

WHITEPAPER

IS AN OPEN SOURCE BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT SOLUTION RIGHT FOR YOU?

COMPANIES AROUND THE WORLD TRUST OPEN SOURCE

90% of Fortune 500
companies use Red Hat
products and solutions¹.

By 2013, open source
technology will be in 85%
of all modern commercial
software solutions².

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Increased availability of highly functional enterprise open source business process management (BPM) technology is bringing the benefits of BPM solutions within reach of more companies and projects. If you are considering deploying BPM solutions, but have been daunted by the cost, footprint, risk, lack of flexibility, or complexity of proprietary options, an enterprise open source approach may be just what you are looking for.

THE BENEFITS OF OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

EVERYONE BENEFITS FROM OPEN SOURCE

Open source software is free to download and use. Users can examine, test, pilot, and even deploy these solutions into production without any upfront cost. However, support and services for open source products can vary widely, and some users choose to rely on a network of volunteers in the open source community to provide fixes, security patches, and assistance.

Commercial open source companies bring open source to the enterprise. They take the best of the community code and related projects and make it ready for enterprise customers by fully testing and certifying open source distributions. Then, they offer service-level agreement (SLA)-based support services, patches, and updates—most using a subscription model. With enterprise open source, you benefit from both the innovative community-built solutions and the backing of a global support organization, all at a fraction of what a proprietary license would cost.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS GOING OPEN SOURCE

Public administration at local, federal, regional and national levels faces some of the most difficult challenges in decades. Citizen expectations are increasing the demands made on governments, which requires innovation to provide new services. The increasing scarcity of financial resources requires solutions that minimize cost, footprint, and complexity.

Public administrations are traditionally rigid and carry considerable inertia. Technologies that are open and adaptable can provide much needed agility. Enterprise open source software can help governments face these challenges, and can provide the efficiency, reusability, and sustainability needed to meet society's demands for more efficient use of resources.



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¹ Red Hat client data, 2013.

² Gartner "What Every Practitioner needs to know about OSS", October 2010, #G00207329.

WHY BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT?

Business processes are the set of activities that convert inputs into outputs and define the processing of the organization as a whole. These processes help define things that need to happen repeatedly, such as:

- What happens when a customer calls with a complaint?
- How is an insurance claim handled from start to finish?
- How is an order processed from the time it is received until it is fulfilled?

When an organization identifies a new business requirement, the work to set up or adjust the corresponding business process should be as straightforward as possible, requiring minimal time from appropriately skilled people. A business process management system exists for the purpose of making this work straightforward, flexible, and affordable.

ACHIEVE BUSINESS AGILITY WITH AUTOMATED PROCESSES

Business processes, no matter how well they are designed and conceived, must be implemented through organizational structures, staff responsibilities, and information systems. Every transaction must be successfully executed, whether that execution is fully manual, fully automated, or a combination of manual and automated steps. Because organizations and processes constantly change in response to new opportunities and challenges, business processes and rules should also be easy to modify, allowing information systems to adapt to new strategies and tactics.

A BPM solution automates business processes using a business process engine that executes steps in a defined process. This means that, at the touch of a button, a BPM system is able to execute process models so the organization performs exactly as the process states. Process implementation becomes seamless and automatic, and business process improvement (BPI) becomes a reality.

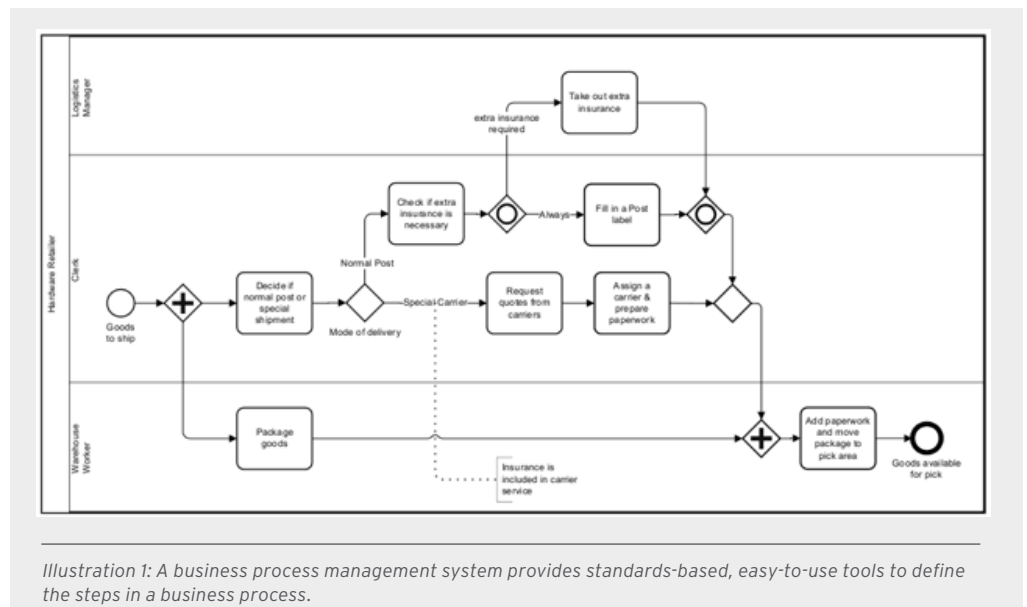


Illustration 1: A business process management system provides standards-based, easy-to-use tools to define the steps in a business process.

SIMPLE ANALYSIS OF PROCESSES AND WORKFLOW

BPM technology helps business analysts and others design processes using straightforward, visual tools. The organization uses these tools to model the activities it performs to achieve its goals. By creating flow charts of their processes, including both human-performed steps and system workflow, analysts can improve the visibility of business practices, making them easier for business analysts and software developers to understand, monitor, and modify.

MONITOR YOUR WHOLE ORGANIZATION IN REAL TIME

As the saying goes, “what is not measured cannot be improved.” How quickly can you react to a fall in demand? How long does your organization take to define a new stock policy for your outlets? Where in the organization do you currently have a lack or excess of personnel? BPM solutions offer business activity monitoring (BAM) capabilities that help your organization measure and analyze—either in real-time or retrospectively—every key variable needed to make quick and effective decisions.

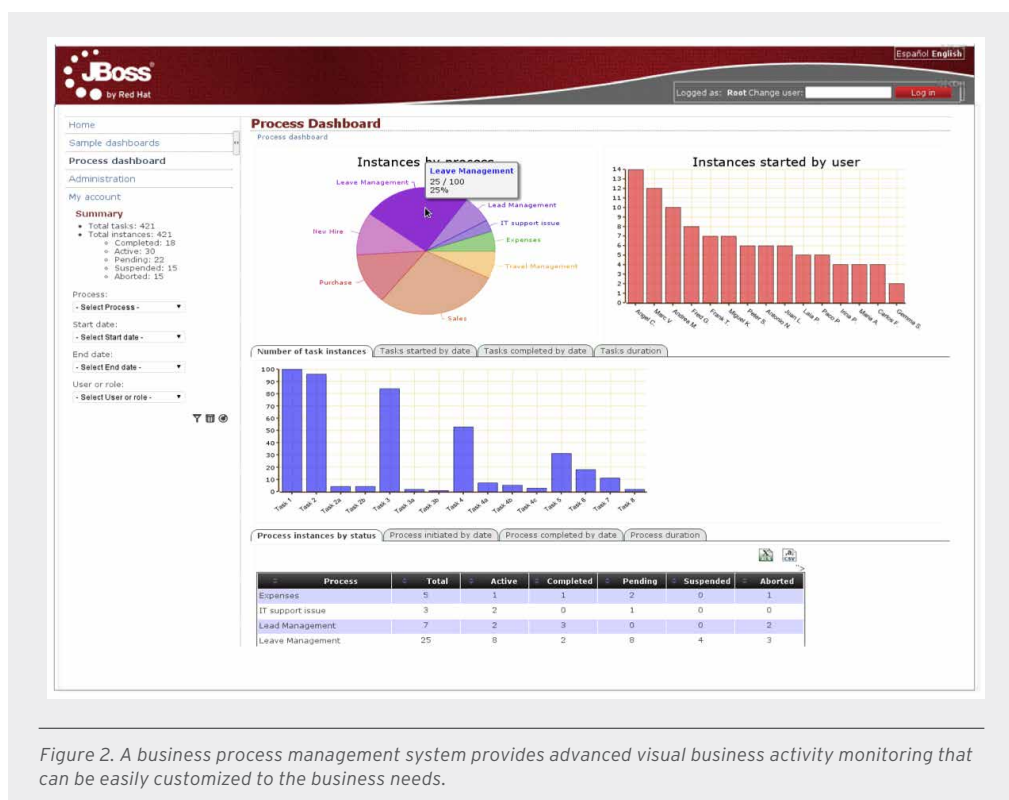


Figure 2. A business process management system provides advanced visual business activity monitoring that can be easily customized to the business needs.

LEAD YOUR FIELD WITH A PROCESS-BASED ORGANIZATION

Much like industrialization revolutionized manual manufacturing, automation based on BPM principles and technology is a powerful shift in people-intensive service industries such as finance and banking, insurance, and public administration. The ability to organize manual work around processes, assisting and supporting decision-taking, and task execution is key to high productivity and effectiveness. Moreover, there is an increasing need to measure and monitor in real time how the organization is performing in order to adapt to the continuous changes and challenges that the environment and competition bring.

USING A SINGLE PLATFORM THAT COMBINES BPM AND BRM CAN OFFER SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES FOR PROJECTS IN A RANGE OF INDUSTRIES AND FUNCTIONS INCLUDING:

- Automated control systems: Air conditioning and heating
- Securities and commodities: Pricing and electronic trading
- Healthcare delivery: Assessing drug interactions or providing prescription assistance
- Financial services and insurance: Fraud detection and pricing
- Manufacturing and distribution: Product configuration with complex feature interdependencies

BUSINESS PROCESS AND BUSINESS RULES MANAGEMENT: BETTER TOGETHER

A business process management solution that includes advanced business rules management provides both top-line and bottom-line benefits. It supports a design and management approach that fosters business agility, strategic alignment, and competitive advantage.

Using a combination of BRM and BPM technologies, organizations can improve the relationships between business and process analysts and their technical and engineering counterparts by fully modeling business processes and policies in ways that are meaningful and easily understood. Some BPM solutions combine these capabilities in a single product so analysts and developers can use a common system to model complex business logic—defining how business processes, business rules, and complex events work together. In this integrated world, processes can execute rules, rules can initiate processes, external applications and systems can interact with processes and rules, and systems can make very sophisticated decisions on the fly.

By defining all the organization's business logic using a single platform, the business can more effectively and efficiently design, implement, and evolve the sophisticated, highly automated processes required by today's competitive environment.

EASILY IMPLEMENT BUSINESS RULES AND POLICIES

Advanced BPM solutions include state-of-the-art business rules management systems. Whether your goal is agility or compliance, you need to ensure that the business's policies are not inside a black box. Instead, they must be easily controlled, understood, monitored, and changed. Policies are ideally defined by business rules designers—analysts with business expertise. These policies can specify many things, such as:

- how interest charges are calculated
- how an insurance claim is processed
- who is eligible for benefits
- how quickly a customer should receive a response
- which parts must be assembled to create a product
- which supplier should receive an order
- whether a given transaction should produce a fraud alert
- and many more

All businesses have policies and rules. The question is who defines, executes, and maintains them, and—most importantly—how.

BENEFITS OF USING A SINGLE PLATFORM FOR BPM AND BRM

- **Reduced gaps between business and IT.** Advanced, easy to use web-based tools provide an excellent user experience that improves collaborative work.
- **Streamlined creation, maintenance, and revision of business processes, rules, and applications.** Business experts can define business processes and policies and easily interact with their IT counterparts to define interaction with other systems and applications.
- **Reduced duplication and inconsistency.** Organizations can simplify and centralize business process and rules by defining them once, maintaining them in one place, and reusing them across the organization.
- **Increased intelligence to your organization.** Processes and rules combined with events generate key information and automate decision-making and action-taking to help your organization become more efficient, streamlined, and effective.

Finally, process and rules management technology makes business systems more transparent, controlled, and auditable by raising the visibility of business processes and business rules and centralizing and standardizing their definition and governance. Organizations that can deploy these technologies effectively will be able to reduce compliance cost and risk.

OPEN SOURCE EXPANDS POSSIBILITIES

In the past, the high cost and complexity of proprietary solutions deterred many companies and projects from using them. As a result, different applications, workflows, processes, and rules proliferated across a diverse range of technologies within the organization. Companies were not able to realize the benefits—or were able to do so only for a small number of specialized projects in limited ways. Fortunately, the availability of highly functional open source solutions now places the technology within reach for many more organizations—and for many more projects within those organizations. You now have a choice of BPM technologies.

When choosing open source software, make sure it is available on a subscription basis that includes access to expert support, patches and updates, long-term maintenance policies, and legal assurances.

Community projects provide fast-paced innovation, but not all open source commercial vendors give customers the best of both worlds—innovation from the vibrant open source community, plus the long-term stability of enterprise-class products.

The absence of licensing fees, common in proprietary software, is one of the reasons customers commonly see significant savings when moving to open source software.

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CONSIDERING BPM SOLUTIONS? TALK TO RED HAT

ABOUT RED HAT JBOSS BPM SUITE

Red Hat JBoss BPM Suite is one part of the Red Hat JBoss Middleware portfolio. As with all Red Hat products, Red Hat JBoss BPM Suite is available on a subscription basis. The subscription includes access to expert Red Hat support, patches and updates, long-term maintenance policies and legal assurances, and a host of other benefits.

For more information about how Red Hat JBoss BPM Suite can help you improve business agility, reduce costs, and increase the transparency and auditability of your systems, contact your Red Hat sales representative or visit redhat.com/bpmsuite.



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ABOUT RED HAT

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of open source solutions, using a community-powered approach to provide reliable and high-performing cloud, virtualization, storage, Linux, and middleware technologies. Red Hat also offers award-winning support, training, and consulting services. Red Hat is an S&P company with more than 70 offices spanning the globe, empowering its customers' businesses.

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