News
Press releases

IBM's building block approach to implementing enterprise workflow solution is affordable and provides staged migration

New workflow framework provides single point of control for entire output management process

BOULDER, Colo., May 21, 2002. . . IBM* today announced a workflow "backbone" that serves as a starting point for achieving the operational efficiency and cost savings of an integrated Infoprint* Workflow and Infoprint Manager output management system. At the core of this base backbone system is Infoprint Workflow, which provides a single print management view as well as the technological framework to automate the control of an enterprise's total output management process. This system will allow users to extend the benefits of sophisticated operations management beyond print, to the total workflow process.

"As we look to the future and how we can best help our customers cut printing expenses, the biggest cost savings occur when we address the entire output process, not just the hardware which only makes up a fraction of the total cost of printing," Richard Troksa, business line executive, enterprise output solutions, IBM Printing Systems. "Utilizing our software and systems integration leadership, we have developed a solution for managing the enterprise workflow, and now through a single point control, both information and operational processes can be seamlessly managed."

The integration of Infoprint Manager and Infoprint Workflow is unique. Starting with the first level of integration, a customer will receive Infoprint Manager and the base level of Infoprint Workflow. The base level of Infoprint Workflow includes a print management and input management component, a new graphical user interface (GUI), and three days of on-site installation and training. This is the first step in the workflow migration path, making it easy for customers to get started.

At the second level of integration, the base system can be easily enhanced to meet expanded output management requirements. This could include sophisticated input management for accepting print files and automatic routing of jobs based on their characteristics. These jobs can then be tracked and controlled end-to-end -- through all of the steps in the process, including composition, printing, finishing, and dispatching to postal or courier services.

A **fully** integrated Infoprint Manager and Infoprint Workflow system will allow users to perform process management of individual documents within a job; distributed operations control; automated management of all of the devices and applications in a complex output management system; sophisticated reporting, costing and billing; and process scheduling. These capabilities are described below:

Multi-site support -- achieve optimal workload balancing and resource utilization by tracking the entire output process across multiple locations, even when using an outsourcer for finishing. With a complete view of print operations, workloads can be automatically distributed across sites, or administrators easily can move work between sites or printers.

Advanced Print Management - Infoprint Workflow will interface with Infoprint Manager to detect events that interrupt print jobs, and will dynamically alter the priority of print jobs in the print queue based on schedule changes. These jobs will then be automatically routed to any device, printer or finisher, in the enterprise. For example, if a print jobs requires finishing, and there is a problem with a finisher, only those jobs that do not require finishing will continue to run.

Reporting, costing and billing - Infoprint Workflow employs a relational database to track print tasks and retain processing history information, to manage devices -- not just printers, but inserters and other finishers, and to track operator activity on devices. It therefore can provide detailed analysis, reporting on all aspects of the print shop operation.

Scheduling- Infoprint Workflow will communicate with Infoprint Manager to automatically create an optimized production schedule based on workloads, equipment, and workers. This will allow a schedule to be put in place that will automatically prioritize workflow to maximize both operator and machine productivity.

Infoprint Manager Enhancements
In addition to the new functionality of Infoprint Manager, which can be accessed through the new GUI, this print management software has been enhanced to offer stand alone features that address productivity.
The new capabilities include:

- Xerox** data transforms for outputting Xerox print datastreams as AFP*, PostScript** or PCL (Infoprint Manager for AIX*);

- Infoprint View for on-screen proofing of print-on-demand (POD) print jobs (Infoprint Manager for AIX); and

- Wireless notification, which now allows system administrators to receive specific messages, such as that a print job has been rerouted or a reason why a print job has been interrupted, via pager, PDA or cell phone (Infoprint Manager for AIX or Windows**)

Pricing and Availability
General availability of the base level integration of Infoprint Manager/Infoprint Workflow solution will begin on May 31, 2002. The following are starting U.S. list prices for Infoprint Manager and base levels of an integrated Infoprint Workflow and Infoprint Manager output management system.

--Infoprint Manager with one high-end printer attachment is $31,000
--Infoprint Manager with one high-end printer attachment and Infoprint Workflow with the base level of integration is $41,000
--Infoprint Manager with one high-end printer attachment and Infoprint Workflow with job management functionality is $81,000

These prices will vary depending on the printers installed and the additional customization services required to meet customer specific output requirements.

About IBM Printing Systems
IBM Printing Systems specializes in e-business printing solutions that deliver "Power to the Printer*". It focuses on information and output management solutions that enhance operations, maximize efficiencies, reduce costs and create new business opportunities. A leader in production print solutions, print-on-demand technologies, distributed print technologies, one-to-one marketing initiatives and print management software, IBM Printing Systems' offerings include printers, software, consultation, systems integration, supplies, service and support. For more information visit www.ibm.com/printers.

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