

IBM Shows Impact of SOA

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IBM is serious about service-oriented architecture. It's so serious that the company is holding an entire conference around SOA this week in Orlando, the Impact 2007 event.

Impact 2007 is IBM first customer event focusing on SOA, which analysts say is a \$160 billion market opportunity. And IBM touts that the company has successfully delivered on more than 4,500 SOA engagements for customers. Indeed, more than 100 IBM customers, including Cardinal Health, Wachovia and Royal Caribbean International, are on hand here to discuss their use of SOA.

Robert LeBlanc, general manager of Global Consulting Services and SOA at IBM, showed the results of a study by WinterGreen Research that showed IBM far ahead of its closest competitor in terms of SOA market share. According to WinterGreen, IBM has 53 percent of the SOA infrastructure market, while its closest competitor in the space is Microsoft with 8 percent.

Meanwhile, TIBCO, webMethods, Sun, SAP and Oracle all had 3 percent each. BEA Systems and Sybase had two percent each. And the amorphous "Other" category, which included companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Cognos and others, accounted for 28 percent of the market, the study said.

Meanwhile, Jason Weisser, chief technology officer of SOA at IBM, summed up part of the reason behind IBM's success in the SOA arena.

"Who are you going to call when you need help with this stuff?" Weisser asked. "Somebody who has done 10 of these things, or somebody who's done hundreds?" he added. "It's all experiential. Everything we do is field based. Everything we do is based on what customers want and need."

Steve Mills, senior vice president, IBM Software, in a statement, said that "SOA has been a growth engine for IBM, as well as our customers, because it gives companies the much-needed flexibility to focus on achieving business results without being hindered by the constructs of established infrastructures. IBM's differentiation is in its ability to address business challenges using the right balance of business and technical skills along with an unmatched, multipronged approach to meeting customers' needs."

Mills also said he sees the worlds of Web 2.0 and SOA coming together to offer new opportunities for both vendors and users.

"We're bringing the people impact into the picture and leveraging things like RSS and Atom," Mills said. Web 2.0 technologies are bringing more usability, "consumability" and user-driven content into the equation, he said.

"People need to get at information in real-time, and personal impact is going to have a big impact on SOA technology."

Tom Perrine, senior vice president at Cardinal Health, an \$81 billion global provider of health care products and services, said SOA is "not the next-generation language, but it helps us with taking business ideas and turning them into code."

In fact, in one instance, Perrine said SOA helped Cardinal achieve a productivity boost of 40 times. He said a process that typically took

Cardinal 1,200 hours took only 30 hours by using SOA technology.

Meanwhile, IBM announced a host of new and enhanced products and services around SOA. The company announced eight new industry-specific SOA Roadmaps spanning six industries. The new SOA Industry Frameworks are specific to the banking, health care, telecom, retail and insurance industries to add to the first framework for Product Lifecycle Management, which was announced late in 2006. Additional frameworks will follow later this year.

Each of the SOA roadmaps contains a business blueprint, which helps customers map the business side of an SOA strategy, and an industry-specific framework, which includes core technology used to execute the business blueprint.

New products for BPM (Business Process Management) include industry specific templates with key methodologies and predefined configurable dashboards, which enable users to monitor business activities and adjust accordingly.

Also, IBM's expanded Business Activity Monitoring software includes adapters that monitor activity from a variety of sources, including third-party software, can provide a single comprehensive view of business activity across an enterprise regardless of individual IT systems. Additionally, new BPM dashboards are now available to track and monitor the roles of people associated with a given activity.

IBM also announced a new version of IBM DB2 Dynamic Warehouse, enhancements to its WSRR (WebSphere Service Registry and Repository) and new Rational tooling.

The new Rational Asset Manager is a registry of design, development and deployment related assets, such as services. This new collaborative

asset management software gives organizations the ability to identify, manage and govern the design, development and consumption of services in SOA.

Also included in IBM's announcements is a new interactive SOA game called Innov8, which is basically a BPM Simulator.

In related news, Hewlett-Packard announced, also on May 21, new products and services that the company said will help propel it to the front of the SOA market.

HP launched new offerings to bring SOA out of the prototype stage and into successful enterprise deployment, the company said.

HP's announcements capitalize on the company's acquisition of Mercury Interactive in 2006, and showcase some of the Systinet technologies HP now owns as part of that acquisition.

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