

# WHY A 30-YEAR PIPELINE VETERAN WORKS AT STREAM

IVAN EWANICKE'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING STREAM SYSTEMS' CHIEF EVANGELIST.

Ivan Ewanicke has always been at the forefront of technological innovation in the energy industry. However, he didn't necessarily realize it at the time.

A power engineer by trade, his first job out of school and after serving in the navy was through a referral from a friend, "I have an interview with a strange company this afternoon, and I'm not really sure what they do. But if there's another opening, I'll let you know about it."

It turned out that the company mentioned was one of the first involved in the development of the oil sands, an unproven entity that needed to be experimented with for commercial viability. This was the seventies, after all. And so Ivan found himself building roads, airstrips and setting up operations and logistics for oil and gas companies, as his company was contracted to prepare these sites in northern Alberta.

Flying into remote airstrips with bush pilots, sometimes just skimming the tops of trees, no one really knew what the oil sands would become, just that it was an entity to test.

"We didn't know if the oil sands had any potential, so we tried anything to make the thick bitumen more viscous: steam flooding, fire flooding, and ammonia injections. Steam flooding became what we know as SAGD today."



Photograph by [Eamon Mac Mahon](#) via The Walrus Magazine

Through this experience, Ivan learned about fire flooding, forcing air down the wellbore to enable combustion, heating the formation and allowing the viscous fluid to be pumped to the surface. He also learned to steam flood (eventually known as SAGD) and became familiar with other fluid injections processes. The recovered bitumen was so thick you could roll it up and carry it around; somehow they had to reduce its viscosity.

After a close call while flying into site one day, Ivan thought that this was probably the right time to take a safer job in a more secure environment.

He was hired on by the Interprovincial Pipe Line Company (IPL - which would eventually become Enbridge) where he found himself in the control center as an operator. At the time, IPL was a cutting edge pipeline transportation operations company. They had the best computer scheduling systems, and dignitaries from Russia and China made regular visits to the office to check out the state of the art operation. Using SCADA, IPL implemented a comprehensive system for remote monitoring and pipeline control.

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From the control center to Supervisor of Operation Scheduling, to Scheduling Specialist, Ivan experienced the pipelines move from a fungible one commodity system, to the unique batch system. He was also instrumental during the migration of the commodity scheduling system, transitioning from the “DEC 10” and “VAX” computers.



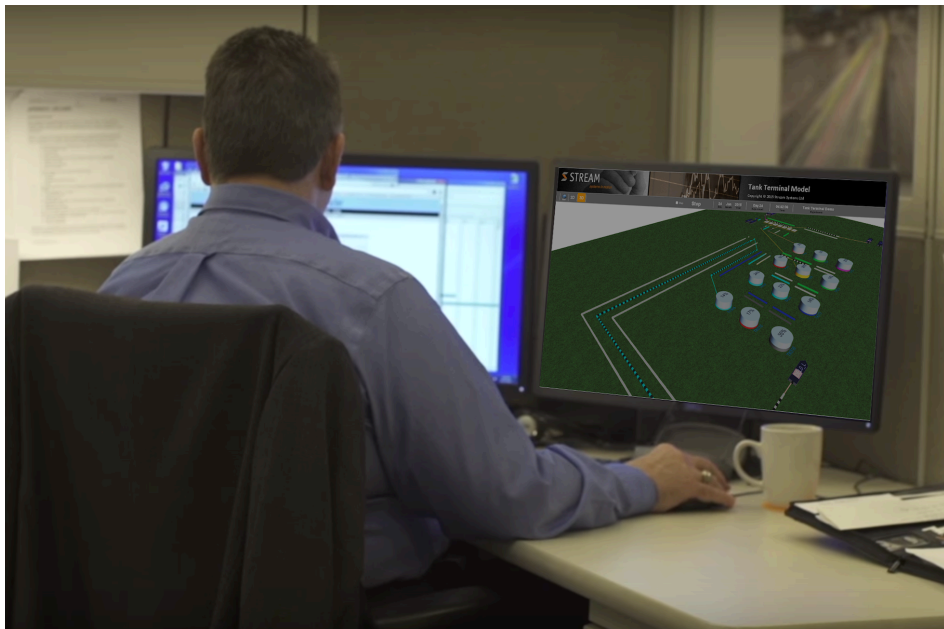
DEC 10: Image via [CoreStore](#)



VAX Computers: Image via [Computer History](#)

Through his thirty-year career at Enbridge, Ivan achieved increasingly higher levels of seniority in the organization, spending more than two thirds of his career as “Pipeline Operations and Scheduling, Specialist”. During this time, he experienced many milestone events that fundamentally changed pipeline operations including the east coast power outage in 2003 and the Marshall disaster of 2010.

On a chance encounter, Ivan saw a simulation modeling demo, and immediately recognized the transferability of this technology to the world of scheduling. However, he was unsure of how to implement this idea in reality.



*“I stumbled upon a demo session of a simulation modeling platform. And as soon as I saw it, I thought, ‘Pipeline scheduling **needs** this software to optimize our networks and operations.’ But I didn’t know how to go about doing it.”*

Eight years later, Ivan met Allan Chegus and Dumitru Cernelev who were working to develop modeling and simulation software to optimize pipeline operations. Ivan could see that the technology he had been searching for after nearly a decade was now at his fingertips.

Retiring from Enbridge after a thirty-year career, Ivan joined Stream Systems as the “Senior Asset Specialist”, providing insight into how Stream’s software could best serve the midstream oil and gas industry.

Today, Ivan acts as Stream’s Chief Evangelist, guiding the development of the technology he foresaw as a valuable tool in pipeline operations, and that he anticipates to have a transformational impact on the entire oil and gas industry.

 **STREAM**

*systems in motion*

