

## OVUM OPINION

# Oracle BPM Process Accelerators are ripe for deployment

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## OVUM VIEW

### Summary

Oracle OpenWorld 2011 included several announcements relating to Oracle Business Process Management Suites (BPMS) 11g, but the most significant was the launch of BPM Process Accelerators. These solutions are off-the-shelf templates consisting of a process model, a data model, service integrations, human workflow definitions, forms, business rules, screens, and dashboards. The accelerators are aimed at automating common processes that are typically managed using email and spreadsheets, and rarely covered by business applications. Ovum believes that the announcement has promise for Oracle's BPM customers and prospects, and is also good news for the broader BPM industry.

### The range includes both vertical and cross-industry accelerators

Process templates are far from new in the BPM industry. However, prior to the Oracle BPMS 11g launch in April 2010, Oracle did not directly provide process templates and accelerators in any significant way, and the accelerators were mostly from partners.

The set of process accelerators announced so far has an impressive range. Some of the accelerators are industry-specific, such as incident reporting of unusual events and deviations from policy for the public sector, promotions planning and execution for retail, and smart meter



management for utilities. Some are cross-industry, such as accelerators for document approval, travel request management, internal services requisitions, and various employee onboarding processes. Oracle is considering other industry-specific process accelerator candidates, including ones for the pharmaceuticals, telecoms, and financial services sectors.

## **"Process accelerators" can mean many things – Oracle's are primarily aimed at processes that are currently managed using email and paper**

There exists a sizable number of processes in every industry which vary much less across companies than processes which are closely tied to revenue generation and important differentiators. Such processes are good candidates for a process accelerator or process template approach. Typically, there are two, distinct, largely non-overlapping sets of principles and objectives guiding the design of such process accelerators. One approach is aimed at reducing professional services time, and therefore reducing time-to-value. Such process templates are designed for fairly complex processes. In the BPM market, IBM's BPM Industry Packs would be an example of this approach. A second category of process templates is aimed at enabling a quick, business-guided approach to process automation, instead of using paper, spreadsheets, and email. Oracle's Process Accelerators, announced at Oracle OpenWorld 2011, fall squarely into the second category.

## **Oracle's approach to process accelerators is likely to achieve its goals**

For Oracle's approach to work, the solution should meet two conditions. Firstly, the process accelerator pack should be operational quickly, which means it must accommodate the most typical scenarios "out of the box." Secondly, the configuration process must also be easy for users to undertake, ensuring that the inevitable unanticipated scenarios and any new requirements can easily be accommodated. The road to implementation must be as painless as possible, because otherwise there is a high risk that users will revert to the status quo – email.

In terms of applicability, Oracle's scale of BPM operations practically guarantees that a high level of readiness will be achievable. An installed base of thousands of companies is large enough to capture most scenarios over time.

In terms of configurability, Ovum's assessment of Oracle BPMS 11g is positive across most aspects, including ease of use. The suite provides a good range of tools suitable for business users and business process analysts, one example being the Process Composer, with its off-the-shelf catalog of roles and services. It is also important to keep in mind that this is the first BPM suite built on BPMN 2.0, and the new standard, with its superior ability to allow full round-tripping,



is likely to help IT build exactly what a business wants to be built. A combination of these factors makes it likely that those sponsoring the Process Accelerator will be able to extend the solution and accommodate changes without having to make a business case for another large-scale and high-risk IT project.

## **The announcement is significant for the broader BPM market**

The announcement is significant because the accelerators are aimed at very common processes and because of the sheer size of Oracle's installed base of BPM users. The charge for a process management system superior to email has been partially led by SaaS-based lightweight BPM providers, such as RunMyProcess. Lightweight BPM tools can be very useful, but have limitations, such as integration, in enterprise scenarios. The quest for a post-email world has also been led by mainstream BPM providers such as Cordys. However, Oracle's scale makes its announcement significant. For Oracle customers, the option to deploy Process Accelerators raises the potential value they can derive from an 11g roll out, by extending the benefits of BPM to a larger number of employees, and speeding up deployment. The move could have serious knock-on effects on other BPM providers.

## **APPENDIX**

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