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BUSINESS PROCESS
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An Oracle Solution Brief

October 2013

Business Driven Process Optimization

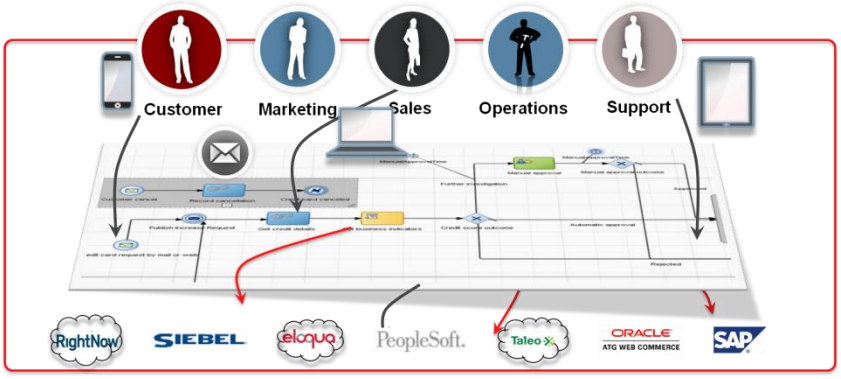
Introduction

Business users have most intimate knowledge about the business operations and understand the process improvements required. Business-driven process management lets them manage the design, execution and improvement of business processes. Business and IT collaboration and business empowerment are necessary so that business applications can keep pace with fast changing world. Oracle Business Process Management Suite enables business users to take control and drive improvements for their processes.

This solution brief discusses how Oracle BPM Suite empowers business users to participate effectively in the entire process life cycle- Design, Execution and Improvement.

Improving Business Processes

Many business applications are acquired and implemented at the department level but generally the business processes run across the departments. This creates process whitespaces, meaning, there are certain activities that are not catered to by any application. Businesses tend to fill these whitespaces with manual activities such as emails, spreadsheets and verbal communications. These activities create process inefficiencies and make traceability a nightmare. When designed and implemented in BPM system, business managers can get their business operations more efficient by eliminating whitespaces between existing applications. Designing end-to-end processes, breaking the functional and application silos, and automating manual activities help improve business performance.



Being Business Driven

Traditionally the relationship between business and IT has been quite "transactional" rather than collaborative. Business usually captures business requirements in documents and hands them off to IT to build business applications. If change is required, the request is again sent to IT, to initiate some change management procedure. This approach may not be conducive for agile enterprises. Agility in an organization requires that business users are able to design and optimize their processes and are able to change processes without overly relying on IT. To be business-driven means to empower non-developers

to design and control the business processes and applications. It means quicker time-to-solution as well as quick updates to the application when business changes.

Business-driven process design with Oracle BPM Suite

Oracle BPM enables business users to define business processes using Process Composer, an intuitive, easy to use and web-based modeling tool. The process models replace the traditional requirements document and drive IT implementation. These models also serve as process documentation for dissemination and learning purposes. Further, using Composer, business users can not only define but also review and provide feedback on their business processes.

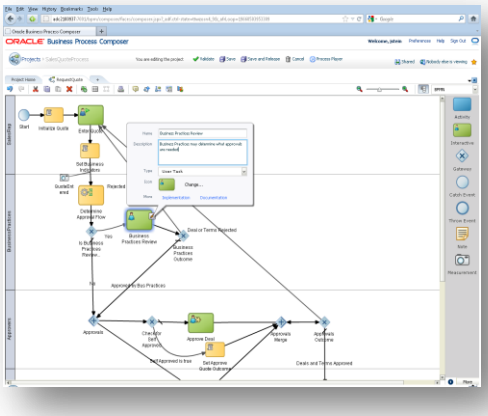


Figure 1 Modeling inside Oracle BPM Process Composer

Process discovery and definition are an inherently collaborative effort. By enabling collaboration inside Process Composer, it brings together relevant stakeholders across the globe to model their processes collaboratively.

Oracle BPM suite supports a unique WYSIWYE technology. It means What You See is What You Execute. This allows for a superior collaboration between business and IT. The process models that are designed by business analysts can be easily viewed and enhanced in the developer toolset, BPM Studio without any loss of design.

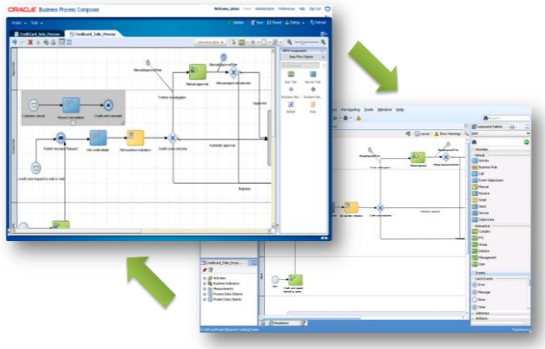


Figure 2 Business users and IT work on same process model

Business user engagement is not just limited to modeling a process, but also extends to other process related artifacts and other phases of the process development life cycle. Business users can also design business rules, human task user interfaces (forms), and data definitions (data types) inside BPM Process Composer. Let's take a look at some of these capabilities.

User Interface Design

Designing human task user interfaces is just as important as the process definition and requires considerable business involvement. Using BPM Process Composer, business users can easily create user interfaces for their business processes by dragging and dropping controls from a palette,

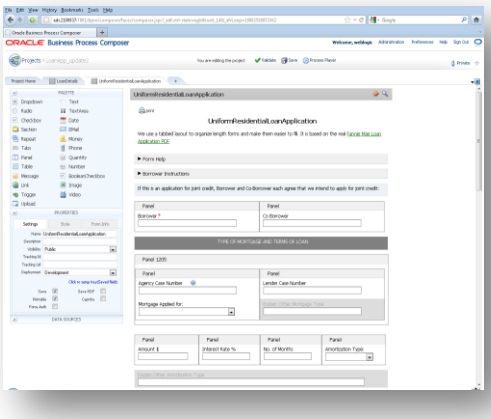


Figure 3 Business user friendly UI designer inside Oracle BPM Process Composer

accelerating time-to-solution and providing significant cost savings.

Business Rules Management

Oracle BPM Suite supports all kinds of rules that you may need to articulate your business policies. These rules can be added to the process models as process conditions, decision tables or as system steps that may call any other enterprise policy systems.

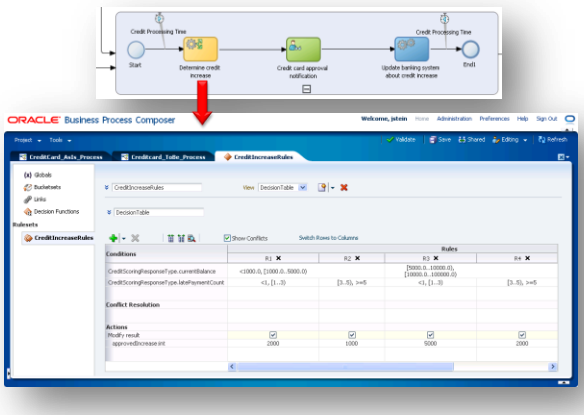


Figure 4 A step in the process can invoke rules maintained by business users

Commonly the rules are managed by a separate group of people than who design the process. Oracle supports the externalization of rules so that if the business condition changes you can change the policy rule independent of the process. This means agility for your business. You no longer have to deal with rigid applications that require months in an effort to implement a policy change.

Process Player

Once the process design is complete, all the rules and user interfaces are defined, business users can test the process using Process Player. It lets users run the process as if it is being run in production with all data and rule invocations. This helps business users to ensure the process is behaving the desired way before it is deployed in the production environment.

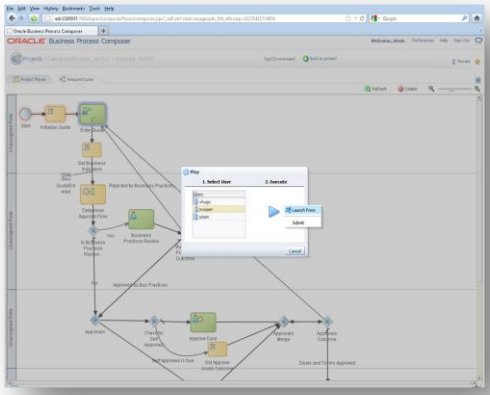


Figure 5 Process Player lets user execute the process from Process Composer for validating business requirements

Role of IT

The role of the IT developers in this business led modeling and composition paradigm is of a business enabler. They are primarily responsible for the creation of reusable, shared business services, data types, and other such implementation artifacts that require technical expertise. However, changes made by IT Developers can be shared back to business and viewed inside the business tool for further refinements by business. This seamless round-trip is possible because Oracle uses BPMN 2.0 as a modeling notation which is a model cum execution language.

Business Driven Process Execution with Oracle BPM Suite

Business empowerment is not just limited to process development, but also extends to work management. Oracle BPM empowers business users to perform their work efficiently by providing them the right information at the right time within an intuitive interface. Oracle BPM suite provides a

personalized workspace where the end users go and perform their daily tasks. These tasks may include processing a claim, or opening a dashboard to see your team's performance.

Oracle BPM Suite also provides a collaborative work management interface called BPM Process Spaces to facilitate collaboration between business users while they work on a task. These collaborations get archived along with process instance data for compliance and future reference purposes.

Figure 6 Web and mobile workspaces

In addition to the collaborative work management, Oracle BPM Suite provides business users with power and flexibility to perform dynamic work assignments. Managers can re-assign, delegate as well as re-route their tasks as situation demands. Various algorithms are available for task assignments and escalations. This flexibility ensures that the operational managers can utilize their team effectively and maintain the optimum work load on staff.

Business-Driven Process Improvement with Oracle BPM Suite

Oracle BPM suites provides various avenues for process improvement. Business users can optimize processes during design time as well as analyze the process execution for iterative continuous process improvement. Following sections discuss process improvement during design and using runtime analytics.

Design time Optimization using Process Simulation

Process simulation lets users specify process step durations and costs and run various scenarios to find the optimum process design. Running simulation helps identify process bottlenecks, paths in the process that are most expensive and the paths that take up the most time. With this information, business users can fine-tune the process design as well as determine resources required to run operations. Process simulation can also be used to do analysis like Activity Based Costing or to establish service level agreements.

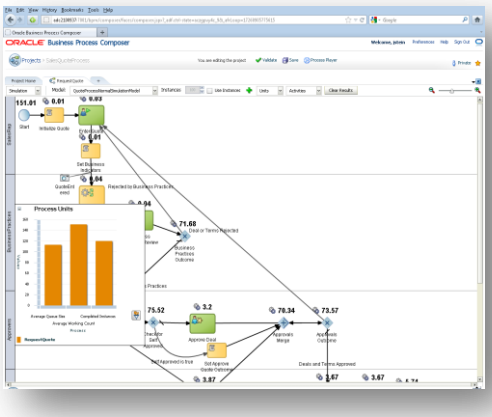


Figure 7 Process Simulation for design time optimization

Process Monitoring and Analytics for Continuous Improvement

Business managers want to have visibility into end-to-end operations. They want to know about the performance of their operations and teams. This information is required in real time in order to be responsive to customer needs and changing business conditions.

Oracle BPM Suite utilizes business activity monitoring to capture the events and data from process. The events are collected for each step of an end-to-end process running in BPM system and from activities executed in an external system like ERP or CRM. This powerful functionality provides a timely, comprehensive picture to the business managers to make timely, informed decisions.

In addition, BPM system captures all the data and events generated during the process execution and the data is available for analysis. Business users can run various analytics, slicing and dicing this data to get insights for process improvement. Oracle BPM suite provides out of the box process analytics that can be used to analyze any type of process. Analysis like process performance, team performance, SLA jeopardy can be easily accessed via various widgets in the dashboard. These analysis charts and graphs provide drill down capabilities so that users can click through and go to the root cause of any issue.

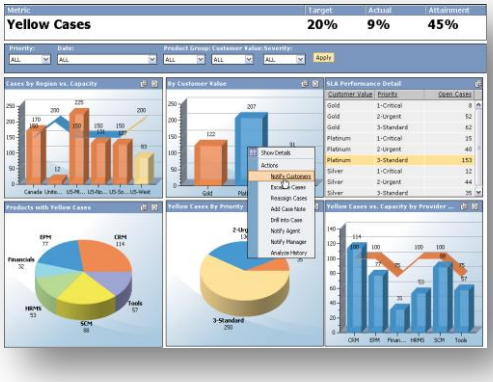


Figure 8 Business activity and performance monitoring

This powerful monitoring an analytics provides business users with insight to improve the processes. The improvements to the processes can be quickly designed, tested and deployed as new version of the process applications, ensuring continuous process improvement

Conclusion

Oracle BPM empowers business participants to design and implement their business processes rapidly, without having to rely greatly on over stretched IT resources, leading to agile and cost efficient development. It promotes close collaboration between business and IT and ensures that processes reflect actual business needs. It enables business users to gain better control of their process related tasks and facilitates dynamic work redistribution enhancing user productivity and process efficiency. It puts business in the driver's seat and provides them the ability to tune processes dynamically and meet changing business needs. For more information on Oracle BPM go to www.oracle.com/BPM

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