



Leading e-business Combines Web Transaction Processing with Work Flow Integration

The ever growing acceptance of the SET Secure Electronic Transaction protocol has led Business Interactive Corporation to launch a new suite of Web-based transaction services, providing safe and efficient technology solutions. Guy Vales, vice president of Product Development for Business Interactive (BI), explains: "Where most people see the Web as a storefront, we see an incredible opportunity for legacy work flow integration — tying customers directly into real business processes. The ability to render direct access in a secure manner to customers over a worldwide network based upon universal standards will significantly change how most companies do business."

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—Guy Vales, Vice President of Product Development for Business Interactive

A three-year-old company with offices in Ottawa, Canada, and Boston, MA, Business Interactive focuses on application development, Web infrastructure services, and Web transaction services that leverage the latest database and Web integration technologies for e-commerce. Vales adds, "A big issue is acquiring the skill set to be able to actually access and integrate legacy data. Not many companies have the skills for integrating the Web with existing systems because most people have been focused on the front end — making nice pages — except that by itself doesn't bring any money into the enterprise."

Two offerings illustrating BI's rationale include Tradename.com and Subscription.com. These services deploy Web-based transaction processing using IBM's Net. Data application to access and manipulate data stored in the DB2 Universal Database. Since opening their virtual doors, the services have proven to be an exceptional value, providing 24-hour access and quick turnaround at significantly reduced costs.

DB2 Plus Net.Data Equals Value

The quality of the underlying data infrastructure was key in the selection of database vendors. Vales explains, "Early on, we decided to use a robust, mission-critical database that would provide performance, security, and all the other benefits of a relational database."

Several of the current services in place and under development by BI employ Net.Data to access and manipulate data stored in DB2, Oracle, SQL Server, and Sybase databases on various operating systems platforms using Web browsers. BI uses browser-based applications (many of them based on Net.Data),

Application	Online subscription services; online search of trade names and trademarks; online warranty management services
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Business Value	20% productivity improvements; cost 10% below industry averages
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Software	IBM DB2 Universal Database IBM Net.Data
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to run its internal operations. This strategy enhances BI's flexibility and speed and translates into savings on training, customer service, and purchasing costs estimated at nearly 10 percent below industry average.



Business Interactive integrates the Web with e-business technologies to provide safe and efficient transaction services.

"Net.Data's live connectivity improves performance because it eliminates the need to open and close connections every time a user wants to access the database," says Vales. "With flexible features that include the ability to easily invoke and integrate existing systems written in C, PERL, REXX, and Java, we estimate a productivity improvement of nearly 20 percent compared to some other tools in the marketplace."

Roody Gaston, vice president of Web Infrastructure Services, adds, "Net.Data has been great — robust, reliable, and quite fast. It does all that we expected it to do. We chose it and DB2 because IBM is very strong at the back end and very business-oriented in terms of vertical industries and business processes. That's where the market really is now."

Tradename.com Speeds Search

Tradename.com facilitates the two million company name and trademark searches performed in North America each year by allowing a pre-search of the federal trademark database to determine whether a particular name is available. It then provides a registration service, including a final search and registration of the name. The efficient online viewing capability of past and current search results, as well as relevant information on trademark-related issues, can cut customers' search time by 30 to 40 percent on certain transactions, such as preliminary searches.

The offering allows Tradename houses to reach customers with an online service that they would not have developed on their own. Tradename.com provides the trademark houses with a full system of tracking, submittal, work flow mechanisms, and e-mail discussion forums. Customers can protect their trademark by having the system automatically check for infringements on a regular basis.

One Stop Shopping with Subscription.com

By concentrating over 4,000 magazines, Web sites, newspapers, government publications, press releases, and more onto one site, BI envisions Subscription.com as a focal point for businesses, governments, and individual consumers to subscribe to any Web site or Web broadcast channel, Web-based publication, print publication, or cable service. Currently, Subscription.com enables its users to obtain detailed information on products and services, renew or suspend subscriptions, plus query and modify account information.

"It is an attractive option for publishers," Vales says, "because instead of creating and managing their own subscription services, publishers just have to link to our site. It's easier, more cost-effective, and gives them greater exposure."

Besides the numerous subscription opportunities on the site, subscribers can also renew, cancel, and suspend subscriptions; change account information; and generate reports; saving both time and money. With the report-generating feature, large volume subscribers such as libraries are able to assemble a global picture of all their various subscription activities that may include specific subscription lists and the monthly or annual costs incurred.

"We've also been asked to provide ad rates and circulation information," says Vales. "We already have the information — with Net. Data, it's easy to repackage it. Some publishers and other subscription management firms even want to bring Subscription.com in-house, as a replacement for the systems they are currently using for handling subscriptions over the phone."

What's Ahead at Business Interactive

Tradename.com and Subscription.com are only the beginning. Recently launched WarrantyNet.com provides warranty information management services to manufacturers, consumers, retailers, and service outlets. Additionally, relational extenders will enable Business Interactive to integrate multimedia into its own DB2 databases. As a result, Tradename.com will be able to search for design logos and video used in trademarks, and Subscription.com will be able to display pictures from specific magazines or photos of editors.

Also in the works is AllClassifieds.com, a business-to-business classified advertising service, and Channelcast.com, a Web-broadcast content delivery service. And BI is currently working with a major healthcare provider on a client-consultant basis to deploy a DB2 and Net.Data solution to make claims benefits accessible online.

Although e-business is still in its infancy, Business Interactive is working with IBM to actively demonstrate that it is impractical *not* to do business on the Web. Gaston concludes, "DB2 Universal Database together with its integrated Net.Data and Java capability is one more testament of IBM's technical achievement and of IBM's understanding of the stringent requirements of mission-critical Web applications."

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