

This year's Gartner Symposium/ITxpo – held from 3rd to 7th November in Cannes, France – was organized around the theme of IT and the economy. This report offers an overview of what was on attendees' minds and what they learned from Gartner analysts and each other.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

This year marked a turning point for business process improvement (BPI) as a discipline. Organizations have begun scaling up their business process management (BPM) efforts to establish BPM as an enterprise program, – not just apply its methods and technologies to one-off projects. For the last eight years, retail banks have led the BPM charge, implementing multiple projects and often using multiple vendors' products. With the current financial crisis, Gartner expects that in 2009 many of these organizations will consolidate their BPM technologies while at the same time expanding their efforts. Organizations that have been on the cutting edge of BPM are in a good position to capitalize on completed work and apply the lessons learned to even more complex process challenges.

Establishing a system of governance, including BP competency centers, continues to be a major concern for organizations trying to advance process maturity and discipline. For maximum effectiveness, stakeholders from both business and IT should work together to create a process-oriented organization.

### CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

#### Workshop: Evaluating Business Process Management Suites

Twenty five business process leaders shared their experiences in business process initiatives in their organizations, and received advice from a Gartner analyst on how to optimize their use of business process management technologies, including the business process management suite (BPMS) and business process analysis tools. Although many of the participants said they are still in the relatively early stages of BPM and early experience with BPM technologies, they welcomed the chance to get some expert advice from the facilitator and compare notes with peers on their BPM experiences.

#### Recommendations:

- In starting with business process modeling in order to describe the processes and analyze processes without the intent to automate these processes, you should look into Business Process Analysis (BPA) tools instead of BPMS. Organizations will face different BPMS use cases at the same time, therefore different criteria used in selecting BPMS will have to be considered simultaneously.
- In selecting a BPMS for specific process-based applications, it is highly recommended in looking at the business value (business architecture approach) of building such an application or extending the existing off-the-shelf application.

### Becoming a Strategy-Driven Organization

What is essential for a BPM program's success is actual business performance improvement – with real results. It's therefore critical to measure the actual improvement in business performance and show how that success enhances critical goals for the organization. Selecting the right projects to produce clear performance changes is vital, and toward that end, organizations must identify what they want to measure and how to compare it to a baseline. Many measurement options exist, but understanding the measures of greatest significance requires adherence to some best practices.

Business process leaders must:

- Recognize the relationship between strategic planning and BPM.
- Overcome the obstacles to effective strategy execution by building a process value chain and performance management framework.
- Use performance metrics to establish a clear, traceable connection between strategic intent and actions to be taken in executing your enterprise's strategic plan.

### The Business Process Management Scenario in 2015

By 2015, business managers will rely on multidimensional models to manage their processes rather than relying on data about completed transactions. Models will provide visualization of work in progress from multiple perspectives and will enable operational managers to access in-progress items and resources with the ability to dynamically change work. The appropriate decision maker will receive alerts in the context of the workflow. Modeling tools for business users will advance beyond simple flow models and become semantically richer to communicate complex processes and relationships between contributing resources and assets. Process managers must:

- Assess organizational maturity for BPM, and cultural readiness for coming changes.
- Do some career planning. Where do you want to be as this scenario unfolds?
- Find a forward-thinking executive sponsor to support the process simulation

### KEYNOTES

#### Welcome Address and Analyst Keynote

There are no easy or safe decisions in the next year – get over it. Be smarter, conquer your fear and make the hard choices. We are in a new age in which IT is still essential... But so is change. Gartner recommends you take action now; examine your inventory, rank it to find your priorities, question everything you have, protect your key people who can deliver your priorities, reconsider each budget line, plan for multiple futures and then choose where to cut AND where to spend.

IT is very good at acquiring systems but it's time to learn how to "manage what you have." Use this opportunity to move from the accidental legacy architecture you have inherited toward a 21st Century sustainable architecture. Use the downturn to modernise and prepare for the return to growth; remember this is your chance to get executive support for the change process so you can do what's necessary.

It's also time to innovate. It's time to "learn to let go" instead of always seeking to control and stamp out user driven innovation and technology choices. Find the opportunities for reinvention. By cultivating innovation and recalibrating your awareness of where differences can be made you will be able to drive down costs and harness new ideas. You need to upgrade or you risk lower speed, lower power and performance than more agile competitors. Do rationalise your portfolio but be careful! Exploit commoditization, use the cloud, and leverage partners where appropriate. Take stock and decide what you need... And what you can change. We live in interesting times; it's time to focus, it's time for courage, it's time to get started.

### Mastermind Interview: Ian Livingston, CEO, BT

For the next year, things are going to be tough across the business world. The key message from Ian Livingston, CEO of BT, is you should plan for it – being prepared won't harm you. No one is recession proof. No one is going to escape the present climate unscathed. Companies should be looking at both the top and bottom line simultaneously, to cost cutting as well as continuing to seek opportunities for revenue growth.

Remember that in this difficult time green IT is not going to go away. And with innovations like telepresence and virtualization, it isn't a case of paying for green IT at the expense of the business. Green IT can and does save you money if approached sensibly, and is something customers want to be a part of.

Reducing headcount is definitely going to be one of the core approaches CEOs adopt; it's inevitable. When BT is talking to its customers, the CEOs are responding that they are examining costs and they are looking to refocus on higher growth regions of the world. The opportunity for IT is to streamline the bureaucracy and to move to a position where the CIO and the key IT management are change leaders and change enablers contributing to overall business efficiency and effectiveness.

Radical moves in the name of cost cutting are not the right approach. Use technology and process to reduce failure, work on increasing agility and ensure customer experience is at the forefront of each decision. This has to be the answer; making the organization more able to realize opportunity and deliver to customers more effectively. Don't force people to use new technologies; think about where social networking technologies, cloud computing, SaaS and remote working can make life better for the business and for employees and use the technology to serve those ends – make people want to use the new approaches.

### Mastermind Interview: Contractions and Balance: Business is IT and IT is Business: Steve Chambers, CIO and Valerie Dias, Executive Vice President, Chief Risk and Compliance Office, Visa Europe

How to get Business and IT to work effectively together is a constant question. The first step is to stop asking the question – the divide between business and IT does not exist unless you create it. In Visa, they have formed joint project boards and everyone is encouraged to continually ask "why?" It's vital to identify, in clear business terms, the purpose and goal of a project. Success must be measured in business terms – how will the project positively impact the business?

It's important that everyone understands that they are all part of the one organisation. Creating trust at all levels across the business and within IT is critical. Visa ensures this by having an IT directorate embedded throughout the organisation. All project teams should ask the "why?" question when they are asked to undertake a project. This close relationship between business and IT can be the key to achieving competitive advantage. If IT is not closely aligned to the business, a gap is created that will add unnecessary risk, time, complexity and cost to a project. A key objective for any CIO should be to minimize this space.

Overcoming scepticism can be a difficult hurdle. Leaders need to be firm in their beliefs, demonstrating on a practical level that their ideas and solutions can work. This process may take some time, but over time, behaviours and attitudes will begin to change. Success breeds change, which in turn breeds more success. Leaders need to have a sustained vision and purpose to ensure this.

People, politics and personalities are often the root cause of conflict. Conflict can, however, be useful, so long as it is focused on solving the challenge and moving forward. But when conflict becomes about entrenched positions and blame, then it benefits no one.

If you can't articulate the value of technology spend... then all you are doing is spending money. Always, always, ask "why?"

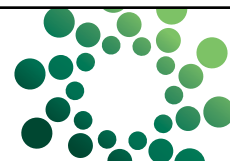
### THINGS TO WATCH FOR

One of the most interesting aspects of this conference was the relative absence of questions about the impact of the economic downturn on the outlook for BPM during the coming year. Vendors are obviously concerned about the economy, but in many instances, user organizations that have process initiatives underway don't expect those initiatives to be heavily impacted by the economy, mostly because the organizations in question have invested sufficient time and money in them to make stopping now unattractive.

In general, economic downturns cause organizations to become more concerned with the efficiencies that can be gained through greater process orientation. In the days of business process engineering, gaining efficiencies often took the form of laying people off. But equating process management with layoffs seems less likely this time around because adoption of BPM is now heavier in service industries than in manufacturing, and therefore much more process work depends on people.

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