



February 2011

Document L18

## RESEARCH NOTE ORACLE BUSINESS ACCELERATORS

### THE BOTTOM LINE

**Oracle Business Accelerators are pre-built configurators and guidelines designed to reduce the time, cost, and risk of implementing Oracle applications. When Nucleus analyzed the actual experiences of customers using Accelerators, analysts found all customers reduced the time to deploy Oracle E-Business Suite, many by more than 50 percent of the time an implementation without Accelerators would have taken.**

Oracle Business Accelerators are tools, templates, and wizards designed to help Oracle customers reduce the time needed to plan, configure, test, and deploy Oracle applications. Oracle Business Accelerators are available for Oracle E-Business Suite, JD Edwards EnterpriseOne, Agile, Siebel CRM On Premise, Demantra, Oracle Transportation Management, and Oracle Business Intelligence.

Because they are based on industry and country-specific best practices and business processes, Business Accelerators enable customers to deploy Oracle applications with less customization. Oracle has also built business flow-based content using the Oracle User Productivity Kit (UPK), Oracle's platform for developing and delivering application training-based content. This enables customers to have a high-level view of the business flows within E-Business Suite and identify where existing processes may need to be realigned or adjusted before deployment.

Although they are designed for midsized businesses, Business Accelerators use the same underlying Oracle applications, such as E-Business Suite, typically deployed by larger companies. Business Accelerators for Oracle E-Business Suite include country-specific versions for 40 different countries and a number of vertical industries including:

- Public sector and local government
- Professional services and consulting
- Life sciences, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology
- Life sciences and medical devices
- High tech
- Consumer goods
- Chemicals

**TOPICS**

Enterprise Applications

To analyze the impact of Oracle Business Accelerators on E-Business Suite deployment time, cost, and predictability, Nucleus interviewed a number of E-Business Suite customers about their experiences.

**WHY ORACLE**

In its analysis of Oracle midsized customers, Nucleus found that while overall cost of deployment was an important factor in customers' selection of Oracle, even more important was the ability of vendors to commit to a predictable deployment time and cost. Business Accelerators enabled partners to offer fixed implementation contracts and clear guidance on exactly what skills and resources the customer would need to commit at each phase of deployment:

- *"The Accelerator was a key piece of our decision, because it was less risky, a speedier implementation, and better working processes. We were a merger of three companies and didn't see ourselves as knowing best practices. We asked the vendors to bring us their best practices. SAP was way over budget and had no standard work processes ... The Microsoft partner could only estimate what the analysis would cost ... The Oracle partner came in with a price estimate and implementation cost with a fixed ceiling on the price. Oracle said it wasn't a demo, that's what the accelerators do."*
- *"SAP and Oracle are high cost, high risk, high reward game you're playing. We looked at who had the highest value proposition today and moving forward, and Oracle was chosen because Oracle owns the full stack."*
- *"The entry cost was very attractive. Software isn't the biggest cost; it's really the implementation. As a midmarket organization we don't have a lot of redundancy. I can't dedicate a year or two of our life to a project. With a short deployment timeline, we could use our best people without disrupting the business."*

**DEPLOYMENT TIME**

A number of project managers running Oracle E-Business Suite deployments had previous experience with other enterprise applications, as well as Oracle, and were able to compare their experience with Business Accelerators to other deployments.

All customers indicated their deployment would have been at least 50 percent longer if not more if they hadn't used Accelerator.

Customers found both the pre-built processes in the Accelerators and the guidance of partners on whether or not to deviate from the Accelerators helped them complete projects on time and on budget:

- *"We deployed in about six months. If we had a traditional model our go live would have been three months longer."*
- *"We kicked off in February 2008 and we were up and running by July. It's still hard for me to believe it. It would have been more than a year to deploy, and SAP would have been even more."*
- *"We had all financials, order management, supply chain, and purchasing globally in three months versus six months using the Oracle Accelerators and relying on [an Oracle implementation partner's] experience."*

Accelerators helped manage deployment time and cost in different phases of the project:

- The configurator tools automatically set up industry best-practice workflows so customers didn't have to scope, map, and code processes themselves.
- The structured implementation guidance enabled customers and partners to quickly determine which skill sets the internal deployment team had and what would need to be supplemented by the partner.
- Because Accelerators are layered on top of standard E-Business Suite software, customers had the flexibility to deploy some modules today and add or extend modules in the future as their business needs changed.

## DEPLOYMENT COST

For midsized companies, deployment cost is about use of limited internal resources as well as access to capital for licenses and implementation consulting. Customers found they were able to take advantage of the functionality of E-Business Suite without the resources they expected would be needed to support the complexity of Oracle:

- *"We always wanted to look at Oracle but we were nervous because it was out of our scope and time. Then I came across the Accelerator tool that they actually had. It made the decision for me because I didn't have the people with the skill set or the time to focus on the project, and it brought it into the price bucket for us."*
- *"We were going to go with [Microsoft Dynamics] NAV because we didn't think we could meet the cost requirements of Oracle – it would have been too expensive for us. We took Oracle because [with the Accelerator] we could deploy it in less than six months."*
- *"I wouldn't have done it without the Accelerator – wouldn't have had the time, energy, or resources to map it all out from scratch."*

## BEST PRACTICES

Not surprisingly, Nucleus analysts found that customers using Accelerators were most successful when they followed the Accelerators' pre-built business processes and limited customization:

- *"We did extensions. Any customizations we've managed by extensions; we haven't touched the core code at all. We didn't want to take the same direction that we took with [our previous ERP system]."*
- *"Personalize, don't customize. Don't try to reinvent the wheel. CEMLI's [Configurations/Customization, Extension, Modification, Internationalization and localization, and Integration Framework, Oracle's published guidelines for developing custom extensions to Oracle Applications] will kill you – you can't design, test, or support the kind of complexity Oracle provides."*
- *"Go Oracle vanilla as much as possible. We looked to change the way we do business – we only customized where we had to do it because it was unique to our industry. We weren't going to make mistakes we've seen people make before. Go vanilla as much as possible. [When you don't] that's when people get into trouble."*
- *"We stayed pretty plain – customization would have been extra. Anything that we looked for that was different was going to be extra work. We add on customizations as we go along so we get it done first and then identify where we need to make changes."*

Nucleus also found the choice of partner was important for customer success, because partners could recommend the best course of action when there was a conflict between Accelerators' pre-built workflows and organic business processes. As one customer said, *"You need a strong team to challenge your organization and have the industry and application knowledge to provide some insight. If an Accelerator dictates that you do something a certain way, the partner should be able to advise on whether or not to deviate or sell why practices should be changed."*

## **CONCLUSION**

Traditionally, midmarket customers have had to choose between costly and resource-intensive ERP applications that could be risky and disruptive and enterprise applications that had less functionality and could support less complexity. In its analysis of Oracle and SAP in the midmarket in 2007, Nucleus found that more customers could be successful with Oracle than SAP. However, Nucleus has also found that customers choose other enterprise applications because of less cost and complexity. Today, because of Oracle E-Business Accelerators, midmarket customers found they could deploy E-Business Suite within the budgetary and resource constraints midmarket customers face.

With its investment in Business Accelerators, Oracle has put Oracle E-Business Suite within the budgetary reach of more midmarket customers by reducing cost, risk, and complexity, and increasing the predictability of an enterprise application deployment.