



Brady Corporation: Leveraging IBM Technology to Achieve Value-Chain Integration

An IDC e-business Case Study

THE SUBJECT

Milwaukee-based Brady Corporation manufactures and markets identification solutions, including high-performance labels, signs, precision die-cut materials, printing systems, software, and label-application and data-collection systems. With worldwide revenues of \$546 million, Brady employs approximately 3,000 in 20 countries.

THE GOAL

To put into place a standardized, fully integrated e-business platform that facilitates continuous process improvement (by enabling rapid application development and cost-effective application support) and allows tighter relationships with customers and value-chain partners.

THE SOLUTION

Brady's solution includes a B2B procurement solution (known internally as "supplier.com"), a distributor extranet ("distributor.com"), and transaction-enabled B2B e-commerce sites ("direct.com", "Web-to-Workbench™"), all of which are integrated with Brady's backend SAP ERP platform. As part of its employee.com initiative, Brady developed a portal-based solution to facilitate employee collaboration. Brady's e-business architecture runs on IBM AS/400 servers and employs IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, DB2 Universal Database, and Lotus Domino.

WHY IBM

"As an e-business leader in our market space, we want to work with companies that are moving in the technology and product direction that's in synch with our own. IBM has shown us that they share our vision."



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Executive Summary

Innovation Spotlight

Brady's B2B procurement solution uses evaluated receipt settlement (under which no invoice is created and payment is issued based upon receipt of the product). "The fact that there are no POs and no invoices takes the paper out of the process."

Based in Milwaukee, WI, Brady Corporation is a world leader in the market for identification and materials solutions. With nearly half of its revenues coming from outside the US, Brady is a truly global player serving a broad base of global customers. While Brady has thrived on the strength of its product line and product development capabilities, the issue of knowledge sharing had (by 1999) emerged as a point of vulnerability. The company saw the need to improve its ability to share data internally, thus improving its ability to serve its customers.

Brady determined that its disparate base of applications and business systems was contributing to the impeded flow of information within the company. As part of a broad effort toward process improvement, Brady launched a series of initiatives designed to create a standardized e-business platform within the company. With the assistance of IBM Global Services, Brady deployed SAP R/3 as its core ERP system. With SAP as a foundation, Brady built a series of fully integrated, transactional solutions that permeated all parts of its value chain—both internal (employees) and external (customers, channel partners and suppliers). Brady decided to standardize on IBM technology because of the strength and integration of its product line.

Brady Corporation's Solution at a Glance

- ▶ **e-business State** Internal Integration (between Web-based front end and backend ERP and legacy processes)
- ▶ **Core Functionality** Distributor extranet (*distributor.com*), B2B procurement solution (*supplier.com*), transaction-enabled B2B e-commerce sites (*direct.com*, Web-to-Workbench™), and employee portal-based solution (*employee.com*).
- ▶ **Software** IBM WebSphere Application Server, IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, IBM DB2 Universal Database, Lotus Domino/Notes; SAP R/3
- ▶ **Servers** IBM AS/400
- ▶ **Services** IBM Global Services
- ▶ **Key Benefits**
 - ▶ From fiscal 2000 to 2001, *distributor.com* revenue rose from \$10 million to \$28 million. Streamlined customer service operations enabled Brady to redeploy reps in higher value-added roles within the company.
 - ▶ For the coming fiscal year, Brady projects that *supplier.com* will save Brady nearly \$200,000.
 - ▶ Brady's various employee-oriented initiatives—such as *employee.com*—are expected to produce significant reductions in printing and administrative costs.
 - ▶ Revenue derived from *direct.com* represents seven percent of total Seton US product revenue, up from one percent the previous year. Web-to-Workbench reached more than half a million dollars in revenues in just the first half of 2001.

► Background

Milwaukee-based Brady Corporation manufactures and markets a wide range of identification and materials solutions, including high-performance labels, signs, tapes, printing systems, software, and label-application and data-collection systems. Its catalog of 50,000 products—sold into such segments as manufacturing, electrical, electronics, and telecommunications—runs the gamut from workplace signs and labels to bar-coding equipment, printers, and industrial tracking software. A key distinguishing characteristic of its product line is the high-performance nature of many of its sign and identification products, which are often deployed in such demanding environments as petrochemical plants, clean rooms, and jet engines.

While Brady nurtured visions of becoming even more global in its scope and dominant in its market, the firm had become hamstrung due to a long-standing cultural aversion to knowledge-sharing and a proneness to “divisionalize” knowledge within the company.

One of Brady’s key competitive strengths is the global nature of its business model, evidenced by the fact that nearly half of its \$546 million in revenues comes from nearly 100 countries outside the US. Supporting its global business strategy is a broad network of manufacturing, warehousing, sales and service operations located in Europe, Asia/Pacific, Latin America, Canada and the United States. This set of global capabilities sets Brady apart from its smaller, more regionally-based competitors and has allowed the company to establish and retain a large base of global customers.

Another key element of Brady’s business model is a significant reliance on indirect distribution partners, a worldwide network of 3,500 distributors and resellers. Brady is organized into two operating groups, Graphics and Workplace Solutions (GWS) and Identification Solutions & Specialty Tapes (ISST). Within GWS, Brady maintains both the Seton brand for direct business-to-business relationship marketing, and the Brady brand for distributor-only sales (in the US) and a mix of direct and distributor sales (in the rest of the world). Channel sales also account for a substantial share of ISST revenues. By comparison, Brady’s direct marketing arm has traditionally sold signage and identification products via catalogs and other direct channels. Brady sees direct marketing as a strategic complement to its channel-based businesses—anchored by the strength of the Seton brand and the quality of service that customers have come to associate with it.

► The Need: To Evolve from Fragmentation to Collaboration

In 1999, Brady looked inward as a company and—despite its core operational and brand strengths—saw a critical need for improvement. While Brady nurtured visions of becoming even more global in its scope and dominant in its market, the firm had become hamstrung due to a long-standing cultural aversion to knowledge-sharing across the company. Paradoxically, Brady’s proneness to “divisionalize” knowledge within the company was in some ways a byproduct of its successful growth as a company. Specifically, the company’s numerous acquisitions of brands and businesses in the preceding years had led to a high degree of fragmentation across the Brady organization. The accompanying proliferation of disparate applications and business systems further

impeded the flow of information within the company. According to Steve Hasbrook, Corporate Director of eBusiness, the need to overcome these barriers to communication were of central strategic importance. “These cultural and systems issues were really holding us back,” says Hasbrook. “It had become apparent that if we didn’t do something drastically different our long-term prognosis was uncertain.”

Brady met the challenge head on. Determined to think out of the box, Katherine Hudson, Brady’s CEO, convened a working strategy session that included top management from all business units. After hammering out a consensus on Brady’s basic goal—to become a more global and efficient company—the group was asked to construct a composite of Brady’s “nightmare competitor.” This competitor, concluded the team, would among other things be collaborative, highly Web enabled, and easy to do business with on both the supply and demand side of the value chain—in short, an e-business. The Brady team then set the goal of *becoming* that competitor.

Action Plan and Decision Process

► First Steps and Decision Process

“As a global company serving global customers, we saw the need to replace fragmented systems and processes with those that we can leverage on a global basis. This would give us the internal efficiencies that allow us to serve these customers better and better understand their needs.”

— Steve Hasbrook,
Corporate Director of
eBusiness, Brady

Having articulated the main elements of its e-business vision, the Brady team focused on identifying the practical goals and approaches necessary to make this vision a reality. The core principles to emerge from these sessions could effectively be summed up as “think globally, act efficiently, and improve processes continuously.” Indeed, as Hasbrook points out, the need to plan, deploy and execute strategy on a global basis was seen as a common thread running through many of the team’s conclusions. “As a global company serving global customers, we saw the need to replace fragmented systems and processes with those that we can leverage on a global basis,” says Hasbrook. “This would give us the internal efficiencies that allow us to serve our customers better and better understand their needs.”

Brady’s broad-based strategy of creating an integrated set of business processes—underpinned by technology and deployed globally—came to be known as “eclipse” (Earning Customer Loyalty (through) Integrated Processes and Systems, Everywhere). A critical enabler of Brady’s eclipse initiative was the development of an e-business strategy, which would provide the necessary framework for bringing these processes together. In 1999, the need for an integrated, easily leveraged set of systems and processes was clearly evident in Brady’s ERP platform—an aggregation of 19 disparate platforms running throughout the organization. Indeed, a key foundation to Brady’s eBusiness initiative was laid by the eclipse team, which decided to replace the legacy systems with SAP’s R/3 system globally

► Moving from ERP to e-business

Brady’s decision to create a standard ERP platform supporting all of its businesses, was the beginning of a multi-pronged effort to create a single,

companywide, process-based business system—a key enabler of the company's eBusiness ambitions. With its standardized ERP backend serving as the foundation, the next step was to build a Web-based platform—fully integrated with backend systems—that would facilitate information sharing and transactions capability throughout Brady's value chain. The depth, breadth and complexity of Brady's value chain presented planners with an overwhelmingly strong value proposition in creating such linkages. Internally, the company's global scope and high degree of vertical integration underscored the need for collaboration. On the demand side, strong relationships with customers and distributors represented a real opportunity to streamline communications and deliver value-added services. Similar benefits, such as tighter collaboration, were also seen on the supplier side.

“We saw a lot in common between our goals and IBM's during its e-business transformation—especially the use of standardized technology to achieve global efficiencies. The fact that they had gone through a drastic transformation in turning their business around—utilizing the same core technologies we would be using—was a key factor in our solution provider decision.”

— Steve Hasbrook

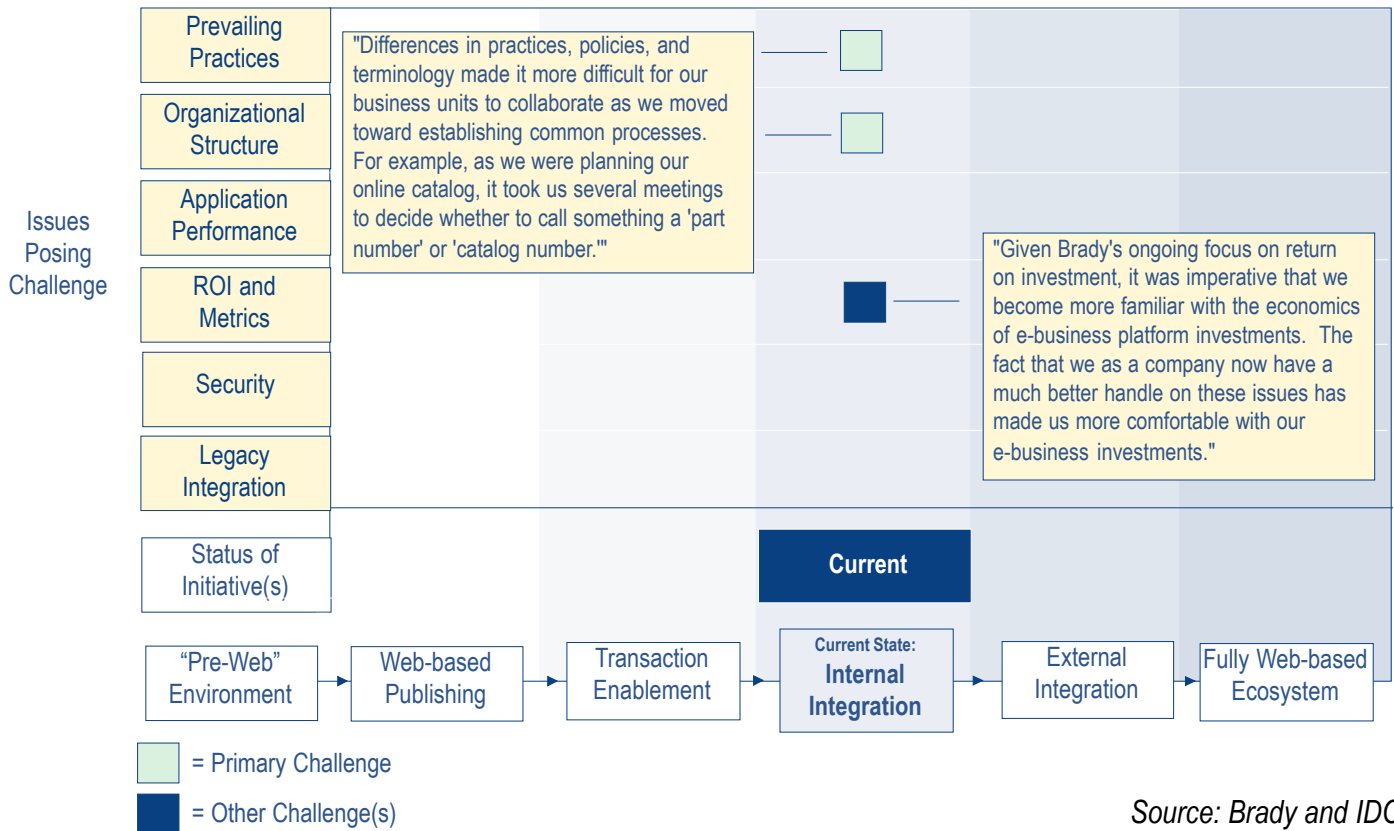
To take its e-business strategy to the next step, Brady needed to select a technology platform to support both collaboration and transactions processing, as well as a solutions provider to assist in development. Responsibility for Brady's selection process rested with its IT Steering team, comprised of Hasbrook, the heads of the three business groups, key business unit leaders, the VP of Process Improvement, the CFO, and the CIO. Foremost among the contenders for the project was IBM Global Services, which had worked closely with Brady on its SAP implementation as well as an extranet project targeted to its distributors (in 1998). Brady's status as a longtime user of IBM's AS/400 servers and Lotus Domino/ Notes also represented a significant factor in its decision process. In 4Q99, Brady selected IBM Global Services as its solutions provider, opting to employ IBM's Net.Commerce (now called IBM Websphere Commerce Suite) to complement Lotus Domino as part of its core platform.

Hasbrook attributes much of the team's decision to the strength of IBM's platform products as well as Brady's positive experiences on recent engagements. However, he also points to IBM's corporate experience—in transforming its own key processes through Web-based technologies—as a factor in the team's decision. “We saw a lot in common between our goals and IBM's during its e-business transformation—especially the use of standardized technology to achieve global efficiencies,” explains Hasbrook. “The fact that they had gone through a drastic transformation in turning their business around—utilizing the same core technologies we would be using—was a key factor in our solution provider decision.”

► Challenges

Having articulated its e-business vision, the company faced a number of key challenges as it moved to make this vision a reality. According to Hasbrook, the fragmentation of Brady's organization—a key driver of Brady's e-business initiatives—was also a significant challenge to its implementation. “Differences in practices, policies, and terminology made it more difficult for our business units to collaborate as we moved toward establishing common processes,” says Hasbrook. “For example, as we were planning our online catalog, it took us several meetings to decide whether to call something a ‘part number’ or ‘catalog number.’” More complex challenges emerged as Brady's

Challenges Encountered in Brady's e-business Evolution



business unit representatives met to examine, reevaluate and redefine processes—a necessary prerequisite to the construction of its solution. “These meetings brought to light the underlying points of overlap and inefficiency within our organization,” he adds, “and forced us to confront issues that had never been addressed.”

While Brady’s senior management provided strong support for the initiative from the start, the issue of return on investment—specifically defining it and measuring it—posed some initial challenges. This ambiguity, notes Hasbrook, also made it more difficult for Brady as a company to set expectations for ROI. “Given Brady’s ongoing focus on return on investment, it was imperative that we become more familiar with the economics of e-business platform investments,” says Hasbrook. “The fact that we as a company now have a much better handle on these issues has made us more comfortable with our e-business investments.”

Solution Profile and Implementation Strategy

Brady’s e-business initiatives fall under three basic categories: supply chain, demand-side, and employee-oriented. The following sections provide an overview of specific solutions within each category.

► Supply Chain Initiatives

Brady has pursued a wide range of supply chain initiatives, known collectively within the company as “*supplier.com*.” As discussed earlier in the case, one of Brady’s first supply-chain initiatives was the deployment of the Enterprise Business Procurement module of the SAP R/3 platform across its North American operations (begun in October 2000 and completed in July 2001). Brady introduced a solution that allows Brady employees to purchase office supplies and other indirect supplies (i.e., not used in the manufacturing process) from a pre-approved list of vendors. At present, employees using the procurement platform are directed to a catalog at the Corporate Express Web site over an XML connection, where they can view a customized subset of products and prices specially negotiated for Brady. This customization of catalog information is triggered by a data message—sent from Brady to the supplier in XML format at the beginning of the user’s session—that identifies the user as a Brady employee.

Hasbrook sees the solution’s use of evaluated receipt settlement (under which no invoice is created and payment is issued based upon receipt of the product) as one of its most innovative aspects. “The fact that there are no POs and no invoices takes the paper out of the process,” says Hasbrook. “This represents a major reduction in our accounts payable costs—above and beyond the savings we obtain from better prices.” Brady plans to expand the procurement application to include the ability to procure direct supplies (i.e., those used in the manufacturing process) over the next few years.

Development Timetable for Brady’s e-business Solutions

	June 1998	4Q1999	2Q2000	4Q2000	1Q2001	3Q2001
Brady rolls out its first version of <i>distributor.com</i> , developed with IBM Global Services.	■					
Brady begins SAP implementation; selects IBM as its core technology vendor for its new generation of e-business solutions.		■				
Brady launches <i>seton.com</i> on the WebSphere Commerce Suite platform.			■			
Brady completes first phase of SAP implementation; introduces <i>Web-to-Workbench™</i> solution				■		
Brady introduces <i>employee.com</i> , its Lotus Domino-based employee portal, and Site Builder (its Website development tool).					■	
Brady deploys the <i>supplier.com</i> B2B procurement solution across a limited number of suppliers.						■

Source: Brady and IDC

► Channel-Focused Initiatives

Brady's channel-focused solution is an extranet targeted to distributors known as *www.bradyserve.com*. A product of the company's *distributor.com* initiative, *bradyserve.com* represents its first and most successful e-business effort. Developed with the assistance of IBM Global Services and released in June 1998, *bradyserve.com* features a Web-based front end (running IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite) seamlessly integrated with SAP R/3 in the backend. The initial *bradyserve.com* solution provided registered distributors with 24-hour access to product pricing and availability data, order status and open invoice listings; in 1999, the site added online order entry capability. By initially focusing on distributor-oriented services, Brady sought to strengthen relationships as well as allay distributors' fears that they would be marginalized by e-business solutions.

Since its introduction, adoption of *bradyserve.com* has grown steadily with nearly 30 percent (\$28 million) of Brady's distributor revenue derived from extranet-based transactions in its most recent fiscal year (2001, up from 10 percent, or \$10 million, in fiscal 2000). While Hasbrook attributes some of the site's success to discount pricing and promotions designed to encourage use, he believes the real key to its success has been its ease of use. "We designed *bradyserve.com* with the user in mind," says Hasbrook. "Our pricing and promotions may get distributors to try it, but its ease-of-use keeps them coming back—which is our main goal."

► Customer-Facing Initiatives

Brady's customer-facing solutions include both transactional and informational platforms targeted to slightly different groups of customers. The first of Brady's transactional solutions, known as *direct.com*, was developed using IBM Net.Commerce and is now in the process of being ported to the WebSphere Commerce Suite platform. *Direct.com* was designed to enable companies to purchase products under the brand name of Seton, Brady's direct marketing subsidiary. Seton's direct business model is distinguished from Brady's traditional, channel-centric model in its highly regional focus—with very different approaches employed from country to country. Acknowledging these distinct regional requirements, Brady opted to deploy unique sites for each of the 15 countries it serves.

"Our goal for *direct.com* is to build a global module that can be deployed rapidly by virtue of its integration with SAP. We don't want to build a series of 'one-off' solutions."

— Steve Hasbrook

But the truly unique feature of the *direct.com* solution is its enhanced CRM functionality, a reflection of Brady's desire to provide online customers with service levels similar to its traditional catalog and telephone-based customers. While *direct.com* has long relied on its own custom-developed code to provide its CRM functionality, Brady has begun an effort to port the solution's functionality to SAP R/3 (adapted for CRM). Hasbrook points out that this approach demonstrates Brady's desire to employ a global, scalable development strategy. "Our goal for *direct.com* is to build a global module that can be deployed rapidly by virtue of its integration with SAP," explains Hasbrook. "We don't want to build a series of 'one-off' solutions."

Under the present solution, *direct.com* users are authenticated via a user ID and password. Based on their registration information, customers are presented with a customized list of products and negotiated pricing data (driven by volume) based on their registration information. Revenue derived from the *seton.com* Web site presently accounts for approximately seven percent of total Seton US product revenue, up from one percent the previous year.

Considered an “order-to-cash” system, Web-to-Workbench™ is designed to facilitate all stages of the transaction—from product design (i.e., customization) all the way to payment and fulfillment.

One of Brady’s most innovative customer-facing solutions, Web-to-Workbench™, allows customers to customize a number of signage and identification products online. Brady developed the WebSphere Application Server and Java-based solution in response to the strong demand for customization among its customers, and to streamline what had been a fairly inefficient process. Considered an “order-to-cash” system, Web-to-Workbench is designed to facilitate all stages of the transaction—from product design (i.e., customization) all the way to payment and fulfillment. Customers can access Web-to-Workbench either through Brady directly or from distributors’ sites. From an architecture standpoint, the Web-to-Workbench solution employs customized Java applets (downloaded to the user’s browser) which interface with Java servlets running within IBM Websphere Application Server. The Web-to-Workbench solution is integrated with Brady’s underlying product configurator, which then sends product customization data to the shop floor where signs and other identification products are produced.

One of the most successful initiatives related to Web-to-Workbench has been its deployment on the W.W. Grainger site (www.grainger.com) as the “Custom Sign Center.” Accessed via a link at the Grainger site, the Custom Sign Center solution runs within Brady’s IT environment. Customers using Web-to-Workbench are prompted to input sign specifications (size, material, color, etc.) from which product prices are calculated.

In addition to its rich array of transactional solutions, Brady has also deployed a wide range of informational portals targeted to its current and prospective customers. In the US, each of Brady’s units operate its own site, with information including technical data, a full catalog of products, a distributor locator and company data. Outside the US, Brady employs an approach similar to its *direct.com* solution, with content presentation presented in local languages. For instance, while it operates a single portal in Europe, language presentation is determined by the user’s browser settings. Brady plans to follow a similar approach in Asia.

► Employee-Oriented Initiatives

Brady has also been aggressive in creating platforms to facilitate information sharing among its employees. Under an initiative known as *employee.com*, Brady launched a Lotus Domino-based employee portal known as “InsideBrady” in 1Q2001. Designed to replace Brady’s paper-based administrative and communications systems such as HR and employee communications, InsideBrady is seen as an important catalyst to knowledge management within the company, believes Hasbrook. “Knowledge management and knowl-

edge sharing are top-priority goals for us as a company,” says Hasbrook. “The InsideBrady solution has proven to be a powerful, valuable tool for helping us to achieve this goal.”

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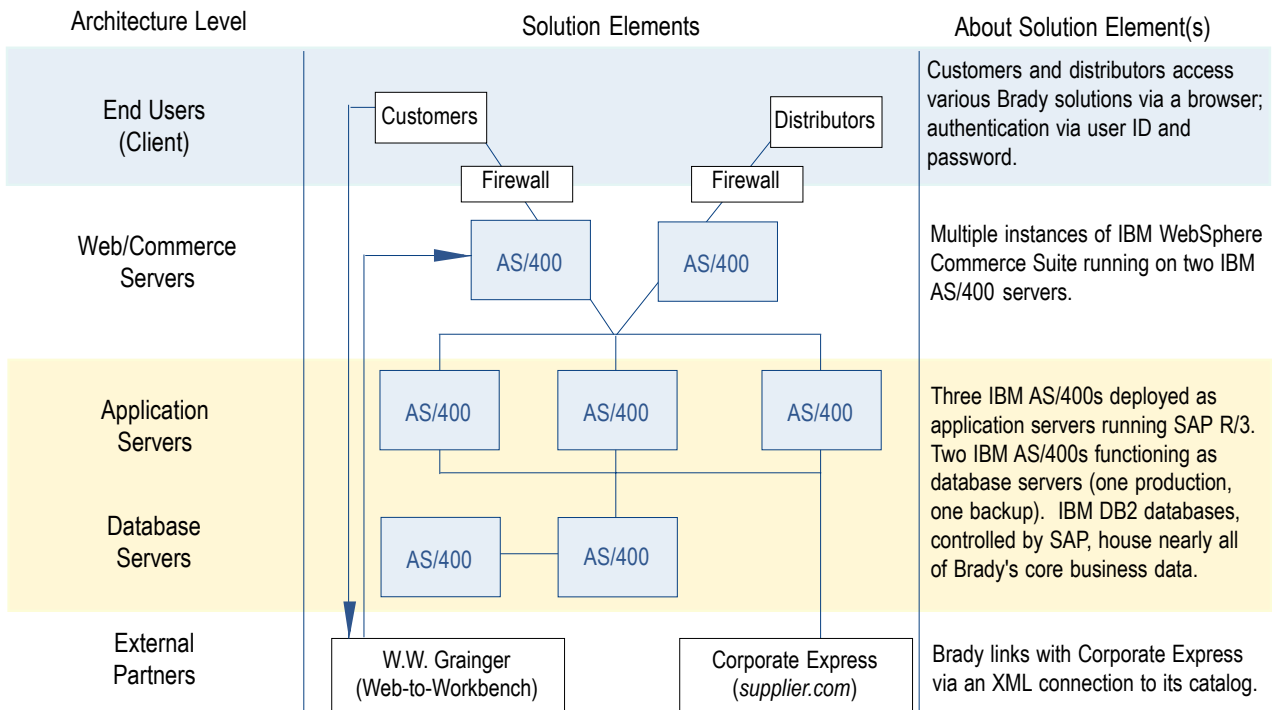
— Steve Hasbrook

Under the broad heading of knowledge management and sharing, Brady has also focused significant efforts on Web content management. Its signature solution in this area—also launched in early 2001—is a Domino-based publishing and content management solution known as Site Builder. According to Hasbrook, Site Builder was intended to empower business units to assume control of content management, which had been a highly centralized function. “Site Builder was a major breakthrough for us because like most businesses we had centralized resources—and far more requests than our resources could handle,” explains Hasbrook. “By decentralizing content management, we’ve been able to create better, more targeted information—and to do so more rapidly.” Not surprisingly, Site Builder has been especially useful supporting more granular and timely content needs, such as new product introductions and market-focused sites.

► Solution Development Approach and Architecture

As discussed previously, Brady’s development approach has adhered closely to its policy of using standardized technology to create modular, easily-replicated solutions. According to Hasbrook, the implementation of this “global” approach is expected to continue reducing the cost and time involved in applica-

Basic Architecture of Brady’s Planned Solution



Source: Brady and IDC

tion development and support. “The issues of modularity, economies of scale and reusability are core to our development strategy,” says Hasbrook. “By developing and leveraging a skill set, we’ve been able to build new applications quickly and support them less expensively—which is critical in a limited resource environment like ours.”

“Our strategy on the distributor side is to build a distributor extranet module on the WebSphere software platform that we can take around the world and deploy. We will follow the same approach for our *direct.com* solution.”

— Steve Hasbrook

At the heart of Brady’s emerging platform strategy is IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, which will power *distributor.com*, *direct.com*, and Web-to-Workbench™ in the coming months. While IBM Net.Commerce presently serves as Brady’s transaction processing engine, the company has begun a number of beta tests of WebSphere-based platforms. In all cases, explains Hasbrook, modularity is seen as key. “Our strategy on the distributor side is to build a distributor extranet module on the WebSphere software platform that we can take around the world and deploy,” says Hasbrook. “We will follow the same approach for our *direct.com* solution.”

Brady’s current base of e-business applications was developed both by IBM Global Services and Brady’s internal resources. IBM’s involvement in Brady’s recent e-business initiatives began in late 1999, when it created the Net.Commerce version of *distributor.com* and integrated it into Brady’s backend SAP solution. [Any registered distributor who orders online at *www.bradyserve.com* generates a PO which is automatically sent into Brady’s backend SAP system.] Beginning in late 2000, IBM Global Services designed and implemented Brady’s *direct.com* solution. Brady’s internal team of Lotus Domino developers created and continue to support the majority of the company’s Domino-based solutions. Brady also maintains a Java development team working on its Web-to-Workbench™ initiative, as well as a team working alongside IBM Global Services to create a series of modular, WebSphere-based solutions for use in *direct.com*, *distributor.com* and other solutions.

Brady’s overall application infrastructure runs on IBM AS/400 servers deployed within two data centers at and near its Milwaukee campus. Under the new architecture, two AS/400 servers running IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite sit just inside the firewall. These servers are integrated with another three AS/400s running SAP R/3, which in turn access another two AS/400s functioning as database servers (one production, one backup). IBM DB2 databases, controlled by SAP, store nearly all of Brady’s core business data, including pricing, product information, and customer account information. As Hasbrook points out, Brady selected IBM DB2 Universal Database as its core database platform because of “high performance, unparalleled reliability and tight integration with the WebSphere family of products.” Brady employed DeskNetAPS (Web publishing software from IBM Software Partner DeskNet, Inc.) to migrate catalog data from Quark XPress (where it resides for all Brady’s Seton print catalogs) to the DB2 database underlying the *direct.com* solution.

Business Results

In the near-term, Brady's primary e-business goals relate to generating and maintaining usage on its various platforms—and on this measure its record is impressive. Take the example of *bradyserve.com*, Brady's distributor extranet solution. From fiscal 2000 (August) to fiscal 2001, the number of registered users of *bradyserve.com* rose from 362 to 2,875. At the same time, the number of visits increased by more than three-fold (to nearly 100,000), while revenue rose from \$10 million to \$28 million. The *distributor.com* initiative has also enabled Brady to streamline its customer service operations, which will ultimately allow the company to redeploy a number of representatives in higher value-added roles within the company over the next 12 to 18 months.

Another of Brady's demand-side initiatives, Web-to-Workbench™, has also been a major success, having reached more than half a million dollars in revenues in just the first half of 2001. On the supplier side, Brady's *supplier.com* B2B procurement solution has already begun to deliver on its promise of reduced transaction and accounts payable processing costs. For the coming fiscal year, the company projects that *supplier.com* will save the company nearly \$200,000. Likewise, Brady's various employee-oriented initia-

Overview of Brady's Business Results Achieved

Brady Initiative	Nature of Benefit	Description or Metric
<i>distributor.com</i>	Improved Customer Service Cost Avoidance	From fiscal 2000 to 2001, revenue rose from \$10 million to \$28 million. Streamlined customer service operations enabled Brady to redeploy reps in higher value-added roles within the company.
<i>supplier.com</i>	Lower Costs	For the coming fiscal year, Brady projects that <i>supplier.com</i> will save Brady nearly \$200,000.
<i>employee.com</i>	Lower Costs	Brady's various employee-oriented initiatives—such as <i>employee.com</i> —are expected to produce significant reductions in printing and administrative costs.
<i>direct.com</i> and Web-to-Workbench™	Incremental Revenue Increased Customer Satisfaction	<i>direct.com</i> revenue was seven percent of total Seton US product revenue, up from one percent in the previous year. Web-to-Workbench revenues reached more than half a million dollars in the first six months of 2001.

Source: Brady and IDC

tives—such as InsideBrady—are expected to significantly reduce the company’s printing and administrative costs.

Beyond the numbers, however, is the sheer breadth of benefits that Brady has derived from the e-business initiatives of the last few years. For example, Brady’s distributors and customers are more satisfied because they receive the convenience of 24 by 7 ordering and order management capability. What’s more, Brady’s adoption of a more efficient application development approach will allow it to bring new services to market faster while keeping its own requirements for application development and support resources to a minimum.

Case Epilogue

Brady’s stated goal as a company is to do at least 50 percent of its business electronically by 2003. As Hasbrook sees it, his company has only recently crossed the threshold into a new phase of its e-business development. “Our strategy will be to continuously enhance the service we provide to our customers and distributors, and to continuously improve our own internal processes,” says Hasbrook. “Having the right IT architecture in place will be a critical component of our success in doing this.” Already a major user of IBM technology such as WebSphere Commerce Suite, DB2 and Lotus Domino, Brady plans to integrate it even deeper and more broadly into its architecture. A good example of this is Brady’s plans to leverage WebSphere’s multiple language and currency capabilities within its many non-US sites. In addition to deploying the WebSphere software platform across all of its e-business solutions, the company is considering the use of IBM MQSeries as its platform for secure messaging. This would allow Brady to capitalize on the tight integration between MQSeries, WebSphere and DB2.

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— Steve Hasbrook

Hasbrook looks back favorably on Brady’s various engagements with IBM Global Services, citing its vision, experience and values as a key part of his company’s success. “As an e-business leader in our market space, we want to work with companies that are moving in the technology and product direction that’s in synch with our own,” says Hasbrook. “IBM has shown us that they share our vision.”

The devil may be in the details, but that’s exactly where Hasbrook sees IBM’s greatest strengths. Discussing the various engagements of IBM Global Services, Hasbrook points to its attention to detail—both at the up-front specification stage and the implementation and follow-up—as points of excellence. “Working with other vendors and platforms, we’ve found that attention to detail has been an Achilles heel, resulting in our expectations not being met,” relates Hasbrook. “IBM brings together both the vision and the execution that we need to be an e-business leader.”

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