



**Patricia Seybold Group**

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Trusted Advisors to Customer-Centric Executives

# **The Value of WebSphere Portal on z/OS and OS/390**

Leveraging Mission-Critical Capabilities  
for Emerging Strategic Applications

*By David S. Marshak  
September 2003*

*Prepared for IBM Corporation*

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## Leveraging Mission-Critical Capabilities for Emerging Strategic Applications

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### The Strategic Value of Portals

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#### **Portals Create Branded, Interactive, Customized Experiences**

Over the past few years, the concept of portals has moved from an aggregation of links aimed at consumers surfing the Web to a key part of most companies' IT strategies. Companies are embarking on portal initiatives aimed at specific constituencies, including their employees, partners, and customers. These portals, more than just being aggregations of content and links, are becoming custom interfaces for users—enabling them to do their jobs and reach their outcomes in a more efficient and effective manner. And portals are now beginning to replace intranets, extranets, and other more static Web sites—becoming the most effective method for individuals to interact with applications, information, processes, and each other, while becoming the preferred way for organizations to create a branded, interactive, customized experience for its constituencies.

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#### **Portal Benefits: Reduce Costs, Increase Revenue, Infrastructure Rationalization**

Companies that are implementing portals have a set of strategic goals around how they want to best enable interaction for their employees, partners, and customers. At the same time, they are looking for tangible payback from their portal initiatives. That payback generally comes from one of three areas: reduced costs, increased revenue, and infrastructure rationalization—often from all three.

**REDUCE COSTS.** Portals enable companies to reduce costs in a number of ways, most significantly by enabling self-service and increasing productivity. Allowing employees, customers, partners, and others to serve themselves not only makes it easier for them, but also can significantly reduce costs such as phone calls to Customer Support and Human Resources. Productivity can be increased by using portals to provide personalized views that enable people to find the information they need right away. This reduces information overload and ensures that employees have all the information and tools they need to do their jobs. In addition, companies can leverage portal content publishing and management capabilities to more effectively communicate with their employees, customers, and partners by providing them personalized, timely, and actionable information. Finally,

companies can use portals to help reduce travel and communication expenses and to assure that users can get to the appropriate information no matter where they are or what device (including mobile devices, such as PDAs and WAP phones) they are currently using.

**INCREASE REVENUE.** Companies are also using portals to increase revenue and to become more responsive to customer needs and competitive pressures within a very difficult economic climate. By having a single point of immediate access to the appropriate information, customer-facing individuals are able to more quickly respond to customer issues (such as support requests) and desires (such as RFPs). These individuals are also able to find, and collaborate more quickly and seamlessly with, the appropriate colleagues to be able to expeditiously meet the customer's needs, often in real time. In addition, portals enable organizational boundaries to be crossed, thus strengthening relationships with partners and customers.

Portals can be used to increase individual and group productivity and the velocity and quality of decision-making, planning, and execution. This leads to increased revenue and competitiveness by improving companies' time-to-market for new products and solutions.

In addition, portals also directly and positively impact revenue by allowing customers better access to corporate and product information. As a result, customers make faster and better decisions, frequently increasing the likelihood of purchase and reducing the time-to-decision or time-to-close. This often has an additional cost-savings implication, since better purchase decisions by customers can directly lead to fewer returns and support calls.

**RATIONALIZE AND CONSOLIDATE INFRASTRUCTURE.** On the infrastructure side, portal implementations promise long-term savings by creating a single user and application management and presentation model. Even more significant is the portal model that uses Portlets to support a services-oriented architecture. This enables companies to encapsulate their legacy applications and surface their functionality within portals, without undertaking new large-scale application development efforts. And it better prepares them to move into the future of a more dynamic on-demand world.

## IBM WebSphere Portal—A Market and Functionality Leader

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In the Patricia Seybold Group independent in-depth evaluation of IBM WebSphere Portal, we found, *"IBM is a clear leader in the portal marketplace in both market share and depth and breadth of its products."* The reasons for this are clear: WebSphere Portal meets all of the requirements in functionality, services, and architecture that customers with strategic portal initiatives are looking for (see Illustration 1). In addition, IBM WebSphere Portal is a distinct leader in several portal categories, most notably its support for mobile device access and globalization of portals; its support for security and single sign-on; its wide range of collaboration, search, and content management services; and its

ability to build customized workspace and task-oriented portals. IBM is also a leader in promoting portal-oriented standards, which will eventually make it easier and faster for companies to find and roll out Portlets that are critical to their portals. And, perhaps most importantly, IBM is fully committed to making portals the key technology that will drive the user experience for *e-business on demand* companies.

WebSphere Portal has also scored very highly in evaluations by other analysts by, for example, occupying the highest place in the Gartner Group Magic Quadrant on portal products.

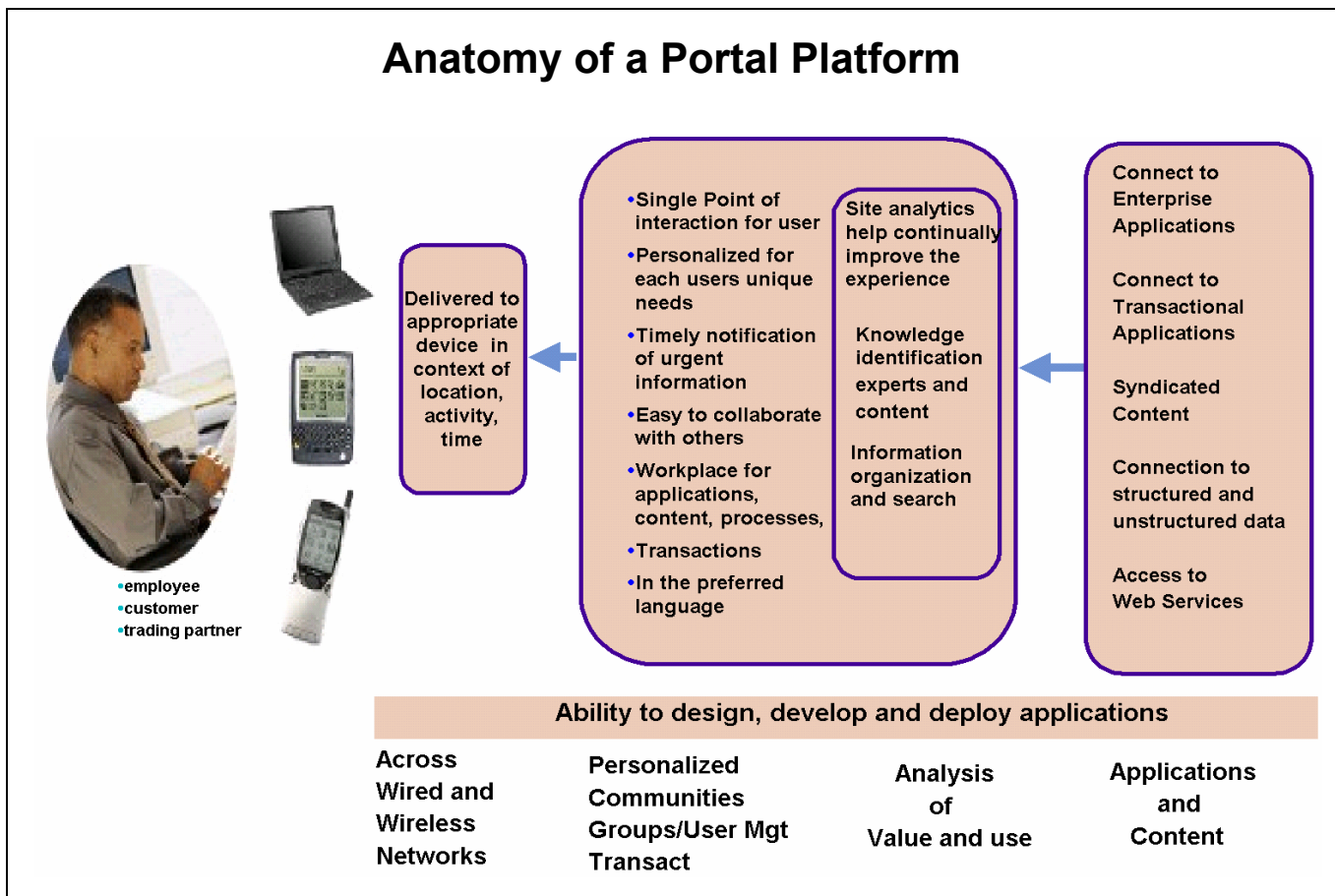


Illustration 1. IBM WebSphere Portal provides all of the capabilities of an advanced portal platform.

## WebSphere Portal and z/OS—A Critical Match

### Supporting Mission-Critical Portals

As portals are becoming more and more strategic, they are taking on the characteristics and requirements of all strategic applications, such as the requirements for high availability, scalability, and manageability. And as with other strategic applications, customers can benefit from the mission-critical features of the IBM eServer zSeries and

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z/OS operating system by running *WebSphere Portal for z/OS and OS/390* (See Illustration 2).

Like all z/OS applications, WebSphere Portal for z/OS leverages the self-configuring, self-healing, self-optimizing, and self-protecting z/OS platform to deliver best-of-breed workload management, scalability, and near-zero downtime. In addition, the strengths of z/OS-unique clustering and workload management provide Service Level Agreement management—enabling IT organizations to deliver guaranteed results to their business constituents. This contrasts with other platforms whose quality of service attributes can only support service-level *objectives*, not *agreements*.

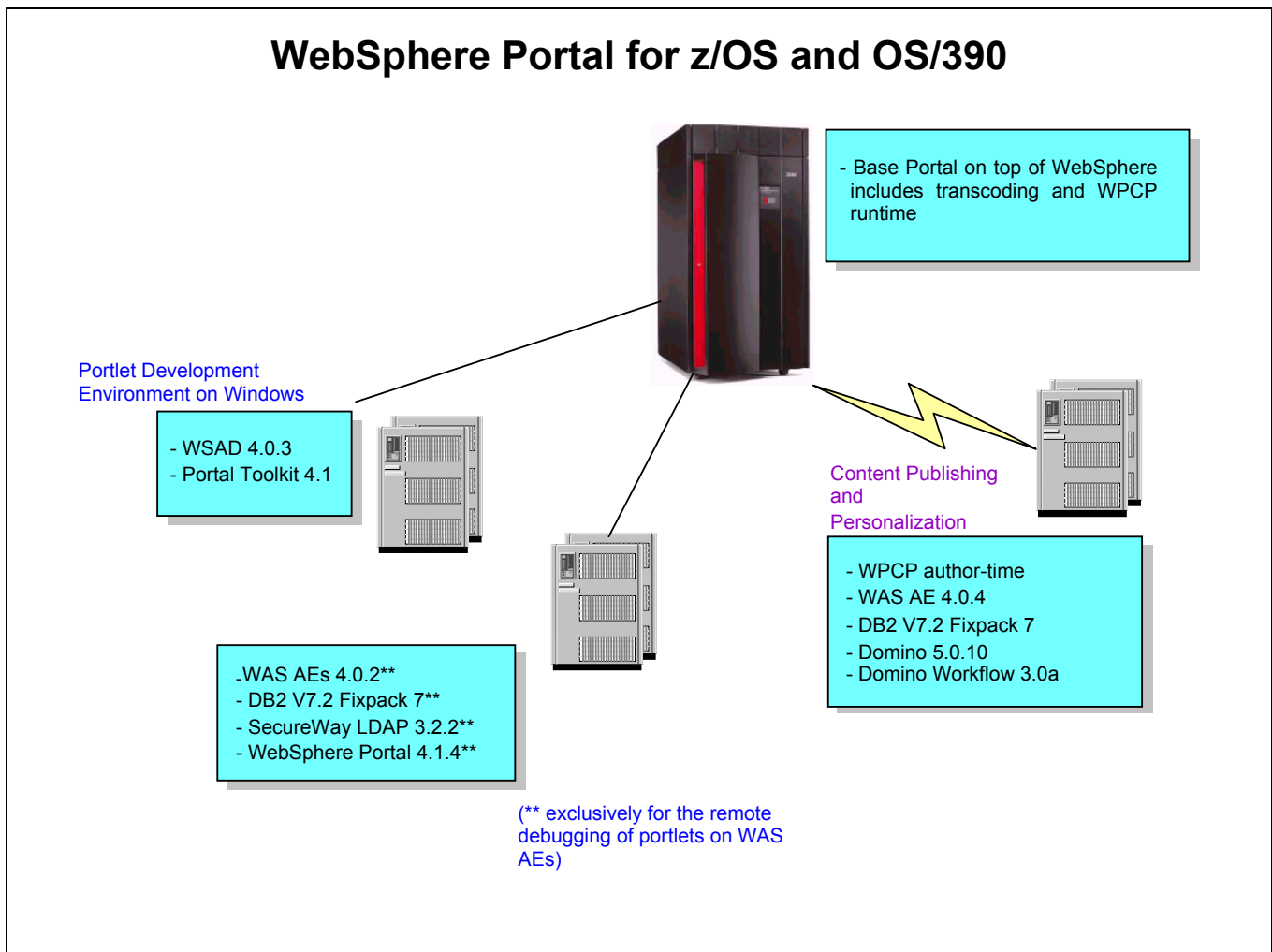


Illustration 2. IBM WebSphere Portal 4.1 for z/OS.

## Improving Performance

Portals can also expect better performance when running on z/OS by taking advantage of the unique z/OS architecture that shares enterprise data and dynamically allocates resources across multiple servers and heterogeneous workloads. Performance will increase even more for portals that access z/OS or OS/390 transactional systems (such as CICS) that can be co-located.

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Finally, running WebSphere Portal on z/OS can also reduce the cost of ownership for portals by enabling greater scalability, the reuse of existing assets and capacity, and leveraging the training and knowledge of existing personnel.

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### *IBM's Commitment to WebSphere Portal on z/OS*

IBM is committed to supporting WebSphere Portal on all of its key platforms. Today, IBM is still in the midst of synchronizing the releases of the portal on all platforms—with WebSphere Portal for z/OS being the equivalent of WebSphere Portal Enable 4.1 for multiplatform (AIX, Linux, and Windows). IBM's current multiplatform release of WebSphere Portal for multiplatform is Version 5.0. In 2004, with release 5.x, the capabilities and versions of the portals on different platforms will come together.

Until then, customers that deploy WebSphere Portal on any platform can be assured that their investments will be protected, as all portal platforms support the same functions, APIs, and Portlets—although this support is version-specific. This means that, while a WebSphere Portal 4.1 implementation, let's say on z/OS, cannot use version 5.0 functions, the 5.x z/OS portal will be able to use all 4.x and 5.x functions, Portlets, and APIs.

With IBM's roadmap to provide equivalent portal functionality in 2004, the ultimate choice of platforms is the customer's—and, for those customers who need the combination of the leading portal platform and the mission-critical features of z/OS, IBM is committed to providing the solution for today and tomorrow.