Using Oracle Workflow

A Case Study

13 March 2003

1

Agenda

- Why we need workflow
- Case Study: The NPD Group, Inc.
 - Project Formulation
 - Oracle workflow
 - Results

Drivers for workflow systems

Corporate Objectives

- More Productive Workforce
- Competitive Advantage making operations more dynamic and responsive across organizations with emphasis on process driven integration and processbased improvement

Current Market Facts

- \$2.26B Market in 2001 of which \$1.48B represents professional services
- Compound annual growth rate of 29.3% till 2005
- Vendor revenue 34.9% growth
- 36 BPM suppliers 21 public 15 Private
- 24 of them market share less than 2%

WFMC Definitions

Workflow

The automation of a business process, in whole or part, during which documents, information or tasks are passed from one participant to another for action, according to a set of procedural rules

Workflow Management System

A system that defines, creates and manages the execution of workflows through the use of software, running on one or more workflow engines, which is able to interpret the process definition, interact with workflow participants and, where required, invoke the use of IT tools and applications.

Workflow Technology

Workflow technology provides a new set of tools to build, manage and monitor the way data gets routed through an organization

Workflow bridges the gap between people, technology and business processes



Integrating Business Process

Adding and Removing business objects and applications as business process improve



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SYSTEM A

SYSTEM B

Workflow Process Management

Workflow Systems help execute and optimize crossfunctional business processes

Workflow integrates applications and it involves people for exception handling and decision-making









SYSTEM B





The NPD Group Inc.

A Case Study in Deploying Oracle Workflow

Case Study: The NPD Group, Inc.

Market Research Company

- Gathers POS Data in a weekly and monthly basis from retailers (2.6B Transactions/month)
- Sends out surveys in a weekly basis requesting purchasing information and Demographic Data
- Statistically combine POS data with survey demographic data in legacy flat file system
- Store data in ODS
- Transfer data to industry specific datamarts Fashion, Toy, Household goods, Food, Computers & Electronics,
- Provide the reports and analysis through an internet portal

The NPD Group Challenges

- Changing business process to load datamarts new business requirements new processes
- Many interactions among various departments to load, QA and publish data
- Many Interactions among multiple systems and applications
- Needed to publish market data faster
- Reduce operational expenses
- Find low investment solution
- Needed better documentation of process for change management

Achievable with Workflow?

- Modeling of Business Process
 - Documentation of Process
 - Analyze and improve process

Automation of Business Process

- Reduce Errors
- Improve Efficiency
- Automatic Auditing of Process
 - Capturing metrics real time
 - Maintaining History of activities
 - Finding true deficiencies in process
- Flexibility in changing Business Process
 - Improving process incrementally
 - Little modification to existing code

Some Workflow Players

Comple	exity (Cost
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IBM MQ Series Workflow	HIGH	170k/cpu
BEA Workflow	HIGH	62k/cpu
Staffware Workflow	MEDIUM	122k#
Ultimus	LOW	31k*
Oracle Workflow	IOW	20k/cnu

50 Users

* 15 Users 10k steps per day

Oracle Workflow

- Part of the core of Oracle E-Business Suite Applications: ERM, ERP, HR
- Over 12,000 installations of the suites
- Integral part of Oracle DB
- Requires application server
- High powered workflow engine that is scalable and robust with messaging capabilities



Creating the Workflow Project

- Upper Management on workflow:
 - "Great concept" but skeptical on delivery
- Structured project as a proof of concept tackling key technological and organizational issues
- Created pilot project for POS data loads after POC
- Captured metrics of current BP
- Modeled the AS-IS business process
- Presented operational improvements
- Created recommendations for TO-BE process and best practices

Components of Workflow

Development Environment - Workflow Builder

- Draw the business Process
- Create tasks for
 - E-mail Notifications
 - Shell Scripts
 - PL/SQL
 - Automated Business Rules checks

WORKFLOW BUILDER INTERFACE

PL/SQL wrappers for activities

- Item Type Internal name of the item type as defined in Oracle Workflow
- Item Key a string that represents a primary key generated by workflow engine
- Actid Id number of the activity from which this procedure is called
- Funcmode :RUN, CANCEL, RESPOND, FORWARD, TRANSFER, TIMEOUT
- Resultout COMPLETE, WAITING, DEFERRED, NOTIFIED, ERROR

PL/SQL wrappers for activities

1 ⇒ procedure <*procedure name*>

(itemtype in varchar2, itemkey in varchar2, actid in number, funcmode in varchar2, resultout out varchar2) is

 $2 \Rightarrow < local declarations >$ 3 ⇒ begin if (funcmode = 'RUN') then <your RUN executable statements> resultout := 'COMPLETE:</result>'; return; end if: $4 \Rightarrow$ if (funcmode = 'CANCEL') then <your CANCEL executable statements> resultout := 'COMPLETE'; return; end if; $5 \Rightarrow$ if (funcmode = 'RESPOND') then <your RESPOND executable statements> resultout := 'COMPLETE';return; end if;

PL/SQL wrappers for activities

 $6 \Rightarrow$ if (funcmode = 'FORWARD') then <your FORWARD executable statements> resultout := 'COMPLETE'; return; end if: 7 ⇒ if (funcmode = 'TRANSFER') then <vour TRANSFER executable statements> resultout := 'COMPLETE'; return: end if: 8 ⇒ if (funcmode = 'TIMEOUT') then <vour TIMEOUT executable statements> if (<*condition ok to proceed*>) then resultout := 'COMPLETE'; else resultout := wf engine.eng_timedout; end if; return; end if: 9 ⇒ if (funcmode = '<*other funcmode*>') then resultout := ' '; return; end if; $10 \Rightarrow$ exception when others then WF CORE.CONTEXT ('<package name>', '<procedure name>', <itemtype>, <itemkey>, to char(<actid>), <funcmode>); raise: 11 ⇒ end <*procedure name*>;

ATTACHING A PL/SQL PROGRAM TO WORKFLOW

POC and Pilot For POS Data Load

- Interviewed ETL group, DBAs, Operations group and Business to map out existing process
- Reviewed Process Model with Business Process owners and verified with technical team
- Wrapped existing code and applications (1 week)
- Wrote code to automated many manual steps

First Version of Main Process



Incremental Process Delivery



28

Managing Business Process

- Managing Complex Processes by creating sub-processes
- Example: Informatica datamart load Task is composed of various steps which are defined in its own process

Main Business Process





Evolving Model



Automated Error Detection

Starting the workflow Process

Launching a workflow process

- EVENT DRIVEN
 - An Internal or External system or application can start a workflow process
- MANUAL START
 - Item Key
 - Process Name



Monitoring a Workflow Process

Monitoring the Business Process

- Web Based Activity Monitor
- Web Based Workflow Monitor

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S Complete	Workflow Engine	FUN POS LOAD	End	21-FEB- 2003 16:51:52	0 Seconds		

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Reasons for Implementing Workflow

- Modeling of Business Process
 - Documentation of Process
 - Analyze and improve process

Automation of Business Process

- Reduce Errors
- Improve Efficiency
- Automatic Auditing of Process
 - Capturing metrics real time
 - Maintaining History of activities
 - Finding true deficiencies in process
- Flexibility in changing Business Process
 - Improving process incrementally
 - Little modification to existing code

Results Of Pilot

Document and Model BP

- Documentation was the primary result of using workflow
- Process diagrams improved communication between Operations and IS
 - Identified tasks and their dependencies
 - Identified tasks that had to be added or changed
- The process evolved from a rigid design to one that reflected the realities of the loading process
- The process was improved and deployed incrementally
- Identified various QA tasks that were manual and not part of any automation or existing programs
- Traceability and versioning of Business Process
- Version History used to analyze how and why the process has changed

Improved Communication and Traceability



Better Communication

- Having a graphical representation of workflow made it very clear which activity in the process was at issue
- Identified processes that were unnecessary, superfluous or repetitive
- Found many undocumented processes that were performed by individuals
- Visual information helped breakdown complex processes
- The visual diagram became the contract for the business process

Design Document is Deployment Program

Help breakdown complex BP



Results Of Pilot

Automation of Business Process

Reduce Errors

- Errors were reduced since the process was systematized
- Many manual QA and error reporting processes were incorporated into workflow

Improve Efficiency

- E-mail notification at various steps slowed process wait for user's response
- Efficiency improved when business rules for routing were introduced
- Additional information was placed in the e-mail notifications such as attaching URL's to log files so that the users did not have to search various system for them
- Users intervened less and monitoring time was reduced
- Many tasks were identified and automated

86 ACTIVITIES

CLEANUP COMPLETE APPROVAL REQ CLEANUP_VERYFY_COMPLETE CLEAR CACHE CONFIRM SPACE FOR TEMP TABLES DDS F POSITEMDATA TABLE FULCNT DDS_F_POSITEMDATA_TABLE_TRNCNT DELETE TOYS IN FACT DELETE VG IN FACT DMLOADCHK DMLOADERRCODECHK DMLOAD COMPLETE DMLOAD ERROR EXECUTE PEARL PROD EXECUTE PEARL TEST FUNPOSLOAD COMPLETE FUN ATTR COUNT VERIFICATION FUN ATTR LOADED CONFIRMATION FUN DATA AVAILABLE **INFILE COUNT** INFORMATICA DBSETUP LOAD APPROVED LOAD TERMINATED LOAD COMPLETED LOAD DATAMART LOOPCOUNTER MANUF_TABLE_COUNT MV REFRESHED NEW CODE ADDTN NEW CODE ENRTY NEW CODE ENRTY REMINDER NEW CODE ENRTY STATUS NEW_CODE_ENRTY_STATUS_REMINDER NOTI PERL TEST RUN PATECDM OR PBTECDM PEARL PRODUCTION RUN COMPLETE PEARL PRODUCTION RUN VAL FIX PEARL TEST RUN COMPLETE PEARL TEST RUN VAL FIX PERLPRODCHECK PERL LOADED CNT PERL PRODRUN COMPLETE PERL PRODUCTION RUN BEGINS PERL TESTRUN COMPLETE

PERL TEST RUN BEGINS POS LOAD POS PRE TABLE CNT POS TABLE CNT PRELOAD CLEANUP BEGINS PRELOAD CLEANUP VERFICATION NW PREPAREPROCESSCHK PREPARE PROCESS MANUAL CHK PREPARE PROCESS MANUAL RUN PREPARE TABLE CNT PRE LAUNCH ACTIVITY PRE LOAD APPROVAL PRE LOAD APPROVAL REMINDER PRE LOAD APPROVAL REQUESTED PRE POS TABLE CNT PRE SESSION REFRESHMV RUN INFORMATICA RUN INFORMATICA ATTR RUN INFORMATICA DATA AVAILABLT RUN INFORMATICA DIM RUN INFORMATICA FACT RUN INFORMATICA INFO RUN POS PREPARE RUN SUPPRESSION SUPPRESSIONCHK SUPPRESSION BEGINS SUPPRESSION COMPLETE1 SUPPRESSION PROCESS MANUAL CHK SUPRESSION COMPLETE SUPRESSION SCRIPT APPROVAL REQ SUPRESSION VAL FIX TABLE COUNT TOY SCOUNTCHK TOYS COUNT TOYS COUNT VERIFICATION TOYS OR VG TRUNCATE DDS ATTR TABLE TRUNCATE DDS MANUF TABLE TRUNCATE FUNPOS TABLE TRUNCATE TABLE VG COUNT VERIFICATION VID COUNT

Results Of Pilot

- Automatic Auditing of Process
 - Metrics of the process was captured real time
 - History of activities was maintained
 - Helped in focusing on process that needs improvement
 - Automatic version control of tasks or processes

VERSION CONTROL OF TASKS

ITEM_TYPE	NAME	VERSION	TYPE	BEGIN_DATE	END_DATE	FUNCTION
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	4	FUNCTION	8/21/02 11:13	9/20/02 16:48	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	5	FUNCTION	9/20/02 16:48	9/25/02 11:31	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	6	FUNCTION	9/25/02 11:31	9/30/02 14:52	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	7	FUNCTION	9/30/02 14:52	9/30/02 14:57	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	8	FUNCTION	9/30/02 14:57	10/2/02 9:14	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	9	FUNCTION	10/2/02 9:14	10/3/02 13:39	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	10	FUNCTION	10/3/02 13:39	11/7/02 17:42	fun_posload.p_perl
FUNPOS	EXECUTE_PEARL_PROD	11	FUNCTION	11/7/02 17:42		fun_posload.p_perl



ITEM_TYPE	ITEM_KEY	BEGIN_DATE	END_DATE	HOURS	PARENT_DISPLAY_NAME	ACTIVITY_DISPLAY_NAME
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/18/02 17:01	11/18/02 17:01	0	FUN POS LOAD	Start
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/18/02 17:01	11/19/02 13:35	20.57	FUN POS LOAD	RUN POS PREPARE PROCESS
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/19/02 13:35	11/20/02 9:57	20.37	FUN POS LOAD	NEW CODE ADDITION/VERIFICATION
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 9:57	11/20/02 10:37	0.67	FUN POS LOAD	OPTION TO RUN PERL ODS TEST LOAD
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 10:37	11/20/02 15:32	4.92	FUN POS LOAD	PERL PRODUCTION RUN VALIDATION/FIX
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 15:32	11/20/02 16:15	0.72	FUN POS LOAD	RUN SUPRESSION VALIDATION/FIX
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:15	11/20/02 18:25	2.17	FUN POS LOAD	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 19:13	0.79	FUN POS LOAD	REFRESH MVIEWS & CLEAR CACHE
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 19:13	11/20/02 19:13	0	FUN POS LOAD	FUN POS LOAD COMPLETE
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 19:13	11/20/02 19:13	0	FUN POS LOAD	End

Time for Major Processes



REPORT ON SUB-PROCESS TIMING

ITEM_TYPE	E ITEM_KEY	BEGIN_DATE	END_DATE	Minutes	PARENT_DISPLAY_NAME	ACTIVITY_DISPLAY_NAME		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:15	11/20/02 16:15	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	Start		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:15	11/20/02 16:15	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	SET DM NAME IN INFORMATICA		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:15	11/20/02 16:15	0.1	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	POS TABLE POST COUNT		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:15	11/20/02 16:16	0.68	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	TRUNCATE DDS_F_POSITEMDATA		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:16	11/20/02 16:16	0.03	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	DDS_F_POSITEMDATA FULL TABLE COUNT		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:16	11/20/02 16:16	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	TOY'S COUNT CHECK AFTER TRUNCATE		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:16	11/20/02 16:16	0.07	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	Truncate FUN DDS MANUFACTURER Tables		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:16	11/20/02 16:16	0.02	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	MANUF TABLE COUNT		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 16:16	11/20/02 18:25	129.23	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	RUN INFORMATICA - LOAD DATAMART		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	DM LOAD ETL ERROR CODE CHECK		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0.35	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	DDS_F_POSITEMDATA TABLE TRANSACTION COUN		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	DATA MART LOAD COMPLETED		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	INFILE AND DM TABLE COUNT CHECK		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	MANUF TABLE COUNT		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	POS TABLE AND DM TABLE COUNT CHECK		
FUNPOS	Toys_POS_1118_V1	11/20/02 18:25	11/20/02 18:25	0	RUN INFORMATICA TO LOAD DATAMART	End		
Sub Process Timing								
Time in Minutes								

	Time in Minutes							
	0	20	40	60	80	100	120	140
Start SET DM NAME IN INFORMATICA	-							
TOYS COUNT CHECK AFTER TRUNCATE Truncate FUN DDS MANUFACTURER Tables	1							
MANUF TABLE COUNT RUN INFORMATICA - LOAD DATAMART								
DM LOAD ETL ERROR CODE CHECK DDS_F_POSITEMDATA TABLE TRANSACTION COUNT								
DATA MART LOAD COMPLETED INFILE AND DM TABLE COUNT CHECK MANUE TABLE COUNT								
POS TABLE AND DM TABLE COUNT CHECK	1							

Timing Trends for each task





Results Of Pilot

Programming complexity for Workflow

- Creating wrappers to existing code was easy after understanding the wrapper structure
- Most existing code could be incorporated into workflow within 30 minutes
- Out of the box wrappers for SQL were used
- Special simple wrappers were created for non-SQL tasks such as the Informatica sessions
- New code and wrappers for QA tasks had to be written and incorporated into workflow
- When improved wrappers were created, it was easy to introduce them to existing processes

Organizational Structure

- Roles
 - Business Process Owner
 - Business Process Designer
 - Operations
 - Process and Application/Code integrator
 - Application Wrapper Programmer
 - Application/Code Programmer



Results Of Pilot

Flexibility in changing Business Process

- Changing process was not very complicated
- Sub-processes could be created and tested separately outside the main process
- These sub-processes can later be added to the main process
- Sub-processes were used individually for production
- Incremental improvement and deployment of the business process was achieved

Did workflow improve Process?

- Modeling of BP helped identify various manual steps
- Workflow allowed users to suspend or if necessary bypass execution of specific processes to fix systems or application issues
- One could incrementally add tasks or sub-processes to improve BP
- Workflow can consolidate the results of QA and attach pertinent information and e-mail it to make informed decisions
- Workflow eliminated latencies between processes
- History of BP and its activities was useful for analysis and reviewing purpose of processes
- Documented BP design helped identify inefficiencies of the overall process

Workflow Objectives

Can Workflow Achieve the following ?

- **YES** Document and Model the BP
- **YES** Automate various tasks
- **YES** Audit the tasks
- **YES** Adapt to changes in business process
- **YES** Add little overhead to existing application code
- **YES** Improve existing BP

Other tangible benefits

- Reduce headcount
- Reduce lifecycle time
- Reduce operating costs
- Automate routine and repetitive tasks
- Faster processing times parallel tasks
- Improve change management
- Improve Quality
- Decision Support information
- Improve inter-organization communications

Using Oracle Workflow

A Case Study

13 March 2003

Phases Of Implementation

- Environment Setup
- Establish Process modeling methodology
- Create the As-Is business process
- Create the To-Be business process
- Define business measures
- Simulate Business Process
- Communicate and Verify Business Process model
- Build the object model wrappers
- Build the object models
- Test
- Deploy

Functional Architecture

Administration Console

Process Definition

Process Execution

Process Analysis and Reporting

Repository



User Interaction front-ends

EAI Software

B2B Integration Middleware

Business Process Management System

Source: Yphise BPM Assesment Report

Workflow Architecture

