Q&A

Jim Kelly, Vice President, IBM Data Management Marketing

What is the significance of the IBM EIP announcement and how does it fit within IBM's e-business strategy?

The ability to manage and leverage information is a linchpin in IBM's strategy to help companies win at e-business. With data doubling every 12 to 18 months, every company's survival depends on its ability to quickly find and use relevant information about its employees, customers, competitors, suppliers and partners. As e-business applications evolve, the number of information sources and sheer volume of data continue to skyrocket, making it increasingly more difficult to locate, manage and present information. With the IBM EIP, companies will be able to create a single point of entry for accessing and integrating all their data sources, structured or unstructured, thereby making it much easier to find the information they need for better decision making.

Is there an overall IBM-Lotus portal strategy?

Yes, the IBM EIP announcement is part of a unified e-business portal strategy designed to deliver contextually relevant information to users by leveraging the best IBM and Lotus technologies, to access and integrate information, applications and people. By employing advanced data integration and search methodologies, companies will be able to perform extensive search queries across numerous data sources, including multimedia, electronic documents, Lotus Notes files and Web servers. Companies can personalize data searches and utilize relevant information, allowing them to improve efficiency. IBM Global Services provides five new e-business portal service offerings ranging from consulting to solution implementation. And IBM is enhancing its existing partner programs to specifically support the IBM EIP partners.

How does IBM's EIP solution differ from Microsoft's and Oracle's?

IBM has a well-defined strategy for delivering complete solutions based on open standards. Microsoft and Oracle do not. The IBM EIP is available now and provides access to information from a wide variety of data sources, starting with unstructured information such as e-mail, Web content, documents and images. Oracle's portal offering will not be available until later. In addition, partner support has been noticeably absent from Oracle's announcements. More than 20 business partners supported IBM at the launch of the EIP, including leading portal vendors such as Plumtree, Viador and Epicentric. Microsoft has not defined how its products and technology integrate in a way that clearly delivers business benefit.

With IBM's EIP strategy unveiled, what's next?

The initial versions of IBM EIP are focused on providing access and search facilities for delivering relevant information in context across multiple data sources. Future IBM EIP releases will deliver and integrate additional e-portal platform features like categorization facilities, collaboration facilities, development tools, application integration, structured content, metadata and sign on. We are also looking forward to near-term deliveries of e-portal offerings from Lotus and our partners that use the IBM EIP as the core e-portal enabling platform.

Customer Scenarios

Hewitt Delivers HR Forms on Web With IBM Content Management Solutions

Lincolnshire, Illinois-based Hewitt Associates is the first customer to use IBM's Enterprise Information Portal (EIP). Combined with IBM content management solutions, the portal is helping the human resources administrator improve service by providing client employees direct access to a diverse collection of unstructured information. Also using IBM ContentConnect running on a Lotus Domino server and WebSphere Application Server Standard Edition, Hewitt's solution is providing secure Web self-service access to vital information ranging from birth certificates and beneficiary forms to health plan 401K administration. Hewitt managers estimate annual operating expenses have been reduced by $8 million, service is 75 percent faster, and they anticipate a return on investment within two years.

Prudential Spreads its CRM Vision With a Pervasive DB2 Data Warehouse

Based on a successful proof-of-concept last year, Prudential Life Insurance of America selected IBM DB2 Universal Database for a data warehouse to support all of the company's CRM activities. Slated for roll out in June 2000, the customer data warehouse will provide a consolidated view across what used to be discrete, independent product companies. The warehouse will be populated with all the data pertaining to Prudential's various relationships with its customers – product, household and individual – all overlaid with demographic information. Jane Landon, systems executive at Prudential explains: "We need DB2 to take us to the next step, where we can understand our customers in the context of the contacts we have with them, whether those contacts are made in the service, marketing, or sales arenas."

Facts Versus Fiction

- IBM announced its vision for e-business – based on decades of successful customer engagements – in 1996, long before other companies grasped the full potential of the Internet. .

- To date, more than 40 million users and more than 225,000 companies rely on IBM data management solutions. There are more than 1 million DB2 licenses.

- IBM data management channels revenue has increased from less than 5 percent of the total workstation revenue in 1996 to 41 percent currently.

- The DB2 family expanded dramatically in 1999, shipping four new versions: DB2 Universal Database V4.4 for AS/400; DB2 Universal Database V6 for OS/390; DB2 Universal Database V6.1 for Windows, OS/2, and UNIX, including Linux for the first time; and DB2 Everywhere for PalmOS and Windows CE. In addition, DB2 Universal Database for Sequent DYNIX/ptx is now in beta.

- IBM has more than 3,000 professionals at more than 20 locations in 13 countries working on Java technology, including services and products to help customers Java-enable their businesses. In December, 1996, IBM was the first vendor to provide built-in Java and Java database connectivity support, offering secure connections to facilitate real-time e-commerce and enabling the development and storage of server-side logic in Java. In September 1998, IBM was the first vendor to provide SQLJ support, translating to increased speed for e-business applications.

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- There are more than 7,000 installations of IBM EDMSuite products worldwide. In North America, 24 of the 50 largest banks and 27 of the 50 largest insurance companies use EDMSuite products. USAA has more than 2 billion pages stored in EDMSuite ImagePlus and more than 12,000 users.