

David Wilson: Hi, everyone, this is **David Wilson**, I'm the director of worldwide business partner sales for WebSphere and IBM Software Group. I'd like to welcome everybody to a continuation of the preview series of podcast leading up to Impact 2010. I'm here with **Devi Gupta**, Vice President of Marketing of one of our top business partners, Prolifics, and we're both getting ready for Impact 2010 that will be held in Las Vegas the first week of May. Devi, hello, thanks for taking some time with us today. Talk with us about Prolifics and the excitement that is building around the upcoming Impact show in Las Vegas. First of all, before you start talking at Impact, can you give the listeners a bit of a quick overview of Prolifics.

Devi Gupta: Sure, absolutely, I'd be more than happy to. First, I'd like to just thank you for inviting me to chat with you today. So I'll tell you a little bit about Prolifics, Prolifics is an end-to-end systems integrator. We specialize exclusively in IBM technology, so we've chosen to standardize a 100 percent the IBM software portfolio. We're actually the largest systems integrator that specializes exclusively in IBM. And we specialize in developing custom built applications for our customers, primarily service oriented architecture, infrastructure, so we do both BPM, business process management, as well as integration projects. We also focus on delivering portal and collaboration type of applications. We've built a new very strong and deep practice around security, and we leverage IBM tooling to help us optimize and maintain all of these applications that we build for customers.

David Wilson: That's great. You know, Prolifics has been one of our most important business partners for some time now; can you give us an idea on a bit of the history?

Devi Gupta: Sure. So today Prolifics is a premier level business partner, and our relationship dates back to 1999-2000, so it's a long, rich ten-year history. Originally in our history, we started with the WebSphere technology, that's at the core of everything we build, all the applications that we build for customers. And so as you can imagine at the Impact conference is near and dear to our heart, it's definitely the most strategic conference for us. Today, we're happy to say that we support the entire IBM software portfolio stack, both as a systems integrator as well as the resellers. So

we're an authorized resellers, we're actually 100 percent authorized in IBM's new program called Software Value Platform.

David Wilson: That's great. You know I'll say it again, you are one of our most valued business partners and that long history is something that we go back and we see the early days of WebSphere, we see the early days of the app server and you guys were there and you continue to be one of our more valued partners. So thank you for that. Let me jump over to Impact, it is as it is said broadly now, the preeminent conference designed for business and IT leaders. We're in our fourth year of existence; we've had a series of conferences in the past that led us to bring everything together in the current Impact structure. This year we'll again be at the Venetian hotel in Las Vegas and we're starting Sunday, May 2nd, and run through Friday, May 7th. I know Prolifics will be at Impact; in fact you're one of our gold sponsors this year. Can you tell us a little about what Prolifics is planning for Impact without giving away any secret announcements or anything like that?

Devi Gupta: Well, I'll try not to give away any of our secrets. First of all, I'll tell you that my strategy is to wear much more sensible shoes this year, so that's one lesson learned. So actually for us Impact is the biggest conference of the year for us, it's very strategic, we're actually sending a full team from Prolifics, I will be there, our executive team, subject matter experts, consultants, sales, so a great variety from Prolifics. And our theme this year is to help customers get a smart start with Prolifics. So one of our offers is a series of SOA and BPM clinics, these are 30 minute private sessions with customers, no obligation, we're just looking to sit down with them, understand what some of their goals and desires and future directions are, and see if we can help them get a smart start to move forward with some of those initiatives.

We're also very proud to say that we have four different speaking spots, and again, these speaking spots are in a variety of different topics, but always with the focus of really helping our customers to get a smart start into SOA.

David Wilson: So, Devi, you've been a sponsor at Impact in each of the previous four years, is that right?

Devi Gupta: Yes, that's absolutely correct.

David Wilson: In fact, you were gold last year as you are this year, which, by the way, I'd like to thank you, we at IBM would not be able to put on such an event of this magnitude and quality without Prolifics and our other partners who sponsor at Impact. You guys make it all possible. What has the experience been for you in the past, and what are you looking forward to this year in terms of sponsorship?

Devi Gupta: Yeah, actually Impact is an extremely valuable conference to Prolifics, and it's the reason we chose to do gold last year and we chose to again sponsor at a gold level this year. We actually were a little nervous about sponsoring about last year, or about whether or not we would get the value out of Impact because of the state of the economy. But we are really happy to see that it was quite the opposite, we actually got a lot of real business and real opportunities that came directly out of the show. In fact, just this past Q1, just this past quarter we closed a major deal, and with that deal the origins of it and the relationship began at Impact last year.

So as you can see, it's a real opportunity for us, it's one that's not easily duplicated with webinars or seminars or other types of events. It's one that you have to experience because of the nature of the environment and all the networking opportunities and all the intimate conversations that we're able to have at the booth as well as private meetings. So it's very valuable and it really gives us the opportunity to have the exposure to IBM and the exposure to our customers and the opportunity to share stories.

David Wilson: That's great. In fact, I think the secrets out there as far as the value of the sponsorships. We're over 60 sponsors now and still going. Actually, for those listening to the podcast here today, if you're interested in getting a spot on the Solution floor I wouldn't waste any more time, they are filling up fast. But if you need some assistance I'd be happy to help you personally, I'll give you my email ID it's very simple, daw@us.ibm.com. I'll be able to put you in touch with somebody who can make sure you're part of this exciting opportunity. Now in addition to a presence on the solution floor, Devi, you mentioned some sessions that Prolifics will be presenting, can you share with us some of those and the benefits that they bring to Prolifics?

Devi Gupta:

Sure, we have four different speaking spots, and again, they're on a variety of topics across the SOA spectrum. The first is called An Approach to Design and Implement Robust SOA, it's a very technical type of presentation where we're gonna be sharing some of our best practices and proven practices to design, version, secure, monitor, audit, govern web services and SOA architectures. The second session is on extending MQ and we're gonna talk about file transfer and monitoring strategies. The third session is on seeing BPM in action, and it's a really cool one. We're gonna walk through a customer's experience, complete end-to-end BPM implementation of a claims management system for a customer in the healthcare space.

And then the fourth one is one that I'm really excited to talk about, we're co-speaking with one of our customers, Huntington National Bank, and this customer had made a ten-year investment in the BEA Oracle technology. And so they were well invested, they had ten years worth of infrastructure built out on WebLogic Application Server, WebLogic Integrator, and WebLogic Portal Server, as well as Intel and Centrino platforms. And they've now since made the strategic decision to move forward to a Z-Linux platform utilizing IBM WebSphere's portfolio as well as other products from IBM including WebSphere Application Server, WebSphere Portal Server, WebSphere ESB, WSRR, ITCAM's and the list goes on.

We're gonna be actually showcased with them, they're gonna talk a little bit about why they chose to make this evaluation, what some of their criteria was for the evaluation, why they actually chose WebSphere over WebLogic as well as why they chose WebSphere over JBoss, which is another one of the competitors that was in the deal. Prolifics helped them to make the decision going forward; we were the IBM business partner that worked with them to do the analysis of what it would take to move their complex BA Oracle infrastructure over to IBM. And now we are the partner that is going to be working with them on this implementation. And we are, as we speak, a big team over at Prolifics is helping the customer to move forward. This is actually one of our specialty areas, so we've conducted over a 100 migrations from the Oracle BA technology and other competing technologies over to the IBM WebSphere platform.

David Wilson: That's great. You know I've often found myself in the Prolific sessions at Impact, so I'll definitely look out for that Huntington Bank on this year's calendar and make sure I put a big circle around it. That's great.

Devi Gupta: Great, session 2342.

David Wilson: Got it, let me write that down, thank you. So we've talked about Prolifics in terms of its visibility at the event with the sponsorships and presenting at the sessions. Does Prolifics take advantage of any of the educational opportunities at the show?

Devi Gupta: We do, we send a variety of technical folks, we have solutions architects, subject matter experts, practice directors, consultants, and they get to go and experience some of the educational benefits within that one week as well as get some certifications done. I think many of us in the business partner community are familiar with IBM's Software Value Plus Program and it's a program that does require certification across a variety of technologies. So this is a great opportunity for business partners and companies out there to go get certified.

David Wilson: That's a great perspective, so not only do you get the value of the solutions center and the presentations, but you're also getting your Prolifics employees out there at Impact, and encourage customers and prospects. Do you get a large community of your customers and prospects to attend, and do they see the same benefits as your team does?

Devi Gupta: Absolutely. We get a huge number of prospects and customers there, we actually have already started calling all of our customers just to make the pitch to them, promote the event and find out if they're gonna be there and try to set up meetings. So as I mentioned, they get the educational benefit similar to our consultants and our subject matter experts and so on. Specifically, it's an opportunity for them to get all of that educational benefit packed within one week. So as opposed to taking the cost and the time out of the project that they may be working on, for instance folks from Huntington Bank will be there and they'll be able to pack in the education within that one week, rather than taking away from the valuable time of their projects.

It's an opportunity for them to get a lot of tips as well, for customers to get tips on how to get started, tips on how to overcome project challenges, tips on maybe next steps on various strategic projects. They get – we find that customers get inspired by hearing stories from other customers. I think IBM really puts a huge amount of emphasis on getting various organizations to share their stories, so it's an opportunity for our customers to hear about those stories.

And in the case of Huntington and other customers, it's an opportunity for them to also share and give back to the community. So they're able to share their own success and show a little pride and share their story with the Impact community. We're hoping that perhaps next year one of our customers will actually be up there on the podium during a keynote sharing their success with the entire community.

David Wilson: You know I'd like to echo your comment about how valuable the customers view other customer's testimonials. I've often found doing sessions at Impact with customers, they're referencing the fact that they sat in on a customer session then chased down the customers, took them out for a cocktail at the reception later to really understand what they've been experiencing. I think that's one of the most valuable aspects of Impact.

Devi Gupta: Yeah, actually one of the things that we're probably gonna try to do is get some of our customers to talk to our other customers, maybe have like a little roundtable lunch or something like that. So you're right, we definitely think it's a great value back to them.

David Wilson: That's a great idea. Now we've talked about sponsoring at Impact, presenting your expertise in various sessions, we've talked about bringing your employees to take advantage, and even bringing your customers and prospects, but I almost looked over the special day we've planned for you and the other business partners, and that being the Business Partner Summit on Sunday, May 2nd.

Devi Gupta: Ah, so you're calling it the Business Partner's Summit, are you? Well, it's a good name and it's definitely a special day for us, it's a great day. We feel like we're privileged because it's a day exclusively for partners, and so we get a sneak peak, per se, or a scoop on all of the new announcements that are gonna come out at

Impact. And these are announcement that are about IBM strategy for the next year, so these are really important announcements. It's almost like getting a view into predicting the future and seeing where IBM's going and where the industry is going as a whole.

David Wilson: That's exactly the intent. What we're trying to do is give you some insight into what's gonna be announced throughout the week, and put you in a position that you can have those conversations with your customers at the event. The Business Partner's Summit day, it's all about the partners.

Devi Gupta: That's right. And it's great for us too, we get the opportunity to mingle, to meet other IBM reps, to meet other business partners, we do a lot of work with other business partners as well. So it's an opportunity to get that face-to-face time. And we've talked about our customers, but it's great to also have the networking time with IBM and with other partners.

David Wilson: Yeah, and we love it to because it's, as you say, a day where we exclusively focus on each other and it climaxes with the grand opening of the Solution Center, which should be around 6:00 this year. It's a very exciting time in the show. Plus, there's the awards, we have, I believe, it's five awards this year. Let's see, there's the Smart SOA award, the Business Process Management award, Distributor Excellence award, Smarter Decision, which is new this year, and it focuses on the iLock portfolio, and, of course, Best in Show. Is Prolifics planning on entering a nomination for any of these awards?

Devi Gupta: Hmm, let me think about that. Well, I would love to answer your question, but I'm afraid it's top secret for now.

David Wilson: Well, I'm gonna be the MC at the summit, so I'll know in advance so you can tell me now.

Devi Gupta: Really, that's great. I didn't realize you were gonna be the MC. You're gonna be fantastic. No, I'm still not telling you, but I think you can probably guess.

David Wilson: All right. Well, folks, I guess you will have to come to Impact to see if Devi and Prolifics end up as one of our IBM Impact business partner finalists or even a winner. And you'll see me there as the

master of ceremonies, I'll be the good looking guy at the front of the agenda. There are other reasons why you're going to not wanna miss this, which is why we have, and it's not David Letterman, you'll have to settle for David Wilson, our top ten reasons for attending Impact. So we'll hear the drum roll in the background there; number ten reason, get a year's worth of education from the most experienced business and technology leaders in the world. Listen, all you have to do is pick up the schedule, see what's planned and you'll fully appreciate the fact that this one week you'll be able to take care of an immense of education that you wouldn't otherwise had a chance to get.

Number nine, you'll view the latest technology advancements from conference sponsors. You could, in fact, be one yourself. Number eight, network with the best in the industry and build a lifetime of new contacts critical to your business. We intentionally made a lot of points within the agenda to give you that opportunity to network as Devi mentioned earlier about the opportunity for customers to talk to customers. Number seven reason, discover how to maximize your sales and marketing initiatives with IBM at the Business Partner Café. So this is something that will be going on throughout the week, and you'll have an opportunity for our partners to interact with other partners. Number six; get easy access to senior IBM leadership and technical experts. It is an amazing amount of senior talent from IBM that'll be in attendance. We've got a really nice system set up so if people wanna get time, one-on-one time there's an easy way to book that.

Number five, attend the dedicated Business Partners Summit and learn about the latest in BPM, SOA and WebSphere programs and products. So we talked about that earlier, the Summit day is all about the business partners and we'll set the partner up for the rest of the week. Number four, save money now. Similar education courses would cost up to \$10,000, you come to Impact and you gain the knowledge to navigate today's economy and it's invaluable. Really, if you look again, and quite frankly this one kinda relates back to number ten again, you're getting a lot of value to this, and if you were to actually compare it against the type of education that you'd be taking in other places it's definitely a major cost savings.

Number three; you'll learn how your clients can align their business objectives with IT by participating in the new business program in Interactive Business Agility Symposium, another great opportunity to connect the IT side of our business with the business priorities. Number two; give your company the ability to be in one of the authorized selling groups of WebSphere. You mentioned this earlier about the opportunity to get certified; you will get up to three free certifications where tests are available at Impact. And finally, number one reason Impact 2010.

Devi Gupta: Here's the drum roll.

David Wilson: I can hear that in the background, thank you very much. Impact 2010 is the premier conference from business and IT leaders. Now, I'm sorry I don't quite have the David Letterman delivery here, but I hope people can appreciate there are a lot of reasons to be attending Impact. Here's my ten, I'm sure there's a lot more that you could pull out as well. There you have it, ladies and gentleman, the top ten reasons to attend Impact. Devi, thank you so much for spending time with me today. I really do look forward to seeing you, Prolifics, and the rest of our business partners at Impact.

Devi Gupta: Thank you so much. Thank you, David, and thanks for inviting me to speak again, and I look forward to seeing you in a couple weeks.

David Wilson: All right, I'll see you then.

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