

Publication Date: 18 January 2002

ID Number: FT-15-2987

## Microsoft Furthers Its Web Services by Linking Office to .NET

David Mitchell Smith

Two new toolkits allow developers to link Office with .NET Web services, and enterprises should ultimately reap the value.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

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### Event

On 14 January 2002, Microsoft launched two new development tools that link Office with its .NET Web services. The Office XP Web Services Toolkit and the Smart Tag Enterprise Resource Toolkit are now available free from Microsoft's Web site.

### Analysis

Microsoft has finally linked one of the brightest jewels in its crown, Office, the company's .NET Web service strategy. The move underlines just how important Web services are to the software giant's future. In-house developers often customize Office to better suit an enterprise's needs. Microsoft's new tool kits will allow them to continue doing this — but by using Web services. The toolkits will allow developers to integrate XML-based Web services into Office XP. For example, developers can use the toolkit to build a link to a Web service that uses Excel to display customer information stored on the enterprise's servers. The toolkit also works with Universal Description, Discovery and Integration (UDDI), a Web service standard that lets Office users find and link to other available Web services.

The toolkits will help Microsoft leverage Office users as a potential launching pad for .NET. Thus, the toolkits belong to Microsoft's continuing focus on "smart" clients, fat and thin, and not just thin clients as does its competition. With announcements such as these — part of its wider, more coordinated business strategy — Microsoft makes sure that developers and users of Office and other Microsoft productivity tools get the same message. Linking Office to Web services allows customers to exploit the value of the connection, which in turn helps to make .NET more popular and further enriches Microsoft. Although there are not many Web services available now, this will change, and as more enterprises see the value of using .NET to access Web services, Microsoft's strategy will begin to come into its own.

**Analytical Source:** David Smith, Internet Strategies

### Need to Know: Reference Material and Recommended Reading

- ".NET or not, Microsoft Security Vulnerabilities Continue" (FT-15-2617) Contrary to recent press reports, the "donut" virus is not really a ".NET virus." **By David Smith**
- "Microsoft Web Services: A PC-to-Internet Platform Shift (C-14-9007). The case for .NET as an evolution of Microsoft's platform strategy rather than the foundation of the company's Internet strategy. **By David Smith**

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