to mirror the life of its flying twin.

> Modeling, Simulation, Information Technology & Processing Roadmap National Aeronautics and Space Administration (2012)

A more general definition appeared in a later paper by M. Grieves:

A **digital twin** is a virtual representation of what has been produced.

Digital Twin: Manufacturing excellence through virtual factory replication Florida Institute of Technology, White Paper (2014)

... but there are many more

ELSEVIER	Contents lists available at ScienceDirect The Journal of Systems & Software journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jss		356 papers reviewed
A Cross-Domain Systematic Mapping Study on Software Engineering for Digital Twins*		Check for updates	112 definitions of the term
Manuela Dalibor ^{a,1} , Nico Jansen ^a , Bernhard Rumpe ^a , David Schmalzing ^a , Louis Wachtmeister ^a , Manuel Wimmer ^b , Andreas Wortmann ^{c,*}		"Digital twin"	
	chen University, Germany sess Informatics – Software Engineering, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria g of Machine Tools and Manufacturing Unit (ISW), University of Stuttgart, Germany		

Companion website

Dalibor et al. "A Cross-Domain Systematic Mapping Study on Software Engineering for Digital Twins", The Journal of Systems and Software, vol. 193, 2022.

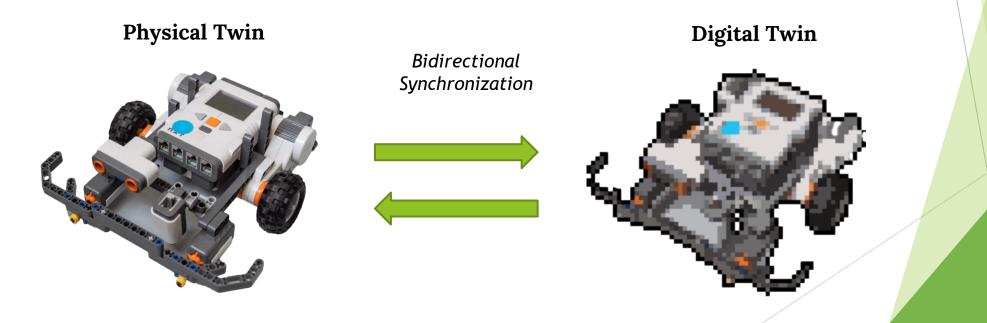
Several of these definitions

- Some of them are too vague:
 - Digital equivalent to a physical product.
 - Simulation method that can be used for evaluation and optimization.
 - Model-based representation of entities of the real world such as machines, cars, or persons.
 - Simplified numerical model.
- Some of them are specific of a certain domain:
 - Virtual replica of the printing hardware.
 - Set of virtual information that fully describes a potential or actual physical production from the micro atomic level to the macro geometrical level.
 - Virtual model of the physical plant.
 - Software model composed of 3D physical, mechanical, and electrical data along with detailed information about its assembly process and instructions on production.

Definition of the DT Consortium

A digital twin is an integrated data-driven virtual representation of real-world entities and processes, with synchronized interaction at a specified frequency and fidelity.

Digital Twin Consortium, Glossary of digital twins (2021)



To sum up

- A Digital Twin is either a fill the gap of its physical (PT) counterpart?
 - model
 - simulator
 - dashboard
 - ✓ control loop
 - prediction system
 - machine learning (ML) system
- Yes (to all) but:
 - the physical twin could be any physical entity, but also a process, a software system, etc.
 - there is a synchronous and automated feedback loop communication between both twins.
 - A Digital Twin System is a pair of coupled physical/digital twins.

Properties of Digital Twin Systems

Representativeness & Contextualization

the DT must mimic the status of the PT, considering only the features that are relevant to the context.

Reflection

the PT is timely and univocally represented by the attributes, status, and behavior of its DT.

Entanglement

the information representing the PT must be received in (close to) real-time by the DT.

Predictability

- the DT may be used to simulate the behaviour of the PT to determine the outcomes in a likely future or context.
 - E. Pretel, A. Moya, E. Navarro, V. López-Jaquero, P. González. Analysing the synergies between Multi-agent Systems and Digital Twins: A systematic literature review, Information and Software Technology, vol. 174, 2024.

Properties of Digital Twin Systems (2)

Persistency

the DT maintains a continuously updated and accurate virtual representation of the PT over time.

Memorization

the DT must store all meaningful past and present data and the context in which they originated for later analysis.

Replication

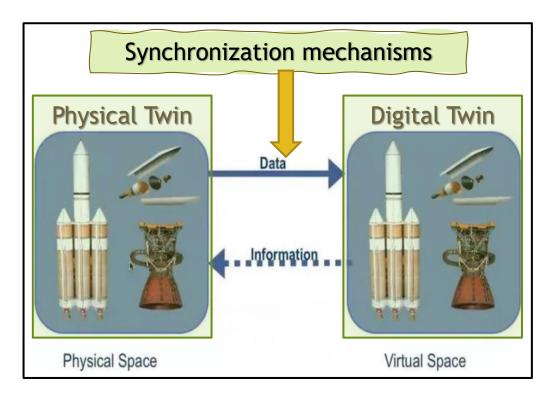
DTs may replicate the PT in different contexts, each replica addressing specific characteristics

Composability

- DTs can be composed so that both the individual and composed objects can be observed and controlled.
- Manageability
 - the DT enhances the PT by an API that facilitates its management, which also allows to deal with damages or problems of both PT/DT.

Architecture of a Digital Twin System

3D architecture

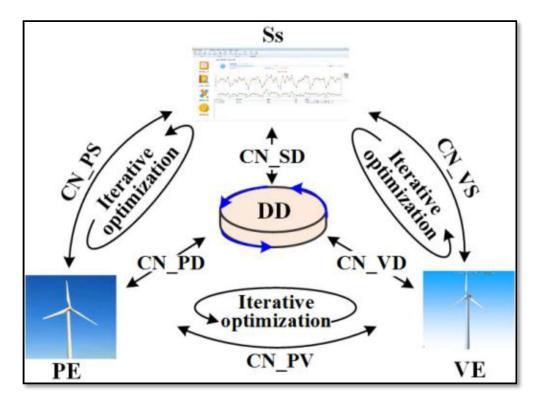


M. Grieves, "Digital twin: Manufacturing excellence through virtual factory replication," White paper, 2014.

Digital Twins - 20

Architecture of a Digital Twin System

5D architecture



- Physical Entity (PE)
- Virtual Entity (VE)
- Data lake (DD)
- Communications (CNs)
- Services (Ss)
 - User dashboard
 - Data analysis
 - Anomaly detection
 - Predictive maintenance

• ...

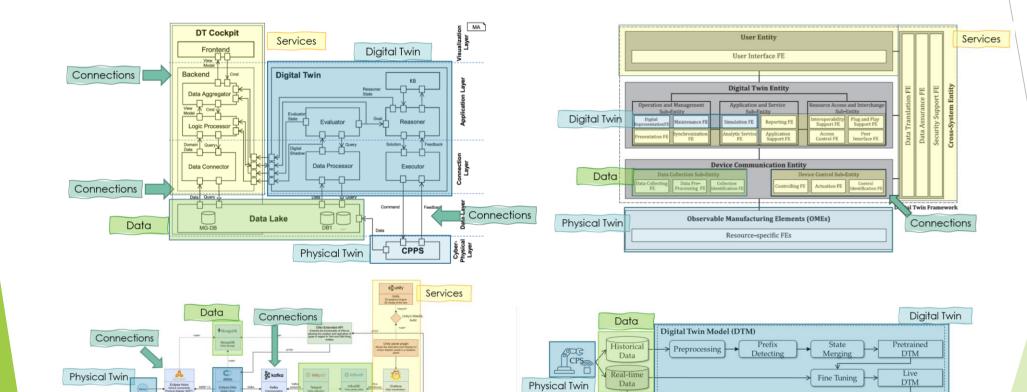
Tao, M. Zhang, Y. Liu, N.Y.C. Nee, "Digital twin driven prognostics and health management for complex equipment," CIRP Annals, vol. 67, no. 1, pp. 169-172, May. 2018.

Architectures in the Literature

Digital Twin

Essential functionality Compositional support Data prediction with Machine Learning

3D representation of the state of the twin



Connections

Services

Digital Twin Capability (DTC)

Noise

Generator

Discriminator

D

Cross Entropy

Loss

Fake Unlabeled

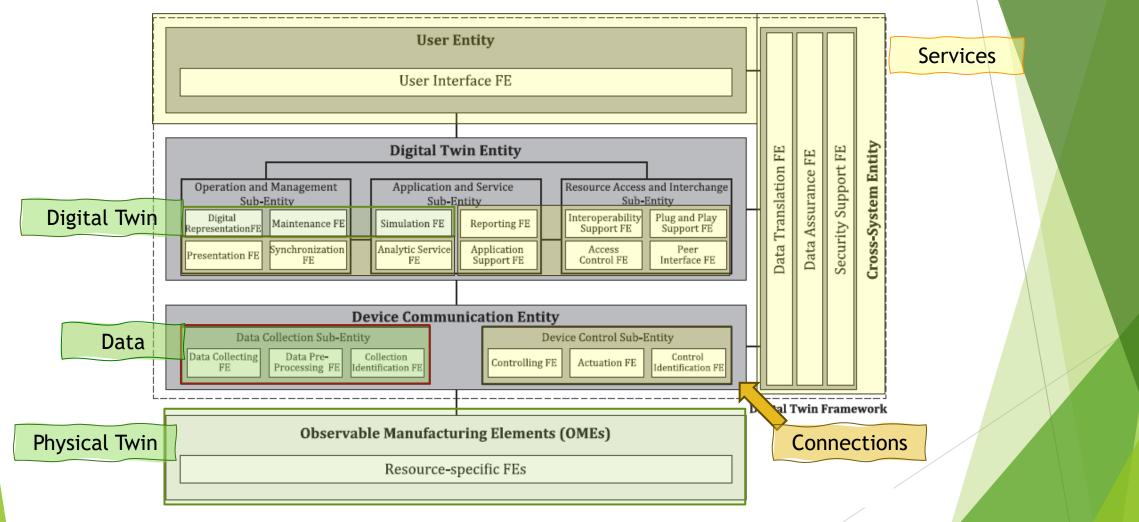
Sample

Fake Labeled

Sample

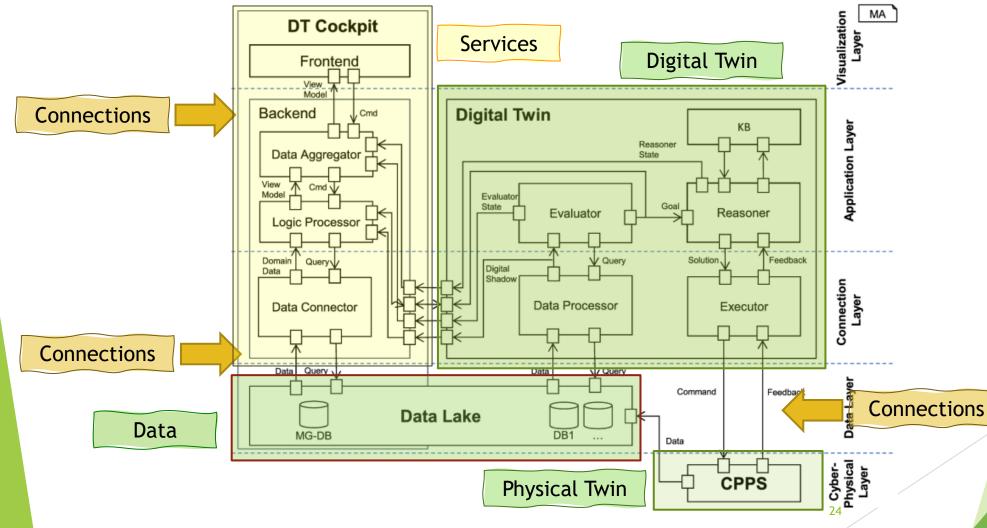
Ground Truth Labelling

Digital Twin Architecture by ISO



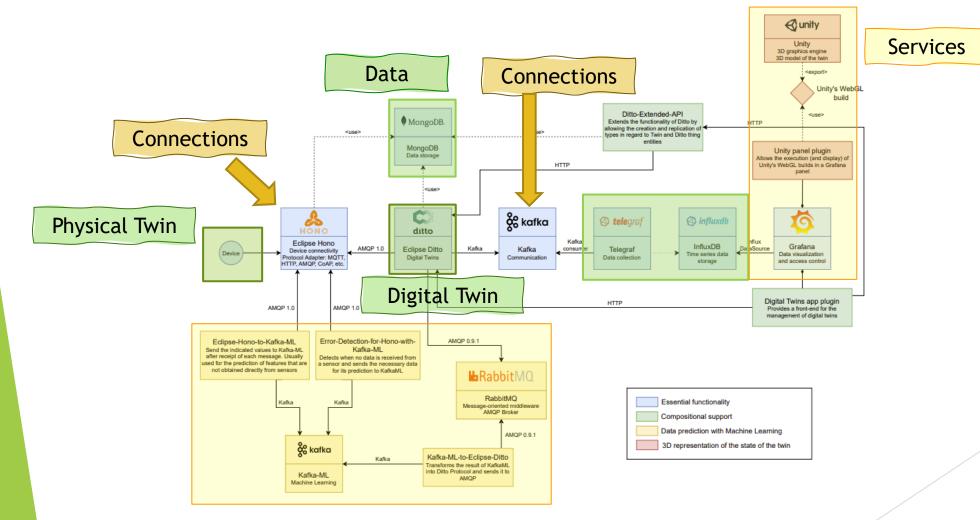
ISO 23247:2021, Automation systems and integration - Digital Twin Framework for manufacturing, International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 2021.

Digital Twin Architecture in MontiArch



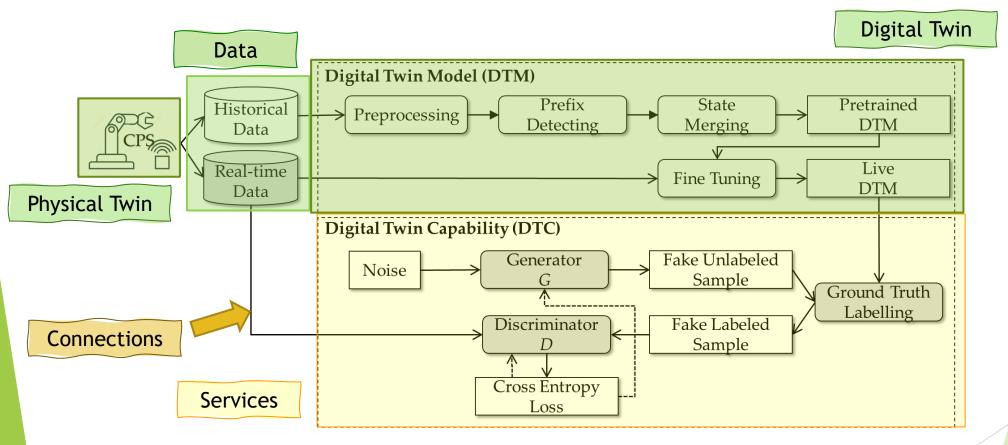
M. Dalibor, J. Michael, B. Rumpe, S. Varga, and A. Wortmann, "Towards a model-driven architecture for interactive digital twin cockpits," In Proc. ER'20.

Digital Twin Architecture in OpenTwins



J. Robles, C. Martin and M- Diaz - OpenTwins: an open-source framework for the development of next-gen compositional digital twins

Digital Twin Architecture for CPS



Q. Xu, S. Ali, and T. Yue. 2023. Digital Twin-based Anomaly Detection with Curriculum Learning in Cyber-physical Systems. ACM Trans. Softw. Eng. Methodol. 32, 5, Article 113 (September 2023), 32 pages.

Fields of application

Digital Twins can be used in virtually any field:

- Manufacturing: Monitor machinery for predictive maintenance.
- Smart cities: Model traffic flow, infrastructures, or energy use.
- Healthcare: Simulate patient health scenarios.
- Aerospace & automotive: Test performance or design changes.

Manufacturing	252	70,79%
Information & Communication	47	13,20%
Energy	17	4,77%
Construction	12	3,37%
Mining	9	2,53%
Health	8	2,25%
Transportation & Storage	6	1,68%
Education	4	1,12%
Agriculture	1	0,28%



A Cross-Domain Systematic Mapping Study on Software Engineering for Digital Twins*



Manuela Dalibor ^{a,1}, Nico Jansen ^a, Bernhard Rumpe ^a, David Schmalzing ^a, Louis Wachtmeister ^a, Manuel Wimmer ^b, Andreas Wortmann ^{c,*}

Software Engineering, RWTH Aachen University, Germany

^b CDL-MINT, Department of Business Informatics – Software Engineering, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria
^c Institute for Control Engineering of Machine Tools and Manufacturing Unit (ISW), University of Stuttgart, Germany





- DTs in Astrophysics
 - James Webb telescope, for monitoring its deployment
 - 800M data items processed daily
 - visualize and predict effects of changes & troubleshoot issues
 - OSIRIS-REx project, for collecting samples from asteroids
 - ▶ Bennu (2023) & Apophis (2029)
 - helping navigating in microgravity environments
 - responding to changes & uncertainties by processing RT data
 - Digital Twin Earth
 - For monitoring and forecasting of natural and human activities
 - visualize environmental changes, support climate policies, and improve resource management

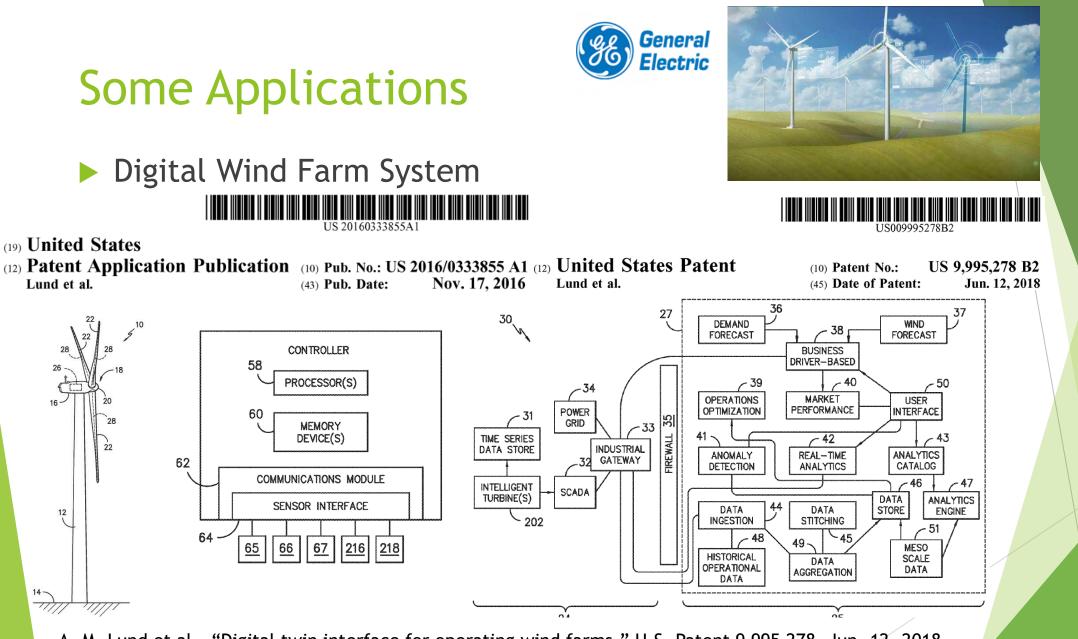
S. Brunswick. The Transformative Power Of Digital Twin Technology In Space Exploration. Forbes Technology Council, Sep 13, 2024





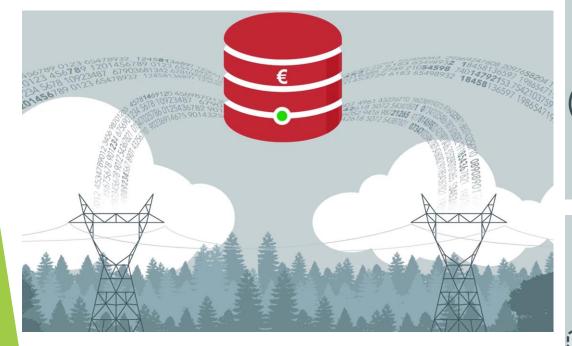


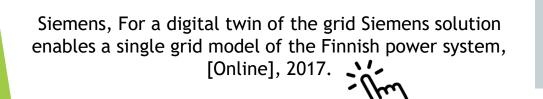
Digital Twins - 28

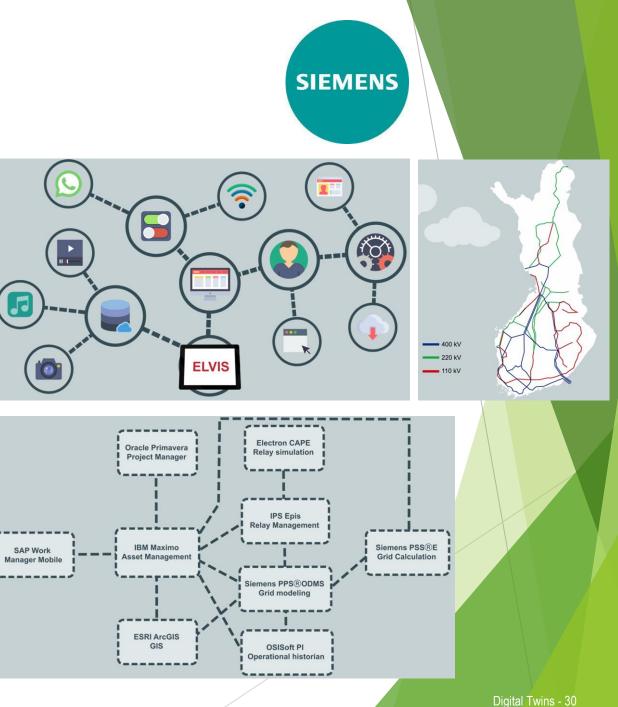


A. M. Lund et al., "Digital twin interface for operating wind farms," U.S. Patent 9 995 278, Jun. 12, 2018 A. M. Lund et al., "Digital wind farm system," U.S. Patent Application 15/075 231, Nov. 17, 2016

Finland's Electricity Network



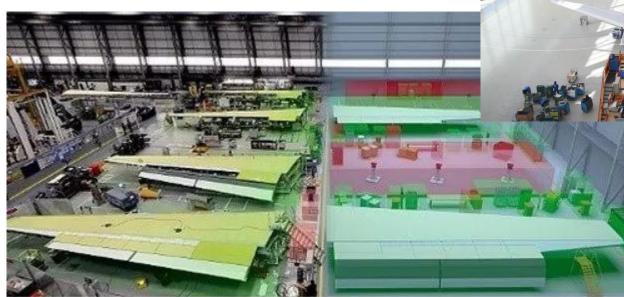




Oil and gas extraction

Digital Twin Insider, BP Digital Twin Technology to Enhance Global Oil and Gas Operations, [Online], 2024.

Aircraft Manufacturing Plant



SME, IIoT Platform Creates A Digital Twin of F-35 Manufacturing Facilities, [Online], 2017.





Tesla's Digital Twins





TESLA

Literally every Tesla sold has a digital representation that reflects its real-world counterpart"

M. Kalil, Tesla's Digital Twins, [Online], 2024.

Agriculture

- Addressing issues such as:
 - Farms and animal welfare
 - Irrigation
 - Resource usage
 - Machinery
 - Crop yield







Agricultural Systems Volume 189, April 2021, 103046



Digital twins in smart farming

<u>Cor Verdouw ^{a b} A ⊠</u>, <u>Bedir Tekinerdogan ^a</u>, <u>Adrie Beulens ^a</u>, <u>Sjaak Wolfert ^{a c}</u>

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2020.103046 7

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C. Verdouw, B. Tekinerdogan, A. Beulens, S. Wolfert. Digital twins in smart farming, Agricultural Systems, vol. 189, 2021, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2020.103046

Smart Cities

- Urban Digital Twins (UDTs)
- Addressing issues such as:
 - Urban planning
 - City infrastructures
 - ► Traffic
 - Energy consumption



N. Mohammadi and J. E. Taylor, "Smart city digital twins," 2017 IEEE Symposium Series on Computational Intelligence (SSCI), Honolulu, 2017, pp. 1-5, doi:10.1109/SSCI.2017.8285439.

Healthcare

- Addressing issues such as:
 - Developing personalized treatments
 - Drug discovery and development
 - Monitoring chronic disease health data
 - Organ-specific digital twins: heart, lung, kidney,...
 - Optimizing hospital operation and workflows
 - Training surgeons
 - Emergency response
 - Remote patient monitoring
 - Population health

Katsoulakis, E., Wang, Q., Wu, H. et al. Digital twins for health: a scoping review. Digit. Med. 7, 77 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41746-024-01073-0

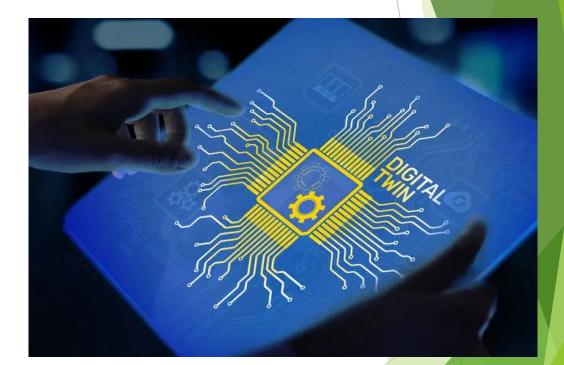




Some Applications

- Information and Communication
 - Addressing issues such as:
 - Network infrastructures
 - Ericsson Site Digital Twin
 - Telecom sites
 - ▶ UE Hexa-X 6G project





R. Dong, et al., "Deep Learning for Hybrid 5G Services in Mobile Edge Computing Systems: Learn From a Digital Twin," in IEEE Trans. Wireless Communications, vol. 18, no. 10, pp. 4692-4707, Oct. 2019, doi: 10.1109/TWC.2019.2927312.

Some Applications

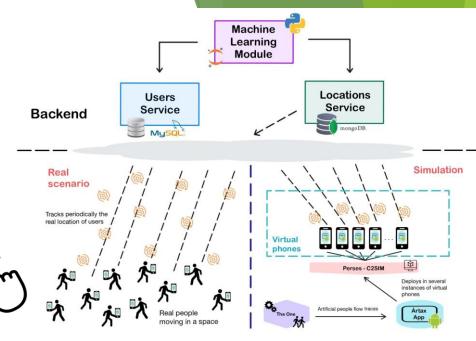
- Artax a DT for people's movement in crowds
 - as part of the research project:

Including People in Smart City Applications

- the phone builds a Digital Avatar of its owner
 - virtual profile with their habits, preferences, etc.
 - including their movements as a sequence of GPS positions
 - that can be served to third-parties on demand
- Individuals are considered as first-class entities of the DT
 - providing RT information from individuals in a specific area

A. Perez-Vereda, R. Hervas, C. Canal. Digital Avatars: A programming framework for personalized human interactions through virtual profiles. Pervasive and Mobile Computing, 87:101718 (17 pp.), Elsevier, 2022.

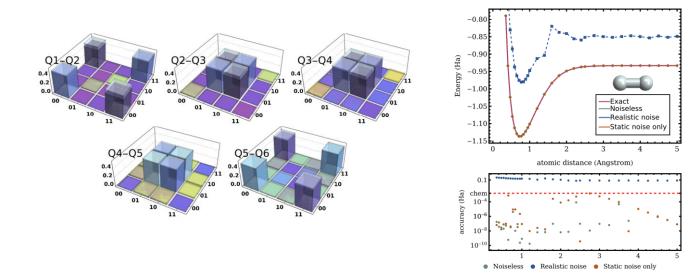
I. Alba, J. Troya, C. Canal. Towards a Digital Twin System for Human Crowd Motion Prediction. EDOC 2024. Lecture Notes in Business Information Processing, vol 537. Springer (2025).





Some Applications

- A DT of Noisy Quantum Computers
 - parametric error model of transmon qubit devices
 - For understanding and mitigating noise in NISQ QPUs





C. Gustiani, T. Jones, S. C. Benjamin. The Virtual Quantum Device (VQD): A tool for detailed emulation of quantum computers. Quantum 9: 1642 (2025).

Research Challenges

Many industrial initiatives for building DTs

developed in an *ad-hoc* manner

Lack of Software Engineering methods in their development

standards

- methodologies
- frameworks & tools
- data fusion & curation
- interoperability, composition & deployment
- validation & evaluation

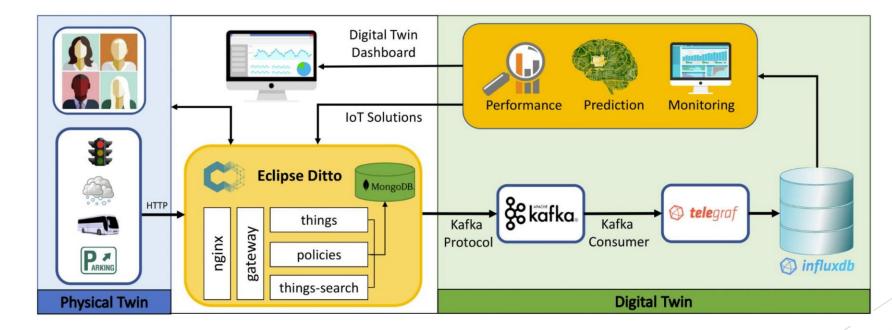
We find efforts in all these fields but not clear outcomes yet

A. Sharma, E. Kosasih, J. Zhang, A. Brintrup, A. Calinescu. Digital Twins: State of the art theory and practice, challenges, and open research questions, Journal of Industrial Information Integration, vol 30, 2022, 100383. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jii.2022.100383.

Composition of DTs

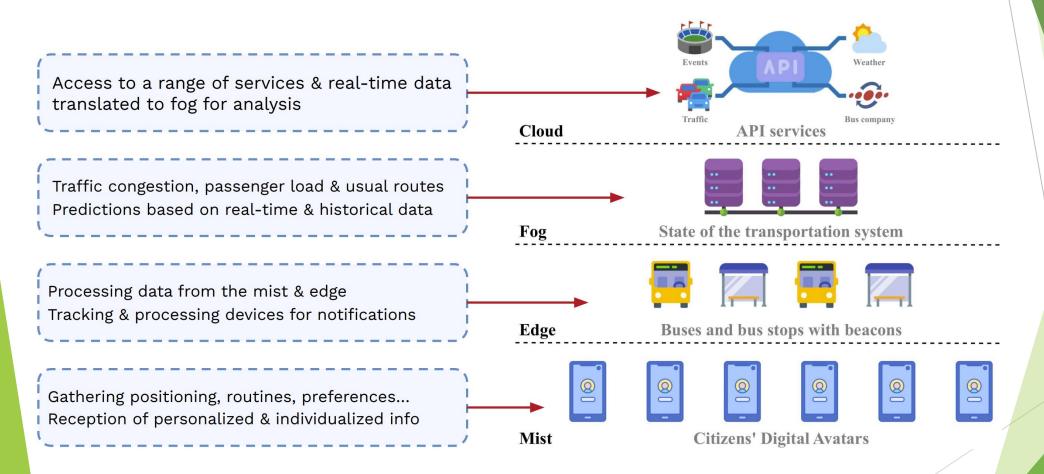
Integration of citizens into UDTs through their Digital Avatars

Case study: Public transportation system of the city of Malaga



R. García-Luque, L. Toro-Gálvez, N. Moreno, J. Troya, C. Canal and E. Pimentel. "Integrating Citizens' Avatars in Urban Digital Twins". Journal of Web Engineering, 22(06):913-938, Elsevier, 2023.

Deployment in the Cloud-to-IoT Continuum

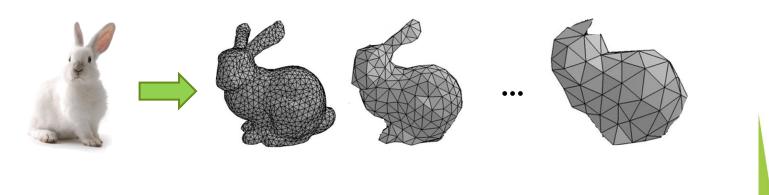


S. Laso, L. Toro-Gálvez, J. Berrocal, J. Troya, C. Canal, J.M. Murillo. "Towards a Urban Digital Twins Continuum Architecture". Software Architecture. ECSA 2023 Tracks, Workshops, and Doctoral Symposium. ECSA 2023. LNCS, vol 14590. Springer (2024) https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-66326-0_17

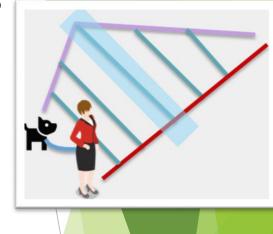
Validation and fidelity assessment

► How can we determine if a DT *accurately represents* its PT?

- How can we measure the *fidelity* between two models of the same system? The leash distance.
- Fidelity: the degree to which a model reproduces the actual state and behavior of a system in a measurable way.



Paula Muñoz. Measuring the Fidelity of Digital Twins using Trace Alignments. PhD. thesis, University of Málaga (2025).



Definition of the DT Consortium

A digital twin is an integrated data-driven virtual representation of real-world entities and processes, with synchronized interaction at a specified frequency and **fidelity**. Dialai Twin Consortium Glossary of digital twins (202



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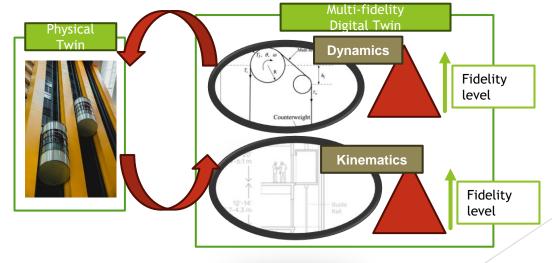
Validation and fidelity assessment

Fidelity depends on the *purpose* of the DT

- and it is related to *abstraction* and *resolution*
- Abstraction: process of selecting the essential aspects of a model, ignoring those that are not relevant for its purpose.
- Resolution: level of detail used to represent certain aspects of the real world in a model.

Case Study

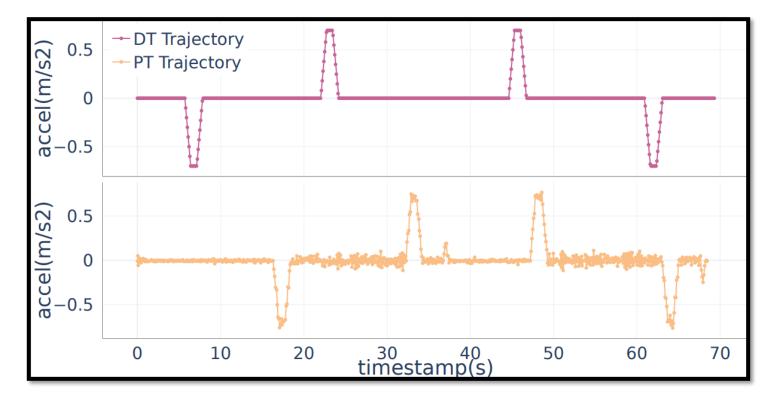
Mondragón elevator





Trace alignment for measuring fidelity

> A trace is a sequence of *snapshots* of the state of each twin

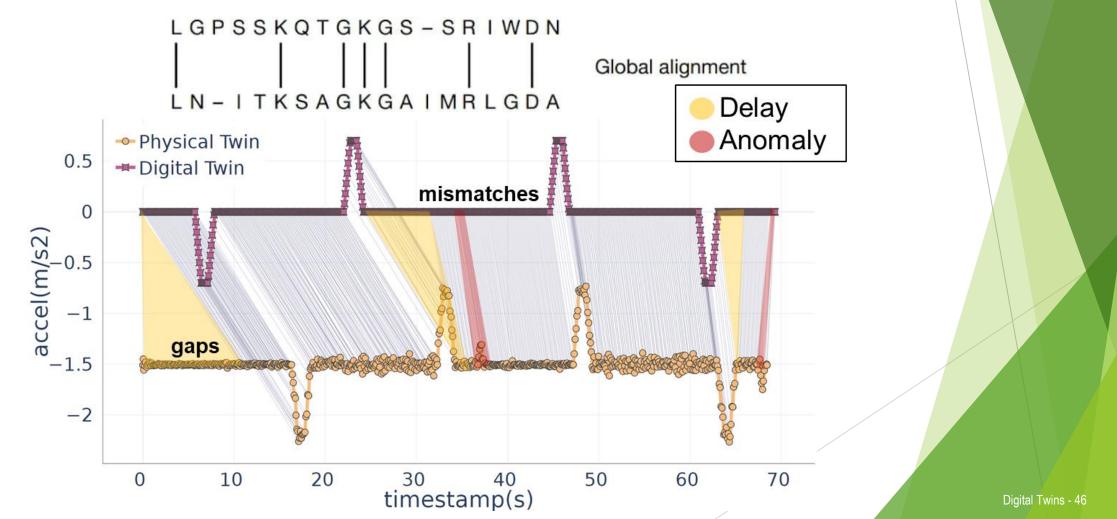




P. Muñoz, M. Wimmer, J. Troya, A. Vallecillo "Measuring the Fidelity of a Physical and a Digital Twin Using Trace Alignments" IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering, Volume 50, Issue 12, 3122-3145, 2024

Sequence alignment

Optimized version of the Needleman Wunsch algorithm



Technologies & Platforms

- Few domain-agnostic proposals
- Low maturity level
 - there are no proposals empirically evaluated
- Lack of a common understanding
 - about which components a DT should have
 - ▶ at least, agreement on: model, datalake, sync, and services
- Main components/techniques involved
 - Mathematical & Physical models, Simulation & Analysis tools, Databases, MDE, CAD & 3D tools,...
 - M. Dalibor, N. Jansen, B. Rumpe, D. Schmalzing, L. Wachtmeister, M. Wimmer, A. Wortmann. A Cross-Domain Systematic Mapping Study on Software Engineering for Digital Twins, Journal of Systems and Software, vol. 193, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jss.2022.111361.

Technologies & Platforms

A number of proprietary solutions are available
 usually they are domain-oriented.

Cloud-based general-purpose platforms

Azure DT, AWS IoT TwinMaker, GCP

Lack of open-source framewoks

Fiware

EU-based heavy-weight platform

Eclipse Ditto

- basic & most popular DT middleware
- OpenTwins
 - open platform that builds on Ditto

J. Pfeiffer, D. Lehner, A. Wortmann, M. Wimmer: Modeling Capabilities of Digital Twin Platforms: Old Wine in New Bottles? J. Object Technol. 21(3): 3:1-14 (2022)

BOSCH

Invented for life

aws

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SIEMENS

Google Cloud

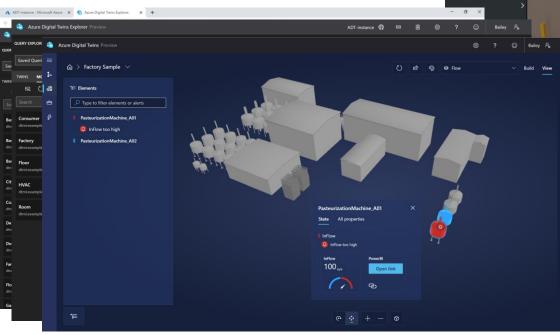
Microsoft

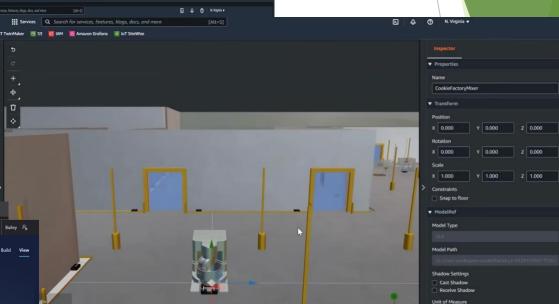
S FIWARE

ditto

Technologiers & Platforms

► AWS IoT TwinMaker





0 4 0

Azure Digital Twins

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Fiware

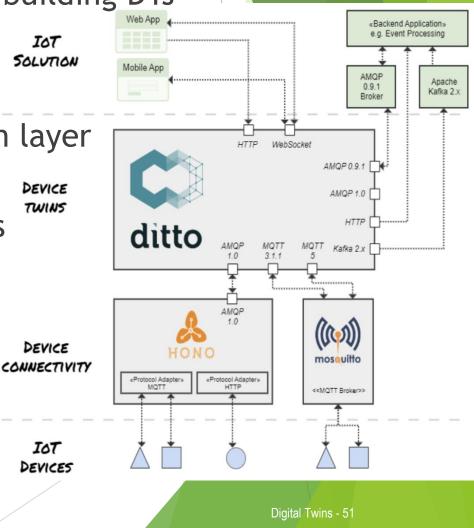
- Open-source ecosystem with components for:
 - ▶ interacting with IoT sensors & devices
 - vertical integration with other information systems
 - processing historical and RT data
 - creating dashboards
 - ► KPI monitoring and analysis
 - visualization

...

Deployment tools	Context Processing, Analysis, Visualization Perseo Cosmos Grafana	Quantum Leap
	Core Context Management (Context Broker) Orion Scorpio Stellio	Data/API Management Publication Monetizatio
	Interface to IoT, Robotics and third party systems IoT Agent Firos	Draco
SMART CITIES	SMART CITIES SMART AGRIFOOD SMART WATER SMART ENERGY	
SMART ENVIRONMENT	SMART SENSORING SMART AERONAUTICS SMART DESTINATION	
CROSS SECTOR	SMART ROBOTICS SMART HEALTH SMART MANUFACTURING	
SMART LOGISTICS	SMART LOGISTICS Smart Data Models	

Eclipse Ditto

- Open-source & domain-agnostic framework for building DTs
- Offers an abstract layer for working with things in the IoT
- Integration of devices through a communication layer (Eclipse Hono) or MQTT (Eclipse Mosquitto)
- Provides state persistence & search capabilities
 - through a MongoDB-like datalake
- Accesses things always in an authorized way
- Gets notified about changes
- Provides APIs Device as a Service
- Integration with other tools & platforms

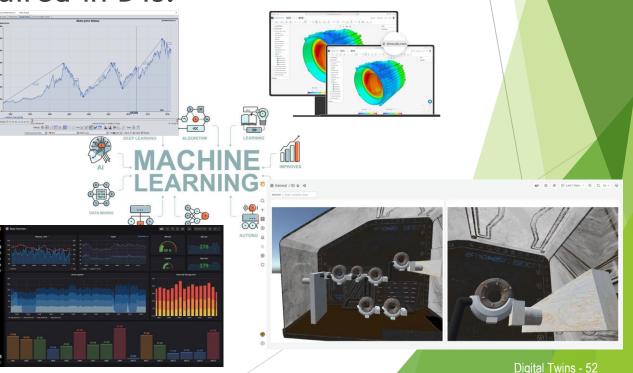


Eclipse Ditto - Limitations

Ditto offers basic functionality for integrating IoT things



- but it lacks many features required in DTs:
 - historical data management
 - ▶ analysis
 - simulation
 - visualization, 3D visualization
 - ML/AI integration
 - Twin composition



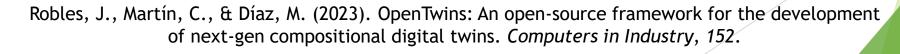
OpenTwins

- Open-source platform for developing compositional DTs
 - user-friendly management of DTs, types, policies and connections
 - DT types and instances for twin composition
 - 3D visualization
 - using WebGL, Unity, Grafana & Blender
 - Machine Learning
 - using Kakfa-ML for communication with Ditto
 - integration with simulation models

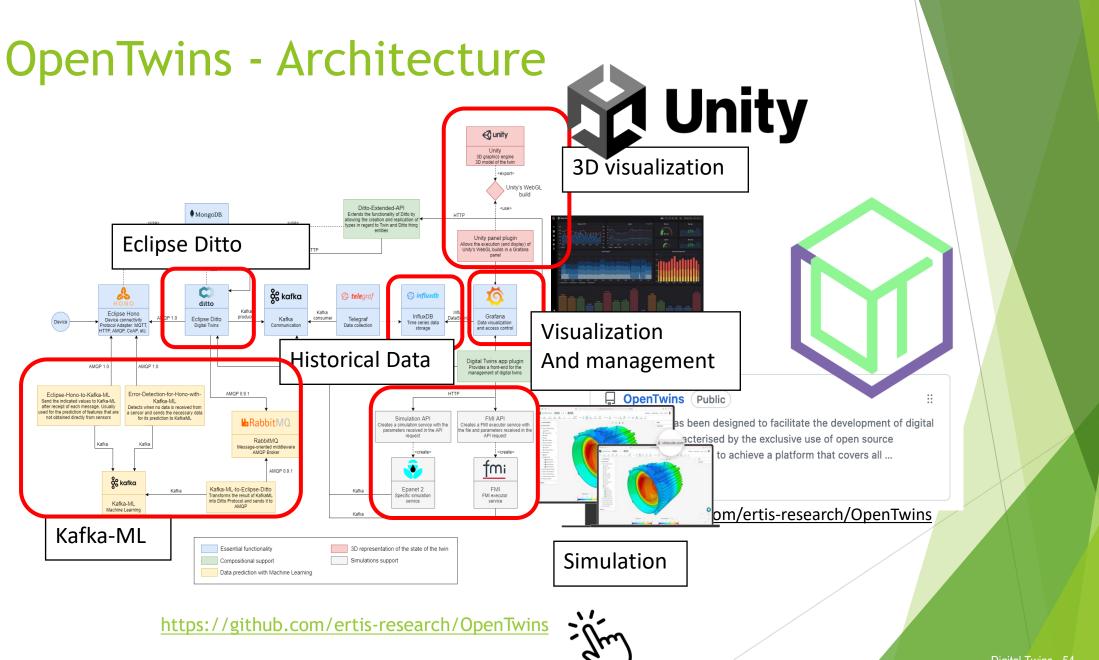
Using fmi



Temperatura (Real-time)	Temperature (ML)	
27.4	27.4	
Temperatura (Unión de origenes)	Temperatura (Sin unir origenes)	
23 Warman Marine	25 24 27 77 162/5 160/5 164/6 164/6 164/6	
Humediad (Real-time)	Temperatura (ML)	
35.2	35.0	
Humedad (Unióri de origenen)	Humediad (Sin unit origenes)	
Mannangel	20 33 36 	







Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my colleagues from ITIS Software:

- Antonio Vallecillo
- Javier Troya
- Paula Muñoz
- Cristian Martín
- for their contributions while preparing this talk.

Any questions?