Innovation Through Business Process Management

This document represents the unique viewpoint of Software AG on Business Process Management

The four forces are a catalyst for changing business drivers

Regardless of industry, company size or business model, organizations are affected by mobile, social, cloud and big data. These “four forces” are transforming businesses and technology platforms in fundamental ways—reshaping how they manage strategic functions like customer service, security, loyalty, support, public service, supply chain and talent.

For a long time, most lines of business focused purely on achieving operational efficiency: doing things faster, spending less money doing them (and having full insight and control over the way how they are done). This view is changing, and that change is being accelerated by mobile, social, cloud and big data.

The operational efficiency that organizations strive to achieve by establishing systems of record (such as ERP) is not the only success factor when competing in the market anymore. Customer centricity—the ability to differentiate on the customer service and experience—is coming back into focus. Because of this, businesses are now looking for ways to leverage technology not just to reduce costs but also to deliver processes that focus on customers and THEIR expectations. Essentially, organizations are now looking for systems of innovation and differentiation.

This is where Business Process Management (BPM) comes in. The four forces and the innovation potential that comes with them are not without meaning if they are not made directly relevant to the business. Business leaders are not looking at individual technologies but rather at ways to increase visibility and agility in order to deliver the best customer experience.

BPM is the glue that ties together these four forces and gives organizations the ability to run their business with the visibility and consistency they need for efficient business operations, as well as the agility and flexibility to quickly deliver innovative solutions that will turn customers into raving fans.

Businesses need BPM. Why?

Huge amounts of time and money are being wasted in organizations every day because processes are not executed consistently. On top of that, lines of business often suffer from a lack of visibility into their daily operations so that even more time gets wasted trying to answer simple questions like “What is the status of my purchase order?” or “Am I on track with my SLAs?”

Enterprises also struggle with their ability to quickly react to changes and opportunities in the market. Business operations cannot be adjusted fast enough as the underlying IT systems don’t provide the agility that is needed.

BPM addresses all of these aspects together and has a significant impact on overall efficiency and productivity. The process-driven solutions that you create with BPM automatically orchestrate and coordinate people, systems and data so you can:

- Eliminate manual activities and inconsistent processes
- Improve accountability and reduce errors
- Discover and resolve business problems before customer impact
- Meet SLAs and quickly manage exceptions
- Quickly change existing process solutions or create new ones without having to customize backend systems

But that is not all there is.
BPM as the glue for the Digital Enterprise
Let us take a closer look at how the four forces are impacting businesses and how BPM can help with adopting them.

Cloud
Through the cloud, the reliance of business on IT gets diminished when it comes to creating business-driven solutions. Required resources for solutions, like hardware and software, are becoming available as a service opposed to having everything installed, created and managed by the IT department. And IT departments can more rapidly deliver resources to the teams that need them via their own private clouds. Going forward, we will see organizations use BPM services the same way they already do, for example, with cloud-based Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems. This means that businesses will be much quicker with the go-to-market of their solutions and, in many cases, these solutions will be owned by the business.

A good example for this approach is AgileApps Live, which provides BPM capabilities via private or public cloud.

Big Data
Through in-memory technology, organizations are now able to process huge quantities of data much faster than through traditional methods. This will drive innovation in the business as the amount of data that can be used for real-time decision-making is getting a lot bigger, opening up new use cases that have been impossible before. Similar to consumers having more information at their fingertips today, businesses have more data to work with and, using BPM, they can dynamically adjust processes to create the best customer experience. A simple example is the ability to monitor social channels like Facebook or Twitter® for comments about your organization’s products or services and to proactively reach out to the person who made the comment through a customer relationship process that gets triggered automatically.

Mobile
There is substantial demand in the market to enable mobile BPM scenarios as many organizations see their customers, employees and partners adopting mobile very quickly and on a large scale. Users want to be able to receive new work items and work on existing ones while they are not in the office. Users expect to be able to queue work items while online and work on them while offline. In addition, they expect user interfaces that fully leverage modern mobile devices with cameras, touch screens and GPS to allow for a rich user experience and enable new business cases (think location-based work item assignments, capture of signature done using the device’s touchpad, etc.).

Many mobile applications in the BPM context will also highlight the need for dynamic, ad-hoc ways for process participants to interact with tasks. Ad-hoc collaboration and workflow concepts are particularly interesting in the context of mobile as it is very likely that a task owner “on the road” will have to collaborate with colleagues in the office. The case with mobile process monitoring and analytics is very similar. Having the data and visualizations available on a mobile device is only the first step. Being able to now trigger ad-hoc workflows for collaboration to immediately take action makes it really powerful.

Social
In addition to the social monitoring example just described for big data, there is another aspect of social when it comes to BPM: Injecting social capabilities into process applications to provide guidance and ad-hoc collaboration for process participants. The key in this area is a new kind of business user empowerment through social capabilities where guidance and ad-hoc collaboration are default ingredients for successful and smooth execution of processes (i.e., social guidance in terms of finding experts in your organization to collaborate with on a given task, process guidance based on historic data for processes of the same type, ability to involve other stakeholders into tasks of a given process and to collaborate with them, etc.). Big data is going to play a role here as process execution data will be kept in a “big data store” for later social mining and understanding who the process experts are and what they do. This will power a “suggestion engine” that provides even more guidance to the business during their daily work. Social and mobile are not just features of BPM anymore but key tenants.

For example, when a leading bank wanted to innovate its approach to mass market consumer experience, the bank created an “in-seconds” mobile and online offering for instant credit offers and numerous other mobile services. This was only possible by optimizing existing processes and establishing a direct connection to consumers using mobile as a new channel. Within the first six months of going live, the bank gained 320,000 new customers and reactivated 133,000 dormant customers.
Software AG’s BPM platform in a nutshell

Software AG’s webMethods BPM Platform is a complete, fully integrated offering that supports the complex and ever-changing needs of enterprises and large organizations. It ties together the four forces—mobile, social, cloud and big data—and makes them directly relevant to the business by aligning them with new and existing business processes. The platform consists of products and also works with preconfigured industry content like process templates and a comprehensive project methodology. This speeds up project delivery and ensures quality.

Technology

The platform includes best-of-breed technology rated highly by independent analysts such as Gartner and Forrester. It includes the following key capabilities all of which leverage a common IDE, installer, run-time, and admin and monitoring tools, collaborative and agile process development, including simulation:

- Content management and integration
- UI design and task management
- Dynamic, ad-hoc workflows with social guidance
- Mobile and cloud ready
- Solid and scalable process execution
- Rules management
- Operational monitoring and analytics for big data
- Dashboarding
- Seamless enterprise and B2B integration
- Integration with AgileApps Live

Methodology

A proven implementation methodology called Prime for BPM provides a solution-centric methodology, consisting of:

- An implementation and deployment process for your entire solution
- A project life cycle composed of phases, work packages and activities

You can execute detailed work steps and generate predefined deliverables by drawing from an inventory of assets, including best practices, guidelines, tools and templates.

This helps organizations to:

- Jump-start projects quickly with our deployment methodology
- Use a standardized project scope with predefined deliverables
- Execute projects reliably, rapidly and more efficiently

Software AG offers a complete solution for building, deploying and monitoring customer-centric business processes.
Laying a strong foundation for automating processes and instrumenting business operations

Governed integrated systems provide a flexible architectural foundation for automating business processes. The webMethods platform abstracts the complex and heterogeneous IT infrastructure as a layer of high-level services that speeds up automating processes and making subsequent changes. These processes that form the core of your business operations are uniquely positioned to be monitored for deep visibility and metrics for your business KPIs.

The webMethods platform is unlike any other solution in the market

Unlike other solutions, webMethods is a battle-hardened and vendor-neutral solution. The webMethods platform:

- Is a highly stable platform that has constantly added new capabilities while remaining backward-compatible for well over a decade
- Delivers capabilities as building blocks allowing you to gradually adopt them as your needs grow while maintaining consistent user experience
- Is easy to use across all life-cycle stages, from design all the way to production leading to higher productivity and lower costs
- Comes with governance and collaboration baked into the platform to reduce duplication, increase re-use, ensure security and alignment with the organization’s policies

No wonder that for over 15 years, some of the world’s largest commercial enterprises including the 70 percent of the Global 50 and federal, state and local agencies have trusted webMethods for their mission-critical applications.

With webMethods, businesses innovate to differentiate and lead

The webMethods platform allows companies to establish a strong and flexible foundation to build innovative cloud, mobile, Web and enterprise applications. That helps companies differentiate themselves from the competition and become a market leader. For instance:

- Bank of Oklahoma deployed a retail mobile banking solution in just four months on its integration backbone to remain competitive with other area banks
- Nemours Foundation built the ‘hospital of the future’ with world class pediatric care facilities by connecting and orchestrating device, equipment and IT systems (i.e., an "Internet of things")
- Sony has built a media backbone workflow product with webMethods BPMS that it successfully sells to customers in the media and entertainment industry
- Colt Telecom automated an inventory planning and pick process and managed to reduce warehouse stock by over 60 percent as well as increase logistics performance from days to hours
- Coca-Cola refreshments can now track the movement and history of each Coca-Cola® branded refrigerator unit to avoid lost equipment, identify trends and uncover troublesome recurring issues
- U.K. Ministry of Defense is estimating savings of millions of pounds per year, thanks to a demand planning and forecasting solution
- Cox Communications, the third largest cable provider in the U.S., saves $4.4 million annually by automating its work-order management application
- Vodafone Iceland has built a complete order management and provisioning platform with webMethods and customers can now be absolutely certain that their order will always go through

Find out how to power up your Digital Enterprise at SoftwareAG.com

ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

Software AG helps organizations achieve their business objectives faster. The company’s big data, integration and business process technologies enable customers to drive operational efficiency, modernize their systems and optimize processes for smarter decisions and better service. Building on over 40 years of customer-centric innovation, the company is among the top 10 fastest-growing technology companies in the world and is ranked as a leader in 15 market categories, fueled by core product families Adabas and Natural, ARIS, Tamacita and webMethods. Learn more at www.SoftwareAG.com.

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