

Integrating the Enterprise

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In This Issue

Real-time is expanding with new products, capabilities and forms of integration. The vision of SOA is also expanding to include hosted integration technology. And RFID is expanding beyond the "Wal-Mart 100." Also, some surprising integration insights into business performance management.

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Top Insights

Wham, BAM!

Express Computer, India: Business activity monitoring (BAM) is an emerging business intelligence (BI) application that can speed decision-making by providing real-time visibility into a company's operations. According to Gartner, BAM will rank among the top four IT initiatives at 30 percent of the world's 2,000 biggest companies this year, owing to its potential for making the ideal of a real-time enterprise a reality. Many vendors of ERP, BI, business process management and EAI products view BAM as the Next Big Thing.

ADDITIONAL READING:

eWEEK: [IBM Readies Software for Real-Time Reports](#)

ebizQ: [Realizing a Real-Time Enterprise with Business Performance Management](#)

Control Engineering: [Using Generic Database Access Technology to Expand OPC](#)

You Have Critical SOA Questions? We Have Answers

eBizQ: A conventional application is written in functional blocks, and the interface code that connects them is often mixed in with the code that accomplishes the functions. In service-oriented architectures (SOAs), the functional blocks are separate entities connected by standard interfaces. As a result, they can be re-used in other applications. This article covers SOA basics like this,

About the Editor

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summarizes SOA benefits, explains how SOA fits into the bigger IT picture, and offers tips on how to get started. (Free registration required)

ADDITIONAL READING:

InfoWorld: [Are SOAs Customer- or Vendor-Driven?](#)

ZDNet: [Why Host your SOA's Connective Tissue When You Can Outsource It?](#)

Line56.com: [The Psychology of SOA](#)

The State of RFID: Heading Toward a Wireless Internet of Artifacts

Computerworld: This article hints at the scary side of RFID — any artifact can be tracked, including living beings — but focuses on practical business applications, e.g., tracking and re-ordering inventory. There are useful descriptions of typical applications, middleware functionality (improving read accuracy and ensuring cooperation between vendors, for example), and lots of tips on choosing the right tags (which can be passive or active, long range or short range, cheap or expensive) and the right readers.

ADDITIONAL READING:

Integrated Solutions: [RFID Adoption beyond the Top 100 Suppliers](#)

NewsFactor Network: [Behind the RFID-Standards Brawl](#)

eWEEK: [What's Wrong with RFID?](#)

The Supple Supply Chain

CIO.com: Agile companies use IT to create a supply chain that's not just efficient, but also nimble and predictive — that is, able to anticipate change and help adjust to that change and accommodate it on the fly. This article discusses how three CIO 100 Award honorees have tapped technology to gain insight into and extract knowledge from business and manufacturing processes that allow both the corporation and its suppliers to respond in record time to marketplace changes.

Impact on Suppliers Due to Growth in the Automotive Industry

allAfrica.com: The automotive industry in South Africa is booming because of export growth. Big-name automakers and parts suppliers are responding to the performance pressure by integrating and optimizing their supply chains with Web collaboration technology. By making their order-entry process Web-accessible to customers, suppliers can more quickly respond to customer changes in demand. Improvements are especially dramatic for inventory control processes, with one parts supplier claiming a 47 percent increase in inventory turns and a 25 percent improvement in accuracy.

Choose Your Bundle

MISWeb.com Asia: Should companies implementing CRM opt for a specialist provider, such as Siebel or E.piphany, or take a solution bundled as part of an ERP or other enterprise application package such as SAP? According to META Group, Forrester and Deloitte experts, there are no easy, generic answers. They generally agree that the decision depends on what a company is trying to achieve, and how sophisticated its integration skills are. Accordingly, Deloitte advises clients to understand the total cost of ownership in terms of maintaining interfaces and integrations.

Five Times Productivity

IT-Director.com: Integration vendors often claim their products are "five times faster" to develop than competitors' products, citing anecdotes of clients who state that "what you've done in a day would've taken a week." What should a developer look for in a proof-of-concept to see if the claims match reality? Issues include the experience of the developer using the product, the effect of a better development method that speeds up the process but is not specific to the product, and how easy it is to maintain the product after development.

3 QUESTIONS:

All about Business Performance Management, "The Other BPM"

With Craig Schiff, CEO of BPM Partners, a professional services company focused on business performance management.

Question: What is business performance management?

Schiff: BPM enables a business to set its goals and then measure and manage its performance against those goals — at a fairly strategic level. The technology components that help support that at the application level include financial and operational planning, consolidation and reporting, modeling, and analysis and monitoring of key performance indicators — often on a dashboard.

Question: What sort of infrastructure has to be in place before a company can implement BPM?

Schiff: Underneath all that [I just described], there are very common business intelligence tools. There's a data warehouse; usually a multi-dimensional OLAP database for some of the analytics; report and query tools; extract, transform and load tools to move data from legacy systems to the database. ... It's really a business application that leverages a lot of the technology that's gone before.

Question: What are the major integration challenges with BPM?

Schiff: BPM, to work properly, needs to pull data together from multiple sources. If a company hasn't already embarked on a data warehouse initiative, that's a major project in itself. BPM systems rely on some sort of central repository, the one you have or the one

it creates. The issue becomes pulling in data from the transactional systems, the ERP systems, as well as from the supply chain and CRM systems, and combining that with the planning system, which unfortunately is still often Excel, in a common format using a standard chart of accounts. That's a pretty major challenge getting all that data together against a common set of metadata in the same currency and scale. On the application side, BPM has a lot of components to it, and you would think if you buy a BPM suite from a vendor that it would be well integrated, but that's not always the case. Many of these suites have grown up through acquisition or even multiple development groups within a vendor shop, so there are integration issues within the product itself. Two of the major players, Hyperion and Cognos, are working on integration challenges.

By the Numbers

\$116,000

Average annual salary of a Boston-based IT manager working in enterprise application integration. An IT salary calculator is located at this InformationWeek URL.

Source: [InformationWeek](#)

17 percent

Increase in spending on extract, transform, load (ETL) software in 2003, according to Forrester Research, an indication that spending on integration is rapidly growing.

Source: [Enterprise Systems](#)

13 percent

U.S. license revenue growth for SAP in Q1 and Q2 of this year. Growth for SAP's next six competitors: 1 percent.

Source: [AMR Research](#)

Breaking Headlines

HP's Results Disappoint

SFGate.com: HP CEO Carly Fiorina fired three executives in the wake of an earnings report that didn't meet Wall Street expectations, citing their "failure to execute." Specifically, the failure was in migrating to a new supply chain management system in the planned timeframe. One analyst noted that HP's business is solving such problems for their customers. Fiorina admitted that the company lost sales due to the botched migration and had to scramble to meet delivery commitments.

Microsoft CRM Incompatible with XP Service Pack 2

CRM Daily: It's being called another "Microsoft Moment." The new XP Service Pack 2, portrayed by Microsoft as crucial for security, has a conflict with Microsoft CRM that shuts down certain features of the

CRM product. According to Ben Holtz, CEO of CRM system integrator Green Beacon Solutions, the new service pack also has conflicts with Onyx, as well as with other Web-based applications, depending on how they are configured.

[Software Giants Ship Addressing Spec to W3C](#)

internetnews.com: Microsoft, IBM and BEA were joined by SAP and (surprisingly) Sun in delivering WS-Addressing to the W3C as a proposed royalty-free standard. WS-Addressing defines a standard way for locating and exchanging Web services messages between multiple endpoints on a network. It is crucial to interoperability between Web service applications. Sun's cooperation in the effort was attributed to the spirit of the interoperability agreement the company signed with Microsoft in April.

Emerging Trends

[Java Is Back](#)

JDJ: A "Googlefight" nets 66 million hits for "Java" and 388 million for ".NET," but that may change. Java got three momentum-building boosts last week. Sun CEO Jonathan Schwartz cited Java as the platform that keeps application portability costs close to zero. Columnist David Berlind characterized Java as the development choice that leaves the most options open. And the San Jose Business Journal reported that the VC community has funded five Java-based gaming deals worth \$86 million this year.

[Tibco Jumps into BPM ... Ripples to Follow](#)

Transform: Tibco, known for application integration software, has entered the business process management (BPM) market with its acquisition of UK-based BPM vendor Staffware, which had a U.S. presence but wasn't selling well. Offering both application integration and BPM has become trendy, to say the least. Others in both markets include BEA, Oracle, IBM, SAP, FileNet and Webmethods. Nonetheless, Tibco has a shot at success because its product is a good one. Also, being based in the U.S. will help.

[Data Integration: A Little DOP Might Do You](#)

ADTmag.com: Object-oriented programming (OOP) is a concept that transcends languages. Data-oriented programming (DOP) is something no one has heard about, although it's the basis behind XML. Crusader Eugene Kuznetsov of DataPower Technology wants OOP-like status for DOP. Technique-wise, the two are polar opposites. DOP exposes rather than hides the data, hides rather than exposes the code, separates data and code rather than mixing them, uses the data rather than the object model, and is loosely, rather than tightly, coupled.