IBM Podcast

[MUSIC]

MATHENY: Welcome to this IBM podcast. I'm Angelique
Matheny. Joining me to discuss, why reinvent a solution
when you can repurpose your information with data mashups,
is Chris Gruber, Product Manager.

In this podcast you will find out what data mashups are.
Chris will identify what data can be incorporated within
data mashups. Chris will also provide some insight on the
types of solutions that are appropriate for data mashups.

And finally, Chris will discuss the speed in which you can
unlock and reuse existing solutions for new business
problems without reinventing the wheel. Hi, Chris. Welcome
to the podcast, thanks for joining us.

GRUBER: Hi, Angelique. Thanks for inviting me to have
a chat with you.

MATHENY: Great, let's start with this question, what is
a data mashup and why is it useful?

GRUBER: Sure. Well, a data mashup is typically an XML
stream of data. And what it ends up being is being able to

be transformed, merged, augmented and even combined with other feeds of information.

And so why is that important? Well, when you are looking at the nature of a lot of core systems and being able to unlock the data into a feed format, which is part of what data mashups is, you're able to actually repurpose a lot of the data and information that you have at your fingertips from a business perspective.

And so you can maximize your green initiatives with your information management. When you look at your SOA -- or, Service-Oriented Architecture -- you are enabled to maximize the reuse of these solutions for quick applications that are built out with data mashups.

So what you end up having as a team within IT and line of business is the ability to work smarter and the ability to increase your intelligence because you're combining data sources that traditionally aren't typically combined.

For people in IT, each person has a role and an expertise to make up the part of a larger team. And when you're able to produce data from your role in a very consumable format and then combine it with other roles, you have the ability to truly get over these skill barriers and do it very, very quickly. So this is where data mashups really excel in

producing solutions for the business.

MATHENY: So what data can be mashed up?

GRUBER: So data mashups are pretty wide in what they
can include. First of all, because it's a Web 2.0 kind of
concept it would be natural for you to think of Web-based
content such as Internet, intranet, RESTful services, RSS
and Atom feeds.

But with that being said, for a business to be truly
successful in using this stuff, you're going to want to be
able to mashup core data insofar as the enterprise systems
like IMS transactions, mainframe information. We have a
large amount of data in relational data sources.

Also, we have large amounts of data in archive data or
legacy data. And I would be remiss to mention the SOA
artifacts in Web services, you'd be able to pull that
information together.

But also you're able to pull in desktop data, things like
spreadsheets, comma separated files that are typically found
in desktop productivity tools. And I would assert that this
type of data is where most business users spend the bulk of
their effort, with this desktop data. So all this
information can be included in a data mashup. Typically you

don't see this data presented in a unified format.

MATHENY: Chris, you know speed is of the essence these days, so how quickly can you enable this data?

GRUBER: The challenge is figuring out the data you want. Once you figure out the data, being able to get to the data is pretty quick. As I mentioned before, you typically have to do a basic connection to the data. In many cases it's pointing to the right server with the proper credentials. And within minutes you can produce feeds from these data assets or data sources again within minutes.

Now, once the data is unlocked and into a feed format, your ability to massage the data, because it's XML and extensible, through a browser interface, so you're using the browser for the browser in this particular case, and data mashups done through the browser really accelerate your ability to massage the data, because it is ubiquitous at that point. And what you end up having is data in the format that you need to be produced, again, within 10 minutes in many cases.

MATHENY: Wow, that's really great, Chris. And what types of solutions are appropriate for data mashups?

GRUBER: Bigger question, Angelique. For solutions with

data mashups, what we're looking to accomplish with this technology is to solve problems that normally we can't get to.

Things that are difficult to model from an application perspective and things that come up in a day and day business that have high value for our business. So things like tracking competitors from product analysis or service analysis, looking at new business opportunities and building out new products. Those types of things are not typically model-able because you're still learning as you go, and there's no way to produce an application in that fluid environment.

Also looking at just general things like assessing risk, assessing new product ideas, looking at things like mergers and acquisitions where the nature of the business in that respect is very fluid to the marketplace.

So those things are very difficult to model. They tend to have some sort of lifecycle. And so IT typically can't get to that. This is where data mashups can fall in and provide a huge amount of value for the business.

MATHENY: And finally, Chris, I think the most important question, how can we learn more?

GRUBER: How can we learn more? Well, there is a fair bit of information on our ibm.com Web sites. You can Google for IBM Mashup Center, I particularly recommend the IBM Mashup Center wiki. It will have things like documentation, but also demos. There's some videos that you can learn to see what we're talking about when we're talking about unlocking and mashing up data, as well as Web pages.

And also, if you are enticed with those demos and collateral, I'd also encourage you to contact your IBM sales rep from information management or Lotus to get perhaps a trial copy of IBM Mashup Center.

And perhaps engage with them with a consulting session to talk about what your needs are, does mashups make sense for your particular environment and architecture. So having a discussion at that level with the people that know what mashups can do and the opportunities that they're in has a high value for opportunity to use IBM mashup center and data mashups.

MATHENY: And these are no charge, no obligation consulting sessions, correct?

GRUBER: This is correct, yes.

MATHENY: Well, that's great. Chris, this was very informative. Thank you so much for taking time out to

discuss, why reinvent a solution when you can repurpose your information with data mashups. We really appreciate it.

GRUBER: Thank you.

MATHENY: That was Information Management's Chris Gruber, Product Manager. This has been an IBM podcast. I'm Angelique Matheny. Thank you for listening.

IBM Podcast

[MUSIC] [END OF SEGMENT]