WebSphere® software
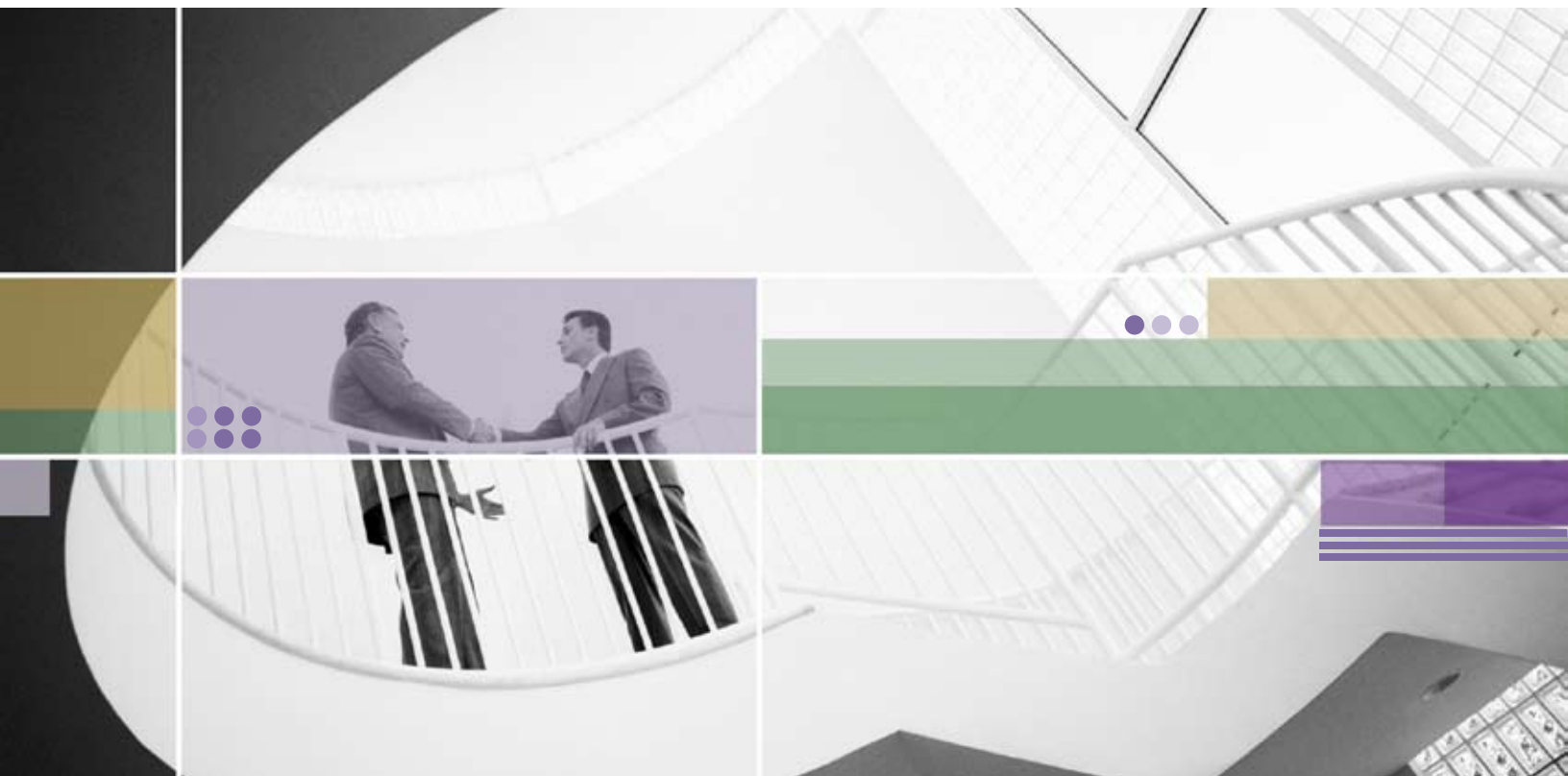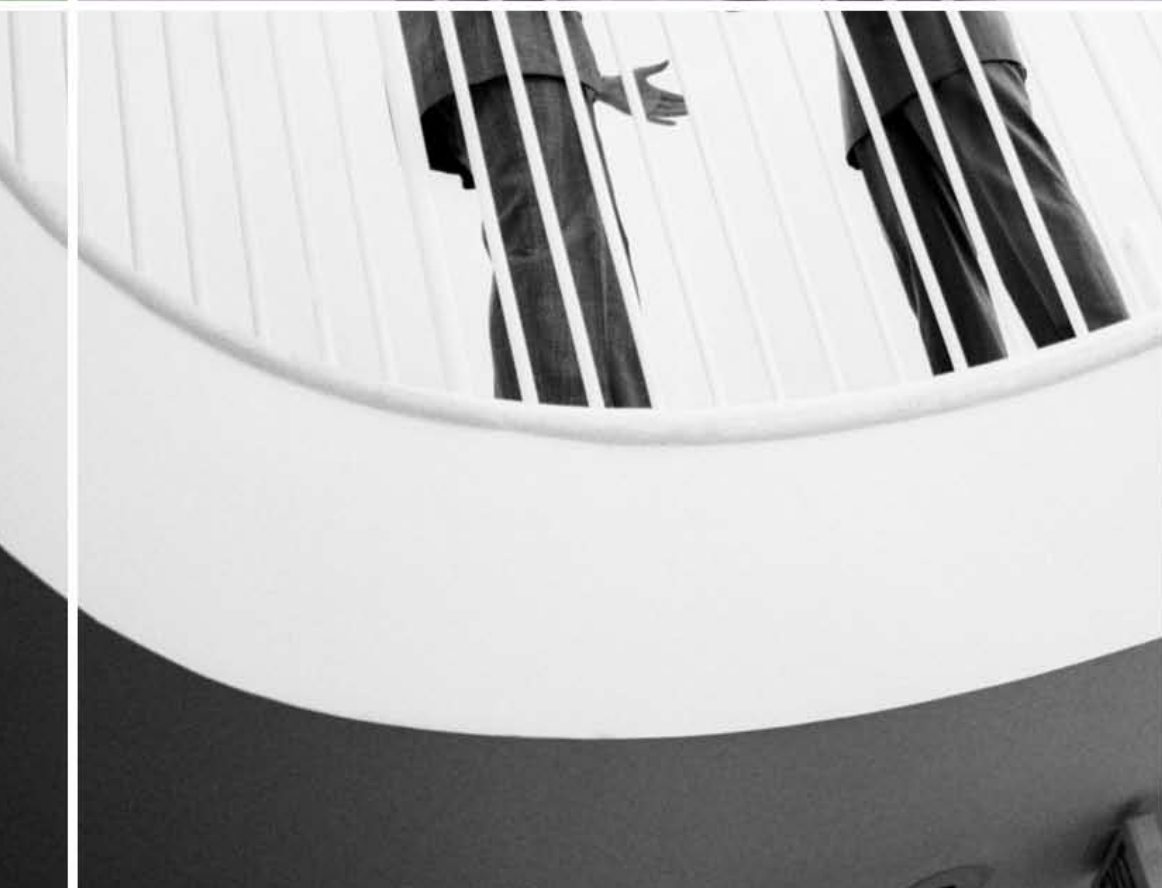
Making business better: business process management with SOA

Facilitating innovation through improved productivity

Optimize and deploy business processes that are in line with your strategic goals

Market conditions are changing rapidly. Unpredictable market forces—such as mergers and acquisitions, expanding regulatory requirements and globalization—can inhibit revenue growth. To survive and thrive, you need to improve the ability of your business to respond to customers and partners. A recent Gartner survey found that business process improvement—making a company easier to do business with—is the top business priority for CIOs for the second consecutive year. In addition, Gartner predicted that 2006 would see CIOs become more externally focused; helping the business to grow customer relationships, improve competitiveness and increase overall efficiency. Executives are looking for ways in which IT can make the company more prominent in a competitive market. CIOs are looking to help the business stand out with strategic and innovative use of information, business processes and intelligence in products and services. They are looking to use technology tools, rather than buying package solutions, to support competitive difference.[1]

Business process management (BPM) is the key to meeting these challenges. Your organization must streamline business processes to become capable of responding rapidly to changing market conditions. And to create this responsive environment, you need to integrate your company's people, applications and information into your business processes. You also need to monitor, control and continuously improve business operations. Achieving these goals can enable you to create more-responsive business processes that go beyond meeting regulations and automating routine tasks—helping you to improve your company's bottom line and meet your strategic business goals.

Taking advantage of the robust capabilities of IBM software solutions can help you enhance:

- Integration-centric BPM, *by helping you integrate and automate processes that get information from applications.*
- Human-centric BPM, *by helping to optimize processes that involve human interactions, including workflow or people working with each other.*
- Document-centric BPM, *by helping to manage processes that involve manuals and paperwork.*

Reducing business complexity

In any organization, employees must spend a lot of time working on developing processes or workflows to provide customer service and generate sales. They must access and update customer records, check loan applications, process orders and check their status—the list is endless. These transactions or business processes are repeated so frequently that they constitute a huge investment of time and resources. Unfortunately, it's only recently that tools have been available to enable business and IT to maximize the return on this investment.

IBM BPM solutions provide you with the objective information you need to increase employee productivity by intelligently streamlining business tasks and optimizing business-process performance (such as: credit risk assessment processing time). By uniquely helping you model, assemble, deploy and measure business processes, IBM BPM solutions helps you gain the insight needed to improve business productivity and bottom-line results.

With these solutions, you can design, automate and administer operational business processes to deliver a high-performance, responsive business. As a result, you can make the most of your resources and assets—from employees to IT systems. Improve customer service by increasing efficiencies across the value chain. And better anticipate and adjust to changing business needs by incorporating business metrics into a process-modeling tool, so that you can use them to simulate and design your processes to their optimum level before deploying them into production.

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IBM provides the building blocks for SOA

IBM has been developing solutions based on service oriented architecture (SOA) for the past ten years. And IBM has used this expertise to build an extensive suite of tools that you can use to create business processes that can respond quickly in today's marketplace. IBM WebSphere® MQ is the foundation for the IBM suite of SOA tools. Other building blocks include:

- IBM WebSphere Process Server, *a business server that enables you to create and deploy new business processes and synchronize business information in multiple business applications on diverse platforms.*
- IBM WebSphere Business Modeler, *a design drawing and analysis tool that enables business managers to design and simulate processes.*
- IBM WebSphere Business Monitor, *a business dashboard that enables you to monitor your business processes so that you can make continuous improvements.*
- IBM WebSphere Integration Developer, *an Eclipse technology-based application-development tool for IT to build and deploy business processes based on SOA.*

Along with these tools, you can use IBM WebSphere Message Broker, IBM WebSphere Partner Gateway and IBM Rational® Application Developer to quickly build and deploy complex, cross-enterprise business processes that are built on top of a flexible SOA.

BPM and SOA: achieving business agility

Developing flexible business processes based on an SOA enables you to optimize business processess and functions, integrate business processes with the underlying infrastructure and make changes on the fly without rewriting all your code. And building BPM capabilities on top of SOA enables you to achieve these advantages fast, with reduced risk—without breaking the bank. BPM capabilities based on WebSphere software are excellent solutions for companies that want to:

- *Enhance, update and integrate manual procedures and processes.*
- *Reduce the number of paper-based processes to combat potential slowdowns.*
- *Model, design and simulate processes without using development resources.*
- *Comply with increasing government and industry regulations.*
- *Maximize the efficiency of business operations, within the organization and beyond.*

**IBM brings it all together**

IBM has built a comprehensive suite of products that span the entire BPM life cycle, enabling you to model, assemble, deploy and manage your processes.

With WebSphere Business Modeler, you can "whiteboard" business-process workflows and design the steps necessary to complete simple tasks. You can then transform these business models into Business Process Execution Language (BPEL) and export them to WebSphere Integration Developer, where existing and new services can be assembled to create new composite applications. Then, you can use that code to deploy your application by publishing it using WebSphere Process Server. WebSphere Business Monitor enables you to monitor your business processes and their performance, then make adjustments as required.

You can also use WebSphere Partner Gateway to connect your business and trading partners using electronic data interchange (EDI) technology. And IBM WebSphere Adapters let you quickly and easily create integrated processes that exchange information among systems such as those for enterprise resource planning (ERP) from SAP, human resources (HR) from PeopleSoft and Oracle, customer relationship management (CRM) from Seibel, and supply chain management (SCM).

Other complimentary products from the IBM BPM portfolio include IBM DB2® Content Manager, which associates critical documents, files, images and information as part of a process. Further, IBM® Workplace™ eForms, in combination with DB2 Content Manager and WebSphere Process Server, forms the basis of many processes that combine human, document and system-centric activity, such as claims processing, employee on-boarding or account opening.

Finally, and also built on the IBM Workplace assets, collaboration offerings exist to offer strong messaging, real-time collaboration and team collaboration platforms, and solid security and IBM Workplace readiness.
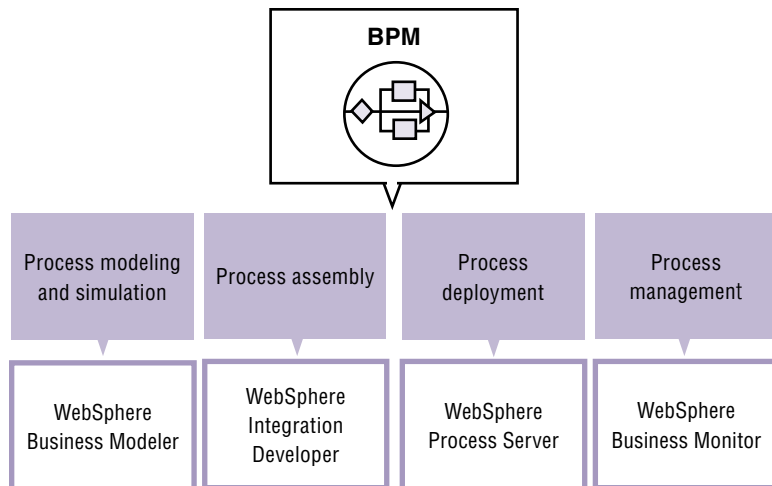
IBM BPM with SOA capabilities uses can help you model, assemble, deploy and manage operational business processes.

As your IT infrastructure becomes more complex because of expanding products or mergers and acquisitions, you must streamline processes to keep employees productive and customers satisfied. BPM can help align IT resources with business priorities while increasing IT infrastructure flexibility.

IBM BPM capabilities are based on the market-leading IBM WebSphere platform — an industry-leading middleware platform for end-to-end integration across the value chain. The products that make up the WebSphere platform are designed to help you maximize performance, scalability and adaptability, providing compounding value that enables:

- *Business-process change through process modeling and simulation.*
- *Business-process deployment and composite-application building through process automation.*
- *Business-activity monitoring through process management.*

"To date, WebSphere BPM suite is the only BPM offering that integrates process implementation based on SOA standards with business-oriented modeling and monitoring. If optimizing business performance is on your mind, you should be talking to IBM."

—Bruce Silver, 2006 BPM Market Report[2]

"An example of one vendor that is responding to these trends and changes in the BPM market is IBM. IBM announced new initiatives in BPM tied closely to its SOA philosophy. The resulting product set it introduced to the market reflects IBM's understanding of what businesses are looking for in terms of BPM functionality."

—Upside Research, 2006 Market Study[3]

Process modeling and simulation for easier collaborative planning

To help drive business-process change from the beginning, you can use WebSphere Business Modeler, a tool that allows business managers to design and simulate processes. This tool includes drag-and-drop business-process modeling, providing a structured environment that allows easier participation in business-process design. Best-in-class simulation and analysis allow you to run the process with real business constraints, enabling your company to obtain valuable business-performance information.

Modeling and simulating your processes enables you to gain an operational-level understanding of your business, provides valuable insight into why your business performs the way it does and gives you the tools and insight you need to identify how you can maximize business performance by creating a better business design. And the collaborative environment with version control creates a "sandbox" for business innovation—enabling you to test the impact of business-process change practically without risk. Process automation for faster response

Process automation for faster response

After you've learned about your company's specific business processes, you can take the next steps toward automation. IBM BPM solutions reduce the resources required to update or automate integration solutions. The comprehensive suite includes model-driven development tools, monitoring tools and a business-process server to help you automate and business-process tasks across multiple systems or applications.

These solutions can help you increase the efficiency of your development or maintenance efforts while at the same time increasing the quality and consistency of the resulting solutions. Another benefit is that the IBM BPM suite enables you to effectively re-engineer business processes using SOA-based modular middleware platforms and development tools. You don't have to start from scratch because SOA enables you to extend the existing IT assets and applications that you already have.

Users can decrease development and deployment cycle times through the use of easily designed, reusable services building blocks. Creating common services helps you reduce ongoing maintenance costs.

Credit Lyonnais used WebSphere software to build just such a solution. With financial markets expanding rapidly, global finance leader Credit Lyonnais faced new economic and business pressures, including dramatic increases in trade volumes, equity values and revenue margins. The French-based financial company needed to improve responsiveness by consolidating a matrix of redundant, globally distributed systems and enabling straight-through processing of equity trades.

IBM had the solution—using WebSphere Business Integration for Financial Markets, a process integration hub, to choreograph complex business processes across internal and external enterprise boundaries. After implementation, Credit Lyonnais saw a 20 percent cost reduction in business and IT operations, 99 percent custodian reconciliation and virtual elimination of failed trades. The resulting increase in responsiveness also meant a faster time to market with new products and services.

"We literally transformed our organization from end to end into a more professional banking organization that is on the cutting edge of financial services."

–Dominique Ioos, head of operations for Equity Products, Credit Lyonnais

Business-process monitoring enables you to continuously enhance their processes

Complex, siloed processes, applications and infrastructure can make it difficult for business leaders to respond to market opportunities, competitors' moves and regulatory changes. WebSphere Business Monitor enables you to understand how processes are performing, where slowdowns occur and how work items are progressing. You can also track the real-time and historical process-performance times by monitoring key performance indicators (KPI). The business-level dashboards enable you to track and audit individual work items for compliance. You can use this insight to understand where processes are slowing down—and make adjustments to continuously enhance the effectiveness of tasks and operations.By measuring business-process performance, you can help ensure that you provide the best possible service to your customers and trading partners.

For more information

IBM helps your company become more flexible and responsive by providing industry-leading solutions that combine comprehensive capabilities with the potential for low cost of ownership. IBM and its Business Partners have the expertise and capabilities to deliver and support your BPM solutions—bringing you closer to creating a more responsive business environment.

To learn more about IBM integration and infrastructure software, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:
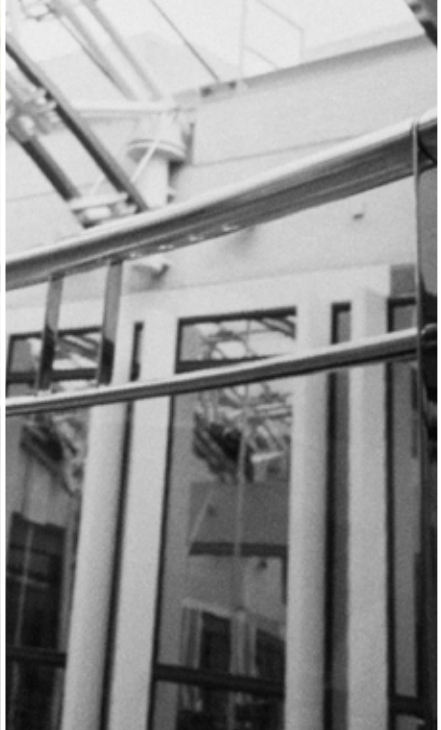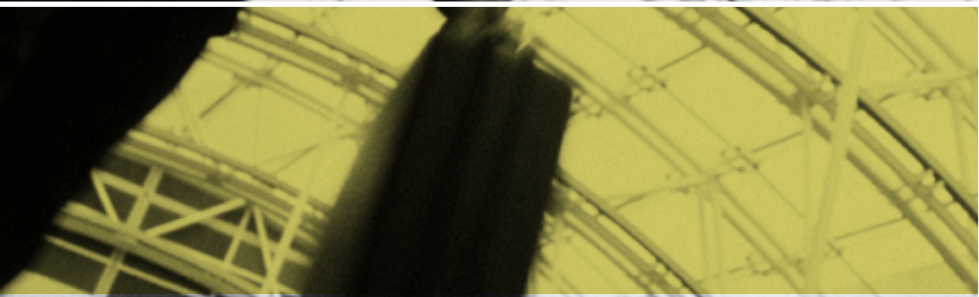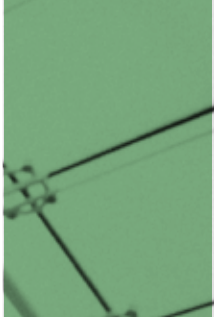
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ibm.com/software/info/bpmsoa

To join the Global WebSphere Community, visit:

www.websphere.org

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[1] "Growing IT's Contribution: The 2006 CIO Agenda." Gartner Research, [need date].

[2] 2006 BPM Market Report." Bruce Silver.

[3] Kelly, David and Heather Ashton. "Changing Business for the Better: A Practical Guide to BPM." Upside Research, 2005.