

Creating competitive advantage by improving your content-centric processes



Making content work for you

Harvesting the information in your company's content stores could give you powerful competitive advantages. Web mail, e-mail, and instant messaging could reveal strong customer preferences that could help you provide better customer service and higher sales. Reports and presentations could be repurposed, improving employee productivity. But how will these improvements happen if you cannot conveniently access the content you need and determine what it means?

Content represents as much as 85 percent of an organization's information assets. Also referred to as "unstructured data," content includes reports, presentations, statements, invoices, letters, e-mail, instant messages, spreadsheets, digital audio and video, and Web content. The challenge of capturing, organizing, storing, securing, discovering and retrieving all of this content is daunting, especially as the growth of content outpaces structured data.

Today, the average knowledge worker spends 25-30 percent of his or her time just looking for information. Many business processes are still paper-based (or based on data stored on other physical media such as microfilm and video tape).

In addition, complying with regulatory and corporate governance mandates could stretch the capability of the information infrastructures your company relies on to address information lifecycle requirements. Compliance requirements are also contributing to an explosive growth of content since many government and industry regulations mandate that content be retained for extended periods of time.

And not only are organizations managing substantial increases in information, they are also more actively leveraging content in business processes and applications

across the enterprise. As a result, they are seeking to buy solutions that can help build their core enterprise infrastructure with a broader, more integrated set of content and business process management capabilities that provide better integration with business applications and a reduction in cost of ownership.

If you've decided to optimize your business processes and need your content to be delivered and utilized in context with those processes, you'll want to consider the benefits. You also may want to evaluate whether the solutions you are considering can help you address your business needs and compliance requirements.

How can you benefit from automating business processes?

If your business processes are based on business forms or documents, transforming slow, inefficient paper-based processes into automated Web-based processes can save time, lower costs and streamline your document creation and management processes. Automating business processes helps eliminate paper and reduces human handling of forms, shortening cycle times and costs, while increasing profits by lowering paper costs and associated overhead.

Your content-centric business process solutions can help you achieve these goals while supporting your organization's efforts to:

Increase efficiency. Process automation technology helps employees, customers, partners and suppliers swiftly and seamlessly transact and exchange content in the context of business processes. You can increase efficiency by eliminating redundant activities, optimizing the steps in the process and reducing the time necessary to complete the task.

Improve accuracy, decision making. With increased efficiency comes better business process control. Automated processes help you define and enable process consistency, including legal approvals, reviews and content usage. This helps you avoid mismanaged content that could lead to misrepresentation, legal exposure and lost business.

With enhanced control over your business processes, your company can benefit from improved decision making by ensuring that content is shared across multiple applications and departments so that everyone who needs to be part of the decision has access to supporting content. This collaboration enhances business agility. Gaining better insight into the business helps employees anticipate marketplace changes and take the right timely actions.

Enhance customer service and productivity. Delivering consistent content across multiple channels —whether customers or partners are dealing with traditional offices, phone support or the Web — helps strengthen relationships. This helps increase responsiveness to employees and customers and frees up employees to attend to higher value activities.

Making workers more productive can result from improving their access to the information they need to do their jobs. This not only reduces time-consuming searches for information, it also enables content to be reused rather than re-created, and allows workers to collaborate more easily on content creation.

Provide visibility. Understanding how well processes are executing and performing requires visibility into processes — from both a historical and real-time perspective. The insight gained from such process visibility gives organizations the opportunity to improve the processes continuously and enables process and business innovation.

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Reduce risk and streamline compliance. In order to effectively manage risk and demonstrate financial and operational integrity, businesses need an agile infrastructure that will enable them to connect, understand, cleanse, transform, organize, manage, report on, audit and federate distributed data and content.

For a smarter, more responsive organization, choose IBM content-centric business process solutions

IBM content-centric business process solutions can help your company address its requirements by automating business processes and ensuring that relevant content is delivered and utilized in context. Further, you can create audit trails on both content and your documented, repeatable business processes that can help you meet the demands generated by governance, risk and compliance issues.



The following IBM solutions are designed to help you automate your business processes and deliver and manage content while enhancing efficiency, productivity and customer service.

Automate content-centric processes with IBM FileNet Business Process Manager (BPM)

If your organization needs to improve business processes and access content as a step in the business process, this solution is for you.

IBM FileNet BPM controls and manages the flow of work throughout your business by streamlining, automating and

optimizing business processes. It has the flexibility and scalability to handle the most complex business processes – involving millions of transactions, thousands of users and multiple business applications.

FileNet BPM helps shorten process lifecycles and automatically manages process exceptions so you can react immediately to internal events or customer demands. While powerful, it is also easy to use, administer and deploy. Best practices and business logic can be captured in the context of visual process models and reused, thereby shortening implementation time and increasing your speed to market so you can seize new business opportunities.

FileNet BPM provides process simulation and analysis so processes can be analyzed with historical data or through what-if analysis. This helps employees identify inefficiencies and bottlenecks in their processes and results in optimized process deployments with efficient use of resources.

FileNet BPM also provides real-time tracking and monitoring of business processes. Managers who own these processes can see how well their processes are running and respond to unusual or critical issues before they become serious problems.

FileNet BPM provides you with the means to:

- Reduce cycle times and improve productivity across the entire organization
- Lower total cost of ownership by connecting users and applications with a unified business process management infrastructure
- Enable the “real-time enterprise” by allowing users to better react to business events as they occur

Automate forms processing using IBM FileNet eForms

Organizations find IBM FileNet eForms compelling because they can realize substantial operational cost savings, improve customer service, increase revenues and ultimately gain competitive advantage by accelerating how work gets done. Using FileNet eForms, business executives can exceed objectives and help ensure regulatory compliance, while IT organizations can increase productivity and develop business process solutions faster than when using custom programming tools.

FileNet eForms allows organizations to build high fidelity, highly intelligent e-forms without custom programming. FileNet eForms is tightly integrated into the IBM FileNet P8 platform. Thus, eForms is the only electronic forms solution based on best-of-breed enterprise-class repository and

business process management technology. With eForms, enterprises can garner significant returns for business and IT executives.

Rapidly build content-centric applications with IBM FileNet Business Process Framework

Many organizations have started reaping the benefits of Business Process Management to model, automate and optimize their business processes by adopting BPM principles as a discipline and deploying BPM technology. To effectively run an agile business that is responsive to ever-changing customer and business needs, it is vital to build, deploy and maintain BPM applications more quickly and easily. It is also important to provide a consistent look and feel across multiple process-based applications. An organization can exercise control and consistency by adopting a standardized framework that forms a basis for such process-centric applications.

IBM FileNet Business Process Framework (BPF) is an application development framework that allows organizations and IBM partners to quickly develop and deploy process applications for FileNet Business Process Manager. BPF uniquely delivers a configurable case-based development environment that can be used to create customized BPM applications across the enterprise with common Web-based user interface elements, maximizing component reuse, substantially reducing the cost of development, time to deployment, and total cost of ownership of such applications.

BPF is a proven, case-based application development framework built on the IBM FileNet P8 platform and its Process and Content Engines. It addresses the needs of organizations across various industries globally. IBM solution partners can use BPF as an application framework for building industry or vertical solutions.

Automate the content wherever it resides using Content Federation Services

IBM FileNet Content Federation Services (CFS) enables organizations to access content from numerous heterogeneous repositories anywhere in the enterprise and federates this information to provide a single enterprise source for critical business content. Unlike other enterprise content integration services in which capabilities are limited to searching repositories only, CFS allows enterprises to search, catalog, classify, secure, retain, comply, activate, update and delete content residing in repositories across the enterprise. It also makes content an active part of an organization's business processes, helping to streamline processes, improve performance and enable better, faster decisions throughout the enterprise.

Existing investments in content management can be preserved, while enabling a consolidated enterprise view of content and providing a single, master enterprise catalog. These services will drive future development efforts and reduce the complexity of managing content across the enterprise. Further, you can apply the full breadth of ECM capabilities available in all IBM FileNet products over any item of content, in any repository, to drive any process or inform any decision anywhere in the enterprise. For example, content can be activated to trigger business processes. Records management policies can be transparently enforced by automatically declaring content and documents, including email messages, as corporate records. By deploying CFS, application developers can focus on solving the business problem, rather than worrying about where documents, images or Web content reside. CFS reduces complexity by enabling applications to easily access content through a single call to the enterprise catalog service.

Summary

Accelerated Decision Making

The moment of decision happens thousands of times a day and each moment affects the velocity of your business. By streamlining and automating critical processes, IBM's content-centric process solutions allow you to automate and optimize your operations and improve your ability to make fast and accurate decisions. By integrating content with business processes, all levels of your organization can make timely decisions based on the most accurate information available. These capabilities have delivered a significant return on investment for our customers including benefits such as:

- Improving productivity by 140 percent
- Decreasing decision cycle time from 7 days to just 7 minutes
- Automating the monthly payment of more than 30,000 invoices to streamline operations and take full advantage of early payment discounts
- Reducing human resources costs by \$1 million (USD) by providing employees with automated services and self-serve resources
- Saving \$3 million (USD) a year by driving high-performance processes and optimized workflow throughout the organization

Look to IBM to help automate your business processes

IBM's comprehensive suite of business transformation solutions can help automate business processes and manage your content. The result helps give an organization the flexibility to reinvent itself — improving time-to-market, responsiveness, client satisfaction and productivity — while delivering managed content when and where it is needed.

Unlike competitors, IBM has the depth of experience, industry insight and the technological know-how to help organizations leverage their information for business transformation, and offers solutions designed to rapidly deliver information to employees, customers and partners, where and when they need it.

For more information

Contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner or visit: ibm.com/software/ecm



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