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— Steve Hess, Director of Product Management for
BEA WebLogic Server, BEA Systems

including a variety of application-management tools from BEA and its partners in BEA WebLogic Server, including industry-leading technology for application change and configuration management from Motive, Inc.

Unlike management tools that provide only limited views of discrete components in an IT environment, Motive uses a model-based approach that provides a comprehensive application view of the entire IT environment, making it ideal for managing SOAs.

Tracking application configuration changes, isolating and resolving problems are common application management problems costing corporations hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Motive J2EE application management products simplify application management by facilitating collaboration and automation across IT organizations, dramatically reducing the time, effort and support cost of identifying and resolving application problems.

The net effect of Motive's approach is management simplicity and reduced complexity, enabling IT departments to maximize

application up-time while reducing application management costs.

When BEA was considering Motive as a partner, BEA admired this unique approach, which was consistent with BEA's strategic product direction. BEA liked how Motive builds management data into application environments – an approach that can close the gap that traditionally exists between application development teams and IT operations.

"BEA partnered with Motive because of Motive's approach and vision," says Hess. "What they were doing was very synergistic with things that we were doing, and might interest many of our customers who, because of the number of applications or the complexity of applications, wanted a better view into the increasingly complex configurations in their data centers."

More and Better Management Tools

BEA and Motive are conducting joint technology, sales and marketing activities with the common goal of serving the needs of mutual customers. Working with BEA,

Motive has incorporated application definition models tailored to BEA WebLogic Server – giving customers a head start on building change and configuration management into their J2EE applications and services.

BEA will keep adding management tools in future versions of BEA WebLogic Server. Hess says, "We'll always be interested in what Motive is foreseeing. We will continue to help our mutual customers cope better with growth in scale and scope of their J2EE applications."

Meanwhile, Rhonda Hocker will continue building better administration and management capabilities into BEA's IT infrastructure, which supports 700,000 users at 15,000 customers around the world.

"Administration and management are very important for us," says Hocker. "There are no complete solutions in the marketplace, but there are pieces of solutions. And today if you combine those pieces, you can come up with a pretty good enterprise management framework."

Forbes



Rhonda Hocker
Senior Vice President and
Chief Information Officer
BEA Systems

BEA Systems: Helping Customers Move with Confidence To Service-Oriented Architectures

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BEA Systems: Helping Customers Move with Confidence To Service-Oriented Architectures

Global 2000 companies are cautiously moving their business applications to service-oriented architectures (SOAs) to make their IT infrastructures more responsive to business needs. They want to be able to develop and deploy capability in weeks, not months or years; to add value incrementally; and to reduce total cost of ownership.

While the benefits of moving to an SOA can be huge – massive reductions in time-to-business value – companies should also be prepared for challenges they might encounter along the way, such as increased application complexity, which in turn can increase the management burden for IT departments.

BEA Systems, Inc., a world leader in enterprise infrastructure software, has been at the forefront of the SOA trend, providing the software foundation that allows companies to benefit from service-oriented architectures. BEA has a direct, keen understanding of SOA challenges: the company has moved its IT infrastructure and business applications to an SOA, using its own technology throughout.

As a result, BEA is well-positioned to help its customers more easily realize the opportunities and tackle the challenges of migrating to SOAs. As part of its next-generation product, the company is incorporating powerful application-management capabilities, including technology from Motive, Inc., a leading provider of management software. This is part of a larger BEA initiative to continue to help enterprises simplify the process of implementing an SOA strategy.

The Customer Next Door

Four years ago BEA became an SOA pioneer under the direction of a new Chief Information Officer, Rhonda Hocker. She brought a fresh perspective: before she joined BEA, she spent much of her career as an internal customer of IT, managing a manufacturing supply chain for a global manufacturing company.

“We purchased the best-in-breed applications,” she says. “We bought ERP, sales force automation, CRM solutions. We customized them and tried to integrate them. But I ended up running my multibillion-dollar business on Excel spreadsheets. So, when I joined BEA, I wanted to approach IT differently. I took a services approach, even though

‘SOA’ was not a widely used term at that time.”

Hocker and her IT team had a mandate from the CEO: build infrastructure fast. BEA knew from its own research that many companies stumble at the \$1-billion level because their IT infrastructures can’t support the growth of their operations or customer base. BEA did not want to make that mistake.

The team hunkered down and started building common sets of services. They also built out portal applications to support specific needs, including customer support, license management, the developer community, partners, and the sales force. The goal was to develop sets of services that could be reused by the many different portals within the enterprise.

“We started building out sets of services before the technology or standards had evolved to the point we needed – it took a leap of faith,” Hocker says. “Then the company formed separate product groups: an app server product group, a portal product group, an integration product group. They didn’t work very well together. But being an internal customer, I needed them to work together. I was trying to

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— Rhonda Hocker, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, BEA Systems

develop on a platform before we were a platform company.”

It was a challenging process, involving a bit of internal tension, but it paid off: the IT team got the product engineering group to agree to take an enterprise view of how products would be used. IT was heavily involved in the evolution of the BEA platform, even writing some of the code.

The business results of IT’s move to a service-oriented architecture were dramatic: time-to-business value was reduced from 16 months to a few weeks, sales productivity and customer loyalty improved, awards for excellence were received, and much more.

“Today, we run our entire enterprise on our own technology,” says Hocker. “We act as the customer next door for engineering. We are a test case for customer success. We provide monthly report cards to engineering. We rotate people between IT and engineering. We help define what features should be included in the product.”

Sharing the Lessons Learned

Hocker regularly visits her fellow CIOs at customer companies. Almost all of them are moving to SOAs, so they are eager to learn from Hocker’s trials and successes.

In these meetings, she explains the top three SOA challenges: (1) you need an additional tier of governance to manage the common services infrastructure layer; (2) you need to adjust the culture of IT, teaching your developers to stop thinking in terms of solving independent problems and start writing their applications with reuse in mind; (3) your IT people need business process architecture skills, not just technical skills.

To help customers get started in SOA, Hocker offers five tips: (1) start small and build on your successes; (2) pick projects where you have business users who “get it”; (3) market your successes internally and externally; (4) be careful when selecting the members of your team, because they will have to work smoothly together under pressure; (5) hire from outside your company a few people who have succeeded on the Internet in a big way.

Overcoming SOA Management Challenges

While BEA’s CIO is sharing her SOA know-how with customer CIOs, BEA is also sharing its SOA know-how in another helpful way: by adding powerful management tools to BEA WebLogic Server™ to help

manage application complexity.

Steve Hess, Director of Product Management for BEA WebLogic Server, explains: “J2EE has become a much more accepted citizen of the data center, and with maturity has come an increased number of deployments and increased complexity of applications. Management challenges stem from this complexity.”

In these situations, application management can cost more than application development, and enterprises expect application infrastructure providers like BEA to play an active role in addressing total cost of ownership throughout the lifecycle of their applications. This means enterprises are looking to BEA to provide both development and management tools that bring increasing levels of efficiency to their application environments. In response, BEA is

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