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IBM Leads Document-Centric BPMS With A Full-Featured Suite

The Forrester Wave™ Vendor Summary, Q3 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IBM FileNet combination provides unmatched market share and strength for managing business processes that also require native capabilities to create, access, read, process, and collaborate on scanned images, documents, e-forms, and corporate records. In the mid-1980s, FileNet coined the term “workflo” and as a result of its early forays into business process, has a much deeper and richer heritage in BPM than any other vendor in this evaluation. The experience shows, both in the richness of the IBM FileNet BPM suite and in the customer base. The planned integration of IBM and FileNet heritage products — including WebSphere and the IBM On Demand product — will strengthen IBM’s already formidable document-centric capability.

IBM IS THE HANDS-DOWN, ALL-AROUND LEADER FOR DOCUMENT-INTENSIVE BPM

FileNet, acquired by IBM in fall 2006, is an ECM company with a long heritage in BPM.¹ FileNet essentially invented the workflow market with its WorkFlo product, which was originally introduced in 1985. The latest architecture of FileNet’s suite, P8, has included full BPM capabilities since 2003.

IBM itself, meanwhile, also developed content management and BPM capabilities in separate product lines; the Information Management division was responsible for content management and workflow while the WebSphere division developed BPM, starting from an integration perspective and later building into more human capabilities over the past 18 months. FileNet gives the company another relevant BPM technology, not only bringing rich document-centric BPM to IBM but also adding human-centric functionality to the IBM BPM portfolio. This richness of products, however, adds to the confusion as buyers try to sort out which BPM suite to buy from IBM for specific types of business processes.

Still, FileNet P8 BPM has market-leading product capabilities backed by IBM’s enormous market presence. The FileNet product can stand on its own, but once IBM integrates its myriad other technologies to the FileNet tools, the results will be unbeatable. (A specific road map for what will be integrated over what time period is not yet available).

Forrester evaluated IBM’s current offering and strategy for document-centric BPMS against approximately 150 criteria (see Figure 1). Overall, the product has strong content management and development tools and adequate monitoring, management, and process design capabilities. This means the product is an especially good fit for buyers who:



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- **Want best-of-breed capabilities for document-intensive processes, from a major vendor.** In a perfect world, one BPM suite would be all an enterprise needs to handle every business process that requires automating and optimizing. And maybe that single BPM product will emerge over the next three to five years. But for right now, there's still a significant gulf between integration-centric and human-centric BPM, and another wide gulf between the pure-play BPM vendors that only think about process and the content vendors that intuitively understand the need to integrate unstructured content with business processes.

With IBM, buyers get the closest to having all BPM solutions from a single vendor, without having to compromise on best-of-breed features for document-centric processes and without having to buy from pure plays that are all but certain to be acquired over the next two to three years. And to many buyers at large enterprises, technology becomes secondary to factors like vendor management and price, and the assurance that comes from buying products from a major IT infrastructure vendor.

- **Want deep experience in BPM implementations.** Because IBM FileNet has a deep heritage in workflow, and its successor technology — BPM — that goes back over two decades, the vendor has deep experience in BPM implementations involving transactional content for back-office processes. Some of the business processes that IBM FileNet has targeted include accounts payable, loan processing, and claims processing; through this experience, the vendor has gained substantial domain expertise. When IBM's services organization is added to the mix, they bring an unparalleled support and service organization in comparison to the other vendors in this Forrester Wave.
- **Plan to use e-forms in conjunction with BPM.** Some visionaries that have already invested in earlier generations of document imaging products now seek to replace scanned images with e-forms. These e-forms can be accessed either internally or by external customers and partners, depending on the specific business process involved. In 2003, FileNet recognized that e-forms is the long-term replacement for many imaging systems, and it responded by acquiring Shana. Instead of competing head to head with e-forms vendors such as Microsoft with InfoPath — or PureEdge, before IBM acquired that company — FileNet decided to position e-forms as a core technology in its BPM suite.
- **Seek a BPM vendor that integrates with collaboration tools.** Prior to its acquisition, FileNet was one of the very few BPM vendors that understood the need for structured processes to create unstructured work environments at certain points along the process. In some cases, these points in the process can be predicted and built into the process model, and in other situations, the unstructured part of the process are unpredictable and depend on many ad hoc factors. FileNet developed a feature called “point in process” in which the structured process creates a workspace, invites people to participate, tracks what happens during the collaborative discussion and document creation, and then resumes the structured part of the process when

the collaboration is finished. If you now fast-forward to IBM's acquisition of FileNet, it's fairly predictable that IBM will likely integrate Lotus collaboration tools into the IBM FileNet product. FileNet's native ability, plus the potential for future R&D with Lotus, is a powerful differentiator for FileNet.

To see how IBM stacks up against seven other competitors, see the Forrester Wave™ evaluation of the document-centric BPMS market.²

Figure 1 IBM FileNet BPM Suite Evaluation Overview

CURRENT OFFERING	
Design	The product's development environment for designing processes is strong.
Development environment	IBM FileNet BPM does use Ajax technology in Business Process Framework (BPF). BPF is a framework for building a flexible, customized presentation layer for process and case management applications in FileNet BPM. Once the processes are designed, BPF Explorer (an MS Explorer-like tool) is used to configure the UI for the process. The interfaces are customized per role and step. It is fully integrated with IBM FileNet e-forms and Content Engine. BPF UI consists of a number of portlets that can be configured per user or role. These portlets are Ajax-based to reduce page refreshes and make it more efficient.
Capture and image repository support	The vendor has strong integration with capture and image repository support.
Document-centric application support	The vendor has strong experience in document-centric applications.
Automation	The product's features have strong support for automating business processes built by the modeling tools.
Workflow	The product has average support for the interaction of people with automated processes.
Monitoring and management	The product's set of tools for monitoring and managing running processes is average.
Product architecture	The product's runtime integration environment has strong performance, reliability, and scalability; it provides localization.
STRATEGY	
Product strategy	IBM FileNet BPM targets a range of BPM scenarios on its own and covers the gamut when WebSphere products are included. The road map includes increasing integration between FileNet and WebSphere BPM capabilities, though details have not yet been released.
Corporate strategy	IBM is a public company, the largest in this evaluation, and is profitable. BPM is a major theme across IBM and has been an important differentiator for FileNet for some time.
Product cost	FileNet products are expensive, though not quite as expensive as those from EMC.

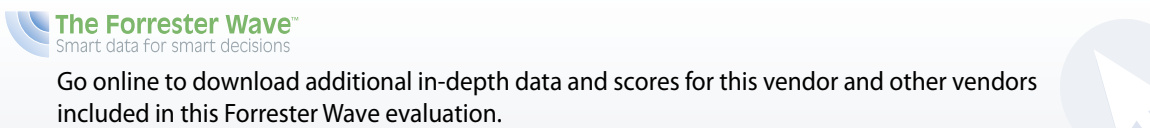
Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 1 IBM FileNet BPM Suite Evaluation Overview (Cont.)

MARKET PRESENCE	
Installed base	IBM FileNet has 4,300 customers in total; 400 of those are on the latest version.
Revenue	\$91.13 billion for 2005.
Revenue growth	Revenue growth is positive for the BPM and software groups.
Systems integrators	Approximately 35.
Services	IBM FileNet provides professional services (now referred to as Lab Services), as well as IBM Global Business Services (GBS), which provides BPM consulting and implementation services. In addition to our own services, IBM FileNet has a large network of implementation partners with focus on various applications areas and industries that do BPM implementation and delivery.
Employees	IBM FileNet has approximately 300 engineers dedicated to this product, and the WebSphere team provides substantial additional engineering resources. The company has approximately 3,000 salespersons worldwide, with a substantial number outside the US.
Technology partners	While this product is not embedded through any OEM agreements, it benefits from an extensive reseller network of more than 400 companies. Many SIs and developer partners also participate in the network.

42677

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.



The Forrester Wave™
Smart data for smart decisions

Go online to download additional in-depth data and scores for this vendor and other vendors included in this Forrester Wave evaluation.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource

The underlying spreadsheet for Figure 1 is available online. The spreadsheet includes more detailed data and scores for this vendor.

This detailed data and scores for this vendor are also available online through an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these

vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and readers are encouraged to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ In August 2006, IBM bought FileNet for \$1.6 billion — IBM's third-largest software acquisition ever. See the August 16, 2006, "[Whoa! IBM Acquires FileNet](#)" report.
- ² To see how the vendors stack up, Forrester evaluated eight business process management suite (BPMS) suppliers best suited and most experienced for document-intensive processes across approximately 150 criteria. The result? IBM, Global 360, EMC, and Adobe lead; IBM leads with substantial market presence and a comprehensive offering; and Global 360 leads with strong design, automation, and workflow capability. Adobe leads with exceptional development tools for rich Internet applications (RIAs) and vision for customer engagement. EMC leads with excellent native capture, content integration, and a very strong BPM offering. Open Text and Hyland Software are Strong Performers with excellent experience, but they require improved process definition, simulation, optimization, monitoring, and management. Autonomy Cardiff has strong content extraction, workflow, monitoring, and management capabilities, but it needs more experience in document-intensive applications. And Captaris — while lacking a strong overall offering — is a Contender, with a significant upside for integrating forms, fax, and paper content. See the July 9, 2007, "[The Forrester Wave™: Business Process Management For Document Processes, Q3 2007](#)" report.