



COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

EMC Profile for IDC MarketScape: Business Process Platforms

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IDC OPINION

EMC is a Major Player in *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014). EMC provides a business process (BP) platform capable of supporting many types of sophisticated process improvement efforts. Key highlights of our assessment include:

- Product capabilities were scored for developer capabilities, business capabilities, and overall architecture. xCP performed well in our assessment. It competes in a peer group of the most sophisticated business process management (BPM) software, and it had a top score for business capabilities, which cover features offered to users in production. xCP's case management capabilities were particularly strong.
- xCP operates within a larger company focused on storage in a group focused on content management that faces growth challenges. EMC in general needs to use its strong momentum in xCP adoption to break through to attract more customers that will appreciate the sophistication of xCP and related products that, together, improve processes around customer communications.
- Customers cited reliability, security, the skill of EMC's partners, and the ability to leverage existing applications and transaction systems as key strengths. EMC's rigid pricing structure, especially for cost of document retention and lack of pricing support for casual users, was cited as a key challenge.
- Partners cited EMC's vision for providing solutions on an as-a-service basis and size and reach of the Documentum ecosystem as key strengths. The lack of support for real-time business intelligence and the need for multilanguage support were cited as key challenges. With the 2.1 release, EMC addressed the multilanguage issue.
- EMC should be considered by enterprises as a BP platform candidate for initiatives that range from departmental process improvement that require well-featured case management to transformation-focused process change around a larger customer life-cycle initiative.

IN THIS STUDY

This study provides details about our assessment of EMC as a major provider of business process platforms. This study serves as a companion to *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014).

There are four important elements that qualify business process management software offerings for inclusion as a BP platform:

- BP platforms are used in projects rated as highly to moderately sophisticated. This was determined by a scoring model associated with complexity, based on our reference calls with customers and partners.
- The products, whether offered standalone or as a portfolio with supplemental products from the same vendor, demonstrated the ability to support a development team across the life cycle. This includes the ability to assign and manage independent teams of developers, who work individually or as a team on diverse elements of the project, including workflow, data modeling, integration, user interface, and decision services. Not all vendors offered case management, but where this was present in the offering, case design and development supported the same team-oriented style of development.
- Vendors in this group exhibit an orientation toward extending model-driven development beyond core workflow automation to enable use of BPM software across a broader set of use cases.
- The offerings are architecturally solid, supporting strategic investments that require reuse and scalability across an enterprise.

This study includes sections covering:

- EMC's history in business process management
- Detailed product assessment based on a demo guide that all participants used to present their capabilities
- Customer service and support assessment based on customer and partner reference interviews
- Business assessment based on how EMC compared with its BP platform peers in sales, marketing, and overall momentum
- Assessment of EMC's best fit for enterprises planning sophisticated process improvement efforts that require correspondingly sophisticated process automation technology

SITUATION OVERVIEW

EMC is a Major Player in *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014). It scored at average or above average in most categories. It is particularly strong in case management and in use cases involving content and correspondence. With

the new 2.1 release of xCP, improvements in the user interface, in development and testing, and support of RESTful Web services help to provide a development environment capable of supporting many types of sophisticated process improvement efforts.

EMC Background

EMC is a publicly held storage systems, digital security software, and enterprise content management (ECM) company. EMC had more than 60,000 employees at the end of 2013 and is headquartered in Hopkinton, Massachusetts. EMC's revenue grew roughly 7% in 2013 to \$23.2 billion.

EMC acquired Documentum, an ECM vendor, in December 2003. The Documentum product line, including xCP Documentum, is in EMC's Information Intelligence Group (IIG) segment where license revenue slipped 10% in 2013 to \$180 million. Services revenue, more than double the product revenue, rose 6% in 2013 to \$467 million. Services include maintenance revenue and professional services. We estimate xCP revenue to be roughly 15% of division revenue and is one of the growth products of the portfolio.

xCP direct sales does not target regions but focuses on named accounts. Roughly 45% of EMC IIG's named accounts are in North America and were targeted as a growth market in 2013 given the continued economic conditions in EMEA. Asia/Pacific is also targeted as a significant opportunity for xCP. Strong emerging markets include Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Both markets are a larger proportion of new growth.

There are differences in adoption patterns depending on maturity of the region. For example, in the United States, two or three years ago, the xCP platform was most important, but currently, enterprises are purchasing solutions built on the platform sold to lines of business. A solution might be loan origination or claims processing. In the emerging markets, the platform is sold to IT (as in the United States a few years ago).

Product Assessment

Product capabilities were scored for developer capabilities, business capabilities, and overall architecture. xCP performed well in our assessment. It competes in a peer group of the most sophisticated BPM software, and it had a top score for business capabilities, which cover features offered to users in production. EMC received an average score for developer capabilities and top score for architectural capabilities.

Strengths

Key product strengths include:

- Solid case management capabilities for any process improvement need case style automation.
- Strong integration with content and other assets delivers process improvements around many facets of customer communications.

- With xCP 2.1, the ability to support event-based dynamic rendering of user interfaces as well as REST interfaces provides better development efficiency for both PC and mobile applications support.

Challenges

Key product challenges include:

- xCP operates within a larger company focused on storage in a group focused on content management that faces growth challenges. EMC in general needs to use the strength of xCP to break through to attract more customers who may not need Documentum but will appreciate xCP and other products that, together, improve processes around customer communications.
- xCP does not have out-of-the-box capabilities to migrate long-running process or case instances. Given the extensive case management capabilities and the fact that projects can involve long-running cases, there inevitably comes a time when the case needs to migrate. This requires professional services. This challenge is by no means unique to xCP.
- The development environment has the same and enhanced functionality compared with other BP platforms, but the approach is outside the box. That means there will be a learning curve to understand how to approach development using xCP. However, while we found consistency of case management features across BP platforms, there was only marginal consistency in how case actions and dependencies are developed or executed in runtime. BP platform vendors have also significantly decreased their dependence on large process models in favor of smaller stateful and stateless model-driven services. xCP is optimized for this approach.

Demo Highlights

A demo was presented by each vendor based on a demo guide we distributed for the evaluation. The guide included 13 sections covering core and extended areas of BPM capabilities. We also provided data for use in each section to gain a better understanding of the data aspects of process automation development and the implications of that design in production. For more information about the demo guide, see *BPM Software Demo Guide* (IDC #247799, April 2014). This section provides highlights of the demo, including sections on newer features such as mobile and social BPM as well as differentiators. To implement the demo scenario presented to all vendors as part of IDC's evaluation, EMC used Documentum xCP.

EMC has a broader portfolio that is commonly used with xCP, including:

- Captiva for data and document capture
- Document Sciences xPression to automate the generation of customized and personalized multichannel customer correspondence
- Documentum Retention Policy Services for record retention policies
- Syncplicity for sync and share and as a secure file service on mobile devices

xCP is built on Java EE and runs on the following application servers: Apache Tomcat 7.0.42, VMware vFabric tc Server 2.9.x, IBM WebSphere 8.5 Fix Pack 2 (8.5.0.2), Oracle WebLogic Server 12c (12.1.1).

xCP relies on the Documentum Content Server for its main repository, which stores business data, process execution data, and application system data; the database requirements are inherent to the content server. The following databases are supported: Oracle 11g Release 2 (11.2.0.3.0), Oracle 11g Release 2 (11.2.0.4.x), Oracle 12c (12.1.0.1.x), SQL Server 2008 R2 SP2, SQL Server 2012 SP1, and DB2 Enterprise 10.1 Fix Pack 2.

xCP also requires a dedicated database for business analytics. The following databases are supported: SQL Server 2008 R2 SP2, SQL Server 2012 SP1, Oracle 11g Release 2 (11.2.0.3.0), and DB2 Enterprise 10.1 Fix Pack 2.

xCP includes an optional feature to facilitate the interaction around content editing. This feature is called seamless editing and requires a Java runtime environment, Oracle JRE 7 Update 5.

xCP licensing is based on named users. A subscription option is also available.

Comparison of EMC with Average Capabilities and Top Capabilities per Category

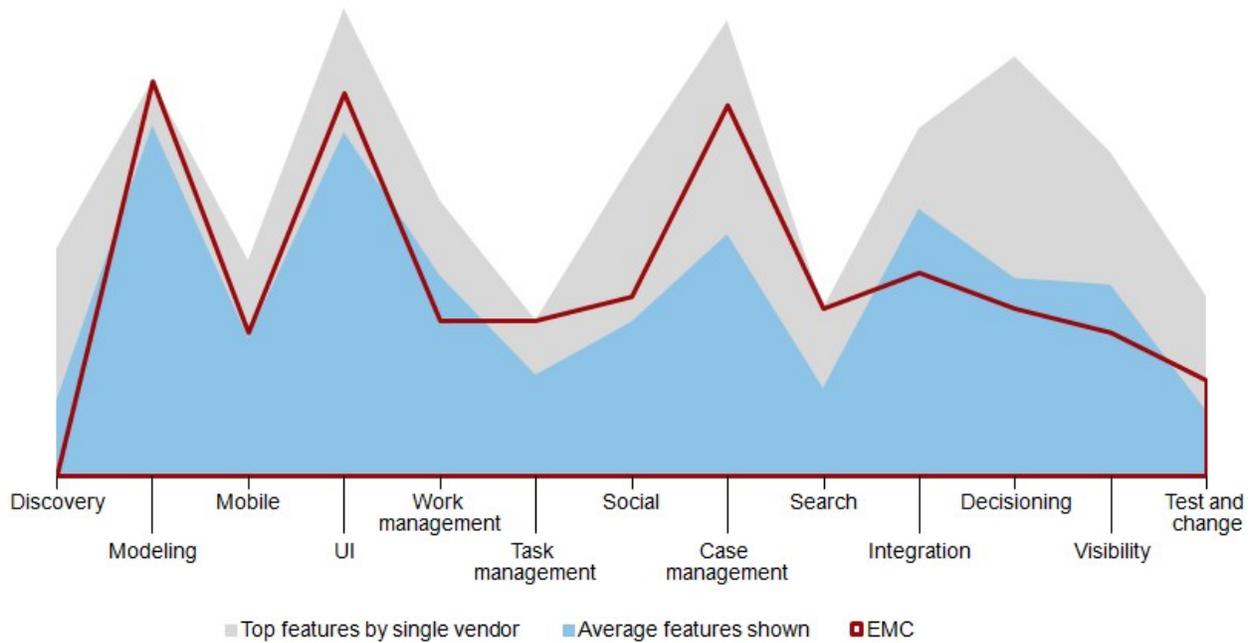
Figure 1 compares features shown in the demo by EMC with average features shown by vendors classified as BP platforms as well as features shown by the top vendor in each category. EMC scored above average and average in most categories, with particular strength in modeling, task management, case management, and search.

xCP is a Documentum brand and uses Documentum for content management, including storing everything related to a case in a file folder as well as setting retention and archiving policies. With the release of xCP 2.0, the underlying architecture of the product changed to an event architecture that tracks everything that happens in the system. Business events are exposed at all layers. Rules, for example, can be written against the event store to trigger actions, such as creating a new task. Reports also are run against the event store.

With xCP 2.1, multiple versions of a process are supported in both design time and runtime. Reports are then able to be produced against the event store for all versions of a process or comparisons can be made between two versions of the process. This is a feature that is appreciated once a process is moved into production but isn't always part of a proof of concept (POC). While it is typically fairly straightforward across all products to create new versions of a process, it requires special effort to provide consistent reporting across all the versions.

FIGURE 1

EMC Demo Graph



Source: IDC, 2014

Process Modeling

Within xCP, the purpose of process modeling is to define modular workflow. For classic process modeling, xCP uses a proprietary notation. EMC plans to add BPMN conventions in a later release but doesn't have plans to support BPMN as a standard. There are other BP platforms that also do not use BPMN, and there is a debate about the value of using standards wherever possible versus building an optimized notation to support predicted deployment patterns. Enterprises need to consider:

- Whether the theoretical benefit of BPMN as providing an ability to migrate from one product to another is actually true (We do not believe this is true at all at this point of BPM software maturity.)
- The time-to-value benefits of BPMN in the ability to leverage skills of developers and business analysts familiar with BPMN
- Overall design trends in process automation (We are seeing a shift away from developing process automation using monolithic large models to the use of situational process fragments that are dynamically marshaled in runtime. BP platforms have also elevated other modeling elements – data modeling, organizational modeling, and case modeling – to the same level as BPMN.)

When you consider any BP platform, all the three above-mentioned aspects need to be weighed in the decision. xCP is optimized for the third bullet point discussed previously.

Similar to a few other products, there is the ability to add milestones to processes, which act to measure and aggregate in-flight instance performance wherever the milestone is added to the notation. This is useful when there are standard processes being designed that have local concerns in the different implementations that would cause variation in the automation. The milestone provides a way to understand process performance at standardized points.

Stateless Processes

xCP distinguishes between workflow and stateless processes. The latter, developed in xCP Designer and executed in Stateless Process Engine, are in-memory back-end processes that effectively orchestrate to produce some kind of result used in a task, the user interface, or other part of the automation. Development is done in the graphical environment developers use to create functions and perform calculations used as part of the policy and is represented in the process model as another type of start event.

xCP Designer is also the development environment for constructing queries. The specifics of query construction and Web services are covered in the Integration and Access section.

One use case is the ability to set up policies for escalations. For example, during the demo, the team set up escalations associated with the onboarding portion of the scenario to remind individual employees of the diamond business customers to send a picture to test the communications to complete the onboarding.

The xCP team also showed several action flows that supported dual starting points, which offered the users the ability to initiate actions manually from the user interface or simply rely on the developed escalation listeners.

xCP Designer stands in for different capabilities that could be offered in BPMN as intermediate events and effectively serves as a state modeler for case management. xCP Designer handles message events, such as email, and this environment is also used to link variables in email templates to the data associated with the variables.

With xCP 2.1, EMC offers process fragment capabilities to better support dynamic case management. In addition, running multiple versions of processes in the same runtime environment is supported.

Mobile

EMC provided a complete demo around an HTML5 mobile browser. It showed rich pages that included charts, lists of employees, and a contextual map as well as updates coming from xCP back-end services. It doesn't support native or hybrid mobile applications.

The user interface doesn't appear to be responsive at this point. The pages are set up for mobile by setting a percentage of width as well as an orientation as part of a form configuration. Assumption is

that xCP presents the correct page when it identifies that the request for back-end services are coming from a mobile browser.

With xCP 2.1, EMC has added xCP REST services to support developers building mobile applications that communicate with an xCP back-end application.

User Interface Development and Default User Environment

xCP delivers an application-style user interface without any coding. The elements on a page are wired together through different event-driven mechanisms:

- Embedded real-time queries deliver data on return. These are added to the page, and they fire off when a page loads and when an input value changes, when they are from results delivered by a Web service, and when they are based on how the query is configured. Input value can be from another widget on the page.
- Pages also may contain hidden elements that help determine what is displayed on the UI based on conditions that are set up during design. For example, during the demo, when a certain employee was selected by a user, that employee's picture and location on a map were displayed. The hidden employee ID was used to select other elements that were then displayed.
- User actions can also cause processes or action flows to initiate and may return a result that is then displayed on the page.

Page output can be defined by selecting from a list of options in the layout editor, such as display in bold, by adding HTML script to the variable. During the demo, the team showed the ability to run a stateless process to retrieve payment data per merchant and calculate fees. By selecting a chart as output, the data was presented in a bar chart showing fees per merchant. The same input action from a user was used to alter the presentation of charts. In the demo, filters were set up to allow a user to select by merchant or by business unit. On action, the chart redrew to show only the item selected, in effect creating a drill path.

Business objects are created that define the metadata of data that will be used across the xCP platform. Configurable queries are set up to find a business object and display it in the UI and to search for additional information or data. Also included is the ability to configure how users are able to search for data or content, including which data fields are searchable as well as how to search (e.g., begins with equals, ends with data range logic).

Four types of queries are supported:

- Real-time queries refer to query objects.
- Historical queries refer to analytics or historical data, which access data from a data store.
- Full-text queries are set up to allow users to search for content both from a full-text index and through a faceted search.
- Task-list queries retrieve objects from queues and inboxes and represent in the UI.

Pages are created next that take the default properties and lay out the page based on the business object selected. The page creates a service that takes the values of the inputs, creates an instance of the object, and sets the values, and the CRUD operations are allowed. There are also widgets that can be embedded on the page as well as layout element and a context menu.

EMC showed how a user selects a record, and right mouse clicking displays actions that can be taken for the process instance. For example, the user can manually select "submit appeal," which kicks off the appeal process. All the queues associated with a user are available as part of the user interface menu.

xCP also supports correspondence-related templates, including:

- Email template
- SMS template with character counter
- Document Sciences integration

Email templates are stored in repository for reuse. While xCP handles delivery of emails, EMC also offers an add-on product, called Document Sciences, for support of formatting across heterogeneous email clients and email services.

With xCP 2.1, EMC introduces support for the dynamic generation of UI by incorporating rules that determine page options are available based on the context of what actions are available to an individual user at that point in time. This simplifies the design of page flows and the overall ability to contextualize case management, making it more dynamic. xCP 2.1 also includes a UI event applications bus to ensure the UI is responsive to what a user is doing.

Work Management

xCP authenticates with directory services. Groups defined in the directory service can be used in xCP. Roles are also assigned within xCP separate from directory services. xCP associates work with performers. Assignments can be made from a list or based on a condition. Different assignment patterns are supported, such as first group member to accept task, user with fewest tasks, and combinations in sequence.

Work can also be assigned by data variables established in an external data table. In the demo, we saw language, expert, and queues associated with employees.

Each process participant has a profile. Different filters are set up for assigning skills to each user. In addition, users can be assigned to work queues. When special assignments need to be made (e.g., a language skill), work is routed by applying the filters to the list of available workers assigned to a queue.

Rules set policies for a number of items in a queue and with the ability to route to a backup queue when the threshold is exceeded. This is implemented through a graphical user interface, effectively executed in tandem with a stateless process.

Social

The demo scenario asked vendors to show how they incorporate social networks into customer service. EMC did not have a prebuilt API to Twitter, but the team built a small piece of custom code to pull in tweets. xCP itself did not present an activity stream in the demo, and its strategy is to interoperate with all of the popular activity streams. Enterprises are able to send events into a queue to simulate an activity stream.

Another element of the social portion of our demo scenario was the ability to identify and route work to experts. EMC showed how, in xCP, keywords were used to look for incoming tweets, and when a matching expression was found, the tweet was automatically routed to an expert associated with the keyword or key phrase.

A third element of social EMC showed was the use of workspaces to share documents and discussions among process participants.

Case Management

Building a case application uses all of the different elements of xCP. But there is an area to define and configure cases. Tasks are associated with the case definition and a retention policy is set. Case task definitions are configured, including the length of time the task has to be completed, task dependencies, whether the task is automatically or manually started, and which performers (equivalent to roles assigned to queues) will perform the task. The dependencies are created by listing tasks that must be completed before the current task being defined can be triggered.

xCP supports the same retention policies supported across Documentum, and these can be set for each case through a variety of mechanisms:

- Modeling the policy in Retention Policy Services
- By defining a file plan using a folder-based structure where cases and documents are stored
- Assigning policies to a hierarchy, such as financial information is retained for seven years

Every application that interacts with an xCP case automatically inherits the policy.

Users create a new ad hoc case by selecting the "new folder" button and choosing the case folder type. They name it and select the type of case and the identifier that is the subject of the case. Users can relate case to workspace using a repository. But the users have to figure out ahead of time what elements can be added to the case.

Search

The search engine in xCP is Explore, which combines Lucene and an XML database. It is available as a top menu item. The ability to search data is configured at the same time when business objects and user interface are configured. Data and content are searchable.

Content is full-text indexed. As part of importing content, content types are defined and fields are filled out that describe the content. This provides the ability to extract metadata. Then, fields can be defined

as facets. A search page is constructed that provides full-text search of a contact type, such as contracts. A further refinement filters by identifier, which is refined by any of the facet choices.

xCP was the only BP platform provider that showed faceted search in the demo. The example shown during the demo was searching for a contract containing a term. The display listed diamond merchant contracts, with the ability to select by email address or phone number facets. Clicking on a facet choice displays the record. The full-text index highlights terms that are matched by the search.

xCP also is able to use federated search services through federated search connectors to connect to Google, LexisNexis, and other archival and information services. This is also a differentiating capability of xCP.

Integration and Data Access

One of the most significant differences across the BP platform vendors evaluated is the variety of ways the products handle data access. xCP is fully featured but different from everyone else, even though the basics, such as support for Web services and access to SQL, is present. A library of activity templates are included with xCP to perform common CRUD and integration operations, including read from databases, write to databases, and execute a Web services via its WSDL.

Communications with Documentum repositories and external systems are handled through the creation of stateful or stateless processes, which are exposed as RESTful services for external consumption by third-party applications.

Accessing data is set up through a series of configuration screens and a graphical input-to-output mapping screen. The logic implemented during the configuration is added to the map, similarly to how most transformation tools work and the results are connected to the UI, to a report chart, or to whatever element of xCP requested the data.

Business Process Life Cycle

With xCP 2.1, EMC includes a debugger and other features that make it easier to create new versions. As part of many of the configuration screens in xCP, there are test buttons that provide a way for developers to test logic as they are completing their development.

Customer Assessment

Customer Feedback

Overall, reference customers used EMC xCP for projects of medium complexity. Examples of projects include:

- The primary goal of the project was to more quickly develop products and services for the company's internal and independent sales agents and to improve its ability to serve its customers. A secondary goal was to streamline and optimize internal processes.
- A government agency wanted to purchase a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) application to replace a custom-coded third-party system because making changes was time consuming and

expensive. The agency sought a packaged BPM solution to support its content and records management processes.

Customers made their selection of EMC, in part, because of positive sales experiences and because of the performance in POCs and pricing.

Based on their implementation and production experience, customers cited Documentum xCP's reliability, security, the skill of EMC's partners, the user interface, its Java orientation, quick scalability, and the ability to leverage existing applications and transaction systems as strengths.

The only concern expressed by customers during the reference calls was the rigidity of the EMC pricing model. This concern, however, was important enough that the buyer mentioning it was considering shifting to another vendor and product. The concern was the need for a pricing model supporting casual users. Without that, xCP was pricey.

All the EMC customers we spoke with used an independent implementation partner and were very positive in their evaluation of those partners and their support.

Customers named IBM Case Manager, Microsoft SharePoint, and OpenText most commonly as EMC's top competition.

Partner Feedback

We interviewed two partners that have professional services benches supporting EMC. Partners cite key strengths of EMC Documentum xCP as:

- EMC's vision for providing solutions on an as-a-service basis
- Size and reach of the EMC Documentum ecosystem

Partners cited key challenges of EMC Documentum xCP as:

- The lack of support for real-time business intelligence capabilities
- The need for self-service-enabling functionality (Customer self-service applications were too expensive under the xCP user-based pricing model.)
- A low number of out-of-box interfaces to improve ease of connectivity to third-party systems

Business Assessment

Part of our evaluation is an assessment of a vendor's marketing, sales, and support capabilities as well as momentum and customer reach. Overall spending on EMC's Documentum xCP software is increasing compared with the overall BPM market. EMC received a high score for momentum.

The number of existing customers a vendor has, compared with its competitors, significantly decreases or increases the effort required to build brand and find prospects. The more customers, the better chance a vendor has in achieving revenue scale. Access to customers is an important measure of capabilities in our model. EMC received a top score in this category.

Another measure of a vendor's ability to achieve revenue scale is the ability for marketing efforts to create demand. During our reference calls, we ask customers which vendors they invited to compete and then measure invitations across all the BPM products. EMC performed at a below-average level. This may be due to a major product transition that was occurring during our evaluation process and to a sales model focused on existing EMC customers rather than external opportunities.

We measure sales execution through a combination of advances to short-list we collect from our reference interviews as well as depth of professional services relationships. EMC received a below-average score in this category. As noted previously, this may be due to a major product transition that was occurring during our evaluation process and to a sales model focused on existing EMC customers rather than external opportunities.

We use customer and partner references as a measure of support quality and as a proxy for non-functional issues not covered in the demo, such as scalability. EMC received top scores for its references.

Strong customer references are easy to obtain when projects are simple and sometimes challenging to obtain when projects are highly complex. For this reason, we include complexity of customer reference projects as a measure of functional and non-functional capabilities. EMC was used on projects of average complexity.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

BPM Platform Approaches

A one-time purchase of BPM software for a single project is expensive, measured by license costs, training, clearing the hurdles for successful development, use of professional services, and acceptance once the automation is in production. Most organizations purchase BPM software with an eye toward leverage, where they learn how to manage process automation and improvement from both cultural and technological perspectives. There is often a focus on building a center of excellence or program office to support process improvement efforts.

While there are similarities across all BPM software, there are different ways enterprises look at BPM as platform software, regardless of whether it is deployed on-premise, managed as a hosted service, or available fully in the cloud. Four common platform approaches to BPM software are as a:

- Business application platform
- Business process services platform
- Strategic business platform
- Process orchestration backbone

Business Application Platform

In some cases, the BPM market is evolving into something that more closely resembles application server adoption, where enterprises pick a BPM product and purchase it as an enterprise standard, build competency around it, and use it repeatedly as the basis for all efforts to automate custom processes. Developer and operations competency are built up to ensure quality and dependability, and scripts and programs may be written to shift among development, testing, and production. However, the projects tend to be discrete efforts. In this case, the BPM software serves as a business application platform.

Depending on the need, some of the process improvement efforts span departments and can be lengthy and complex, while others emphasize rapid application development supporting users that work on both structured and ad hoc activities.

Deployment patterns include:

- Constructing composite applications
- Extending packaged applications by creating net-new functionality
- Creating a standalone application designed to automate work that formerly was handled manually

All of the vendors assessed in *IDC MarketScope: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014) support business application platforms. xCP is particularly well suited as a business application platform for case style applications as well as content-centric process automation.

Business Process Services Platform

We are also beginning to see use of BPM software in private cloudlike scenarios where the BPM team creates core services and repeatable actions that can be rapidly configured and deployed individually as a solution for a team or group. In this scenario, many users benefit from process improvement, but the BPM team treats this as a configuration project rather than a major new business process automation project.

At this point, there is a dependency on the customer to envision this type of adoption. In one of our customer discussions, the BPM team was so successful with its initial set of process improvement efforts that demand was overwhelming and the resources required to support all requests impossible to obtain. While many organizations have this problem, the most common response is to prioritize and pick the top projects that made the most sense and push everything else into a queue. This company made a decision to identify common characteristics across group needs and created a set of common and repeatable activities that could be configured as a solution. While there is still a dependency on the BPM team to help in the configuration, this approach enabled the team to significantly increase the number of internal satisfied customers without overtaxing developer resources.

In this use of BPM software, the platform itself isn't used repeatedly across discrete projects, but the reuse comes from the implementation of a large platform – effectively a private cloud – with a catalog of reusable services that can be configured into a solution.

All of the BP platform vendors can support this style of process automation, but some are better optimized for this than others. We look for the ability to build a composite application as core. Ideally, activities can be callable business services or else provisioned or cloned into the application. Each activity may have its own workflow or subprocess, depending on the goals of the project. There may be a need to define stages, dependencies, or milestones to complete a group of activities before advancing.

Strategic Business Platform

Another style of platform is driven by larger business-driven strategic initiatives that involve broad process change and standardization around the change. The focus is on building consistent and reusable components deployed as business services associated with the strategic initiative.

In this scenario, effort is made from the outset to define several elements of the automation ahead of time to apply across all the process automation that executes as part of the strategic change. This includes:

- Effort to create clear definitions of major objects – such as customer, order, and incident
- Common user design that provides consistency of look and feel and ways users interact with tasks and the screen to take action whether by mobile or PC
- Creation of decision services and common rules that work broadly as well as in local situations
- Reusable Web services

The design from the beginning assumes that the set of applications or process improvements will be consistent. Not all BP platform vendors support this style of process automation. We look for the ability to build a composite application as core. There is a need to manage the services and reusable elements in repositories and support callable business services, decision services, and Web services. There is also a need to define stages, dependencies, or milestones where there may be a need to complete a group of activities before advancing.

Strategic business platforms correlate strongly with customer-focused strategic change initiatives. Because of xCP's strength in the integration of process automation with content as well as the product's key collaboration capabilities, it should be considered where the strategic efforts involve a knowledge worker and decision-centric use cases.

Process Orchestration Backbone

To increase the efficiency and adaptability of supporting complex, heterogeneous application environments, enterprises are building backbones that receive work and process it as well as deliver the processed work to systems of record. These backbones become standardized processing utilities for the families of applications and workers associated with the backbone.

Core requirements include:

- The ability to design a process that includes activities performed outside the process execution environment

- Integration infrastructure capable of handling data services and support for diverse packaged applications deployed on-premise, hosted, and in the cloud
- Backbones that are event driven and must be able to pass tasks to third-party applications
- Business activity monitoring (BAM) or operational intelligence capabilities, which are essential

Enterprises may also need to include:

- The ability to exchange data with trading partners, where transactions often originate
- Paper-to-digital conversions where work originates as paper
- Master data management for many types of complex orchestrations

xCP is well suited to this style of platform as it relates to the customer communications life cycle.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

xCP is well suited for case-centric and decision-centric process improvement initiatives. It also has enough capabilities in workflow to support human-centric process automation. Overall, we expect EMC xCP to be well suited for enterprises that need a:

- Strategic business platform to reengineer customer service and customer communications
- Processing backbone that originates with paper or unstructured content and requires conversion and coordination across supporting applications
- Platform for creating reusable business services and composite applications
- Business application platform with a dependency on case management

xCP should be considered by enterprises as a BP platform candidate for initiatives that range from departmental process improvement that require well-featured case management to transformation-focused process change around a larger customer life-cycle initiative.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014)
- *BPM Software Demo Guide* (IDC #247799, April 2014)
- *Market Analysis Perspective: Worldwide Business Process Management Software, 2013* (IDC #244986, December 2013)

Synopsis

This IDC study provides details about our assessment of EMC as a major provider of business process platforms. This study serves as a companion to *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014).

There are four important elements that qualify business process management software offerings for inclusion as a BP platform:

- BP platforms are used in projects rated as highly to moderately sophisticated. This was determined by a scoring model associated with complexity, based on our reference calls with customers and partners.
- The products, whether offered standalone or as a portfolio with supplemental products from the same vendor, demonstrated the ability to support a development team across the life cycle. This includes the ability to assign and manage independent teams of developers, who work individually or as a team on diverse elements of the project, including workflow, data modeling, integration, user interface, and decision services. Not all vendors offered case management, but where this was present in the offering, case design and development supported the same team-oriented style of development.
- Vendors in this group exhibit an orientation toward extending model-driven development beyond core workflow automation to enable use of BPM software across a broader set of use cases.
- The offerings are architecturally solid, supporting strategic investments that require reuse and scalability across an enterprise.

This study includes sections covering:

- EMC's history in business process management
- Detailed product assessment based on a demo guide that all participants used to present their capabilities
- Customer service and support assessment based on customer and partner reference interviews
- Business assessment based on how EMC compared with its BP platform peers in sales, marketing, and overall momentum
- Assessment of EMC's best fit for enterprises planning sophisticated process improvement efforts that require correspondingly sophisticated process automation technology

"In our briefings with vendors, we commonly hear the comment that if competitor X is competing for the same deal as competitor Y, one of them is in the wrong deal," according to Maureen Fleming, vice president of IDC's BPM and Middleware research programs. "When an enterprise doesn't quickly understand the difference, it invests too much in the evaluation and runs the risk of making a mistake that will cost far more in development and user satisfaction. This study covering EMC is one in a series associated with *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Business Process Platforms 2014 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #247683, April 2014), which is designed to help enterprises with vendor selection when their process automation projects are highly to moderately sophisticated."

About IDC

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