

WHITE PAPER

# Business Process Management: The 'Super Glue' for Social Media, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud (SMAC) enabled enterprises?



Business managers and technology leaders are being challenged to make faster and better decisions and to 'do more with less'. In today's dynamic business context, it is imperative to have end-to-end, near real-time visibility into an enterprise's operations and environments; without this, strategic planning and operational decision making will be extremely time consuming activities.

The mobile, cloud, analytical and social age in which we live is creating new worlds of opportunity to transform business operations and engage with customers. Business and IT leaders are enacting strategies to derive business advantage from these consumer-driven technology innovations and, over time, the influence of these innovations will only continue to grow. By aligning these technologies with process improvement efforts, enterprises and organisations are attaining new levels of speed, responsiveness, quality and agility. Let us explore the synergies between SMAC technologies and BPM which will help enterprises take advantage of the mobile, cloud and social revolutions and create informed and intelligent business processes that drive better and faster business decisions.

A traditional business process management (BPM) scenario brings together a complete set of integrated composition technologies for managing the interactions among all the resources — people, software systems, information, business rules and policies — that contribute to operational process outcomes. Its model-driven approach enables business and IT professionals to work together more collaboratively throughout the process improvement life cycle than is possible with other approaches to solution delivery.

By incorporating functionalities to support real-time business analytics, deep complex-event processing (CEP), social media to support behaviour and collaboration and expanded technologies to support growing requirements for mobility, BPM can be extended to the next level of adding more intelligence to processing capabilities. Gartner foresaw this scenario well in advance and coined the term "iBPMS" (intelligent BPM) and predicted a much higher collaboration between machine and human intelligence in a much friendlier work environment that is characterised by role-based workspaces.

### Social media & BPM synergies

Omnipresent social media is changing the way enterprises define, analyse, implement, control and optimise their business-critical assets – 'processes'. By expecting their skilled workforce to possess higher degrees of Social Quotient (SQ) along with Intelligent Quotient (IQ),

organisations are actively gearing up for enriching their business processes for multi-channel revenue avenues, real-time decision making and "crowdsourcing" for process optimisation.

Organisations are increasingly embracing 'processes' as the mode of translating business strategy into effective execution. The journey of Business Process Management establishes the right focus for initiatives based on the strategic imperatives of an organisation and converts business processes into real assets that provide competitive advantage. The key to success of BPM is communication, and nowadays communication is completely intertwined with social media.

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The huge strides made on the process optimisation front by synergies of BPM and social media have created a trend known as Social BPM, which is acknowledged by the analyst community and adopted by numerous customers. Social BPM is the use of social tools (e.g. blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) and techniques in Business Process Optimisation. Social BPM uses web 2.0, components such as wikis and social networking and more traditional components in BPM initiatives. The use of social BPM allows direct and volume user interaction which helps in leveraging the mindshare of resources outside the company and encouraging a more collaborative and transparent approach to process optimisation. The re-definition has created a new problem-solving paradigm called 'crowdsourcing'.

To gear up for the social BPM trend, the market has effectively integrated most of the popularly used social media channels as part of their BPM suites. IBM BPM 8.0 and PEGA Smart BPM Suite lead from the front in this context. This will enable business analysts and process architects to effectively utilise data from social channels as input for key processing scenarios.

These act as a trigger for an alternate workflow or as exception process flow, or even as an initiator for critical process flows. Real-time event correlation and predictive analysis scenarios using Complex Event Processing (CEP) can also effectively leverage this 'crowd-sourced' data. Mindtree's BPM practice is one of the early movers in effectively supporting the synergies between BPM and social media for optimised BPM life cycle offerings for our customers. Our BPM Centre of Excellence uses it as

an effective tool for collaborative process definition and discovery and analysis with all our SME customers. We are seeing a high demand from customers on enterprise business transformation consulting services for effective leverage of social BPM channels.

BPM technologies are already established as 'change agents' for an enterprise transformational journey. Social media adds another effective channel for adoption and navigation of core enterprise business processes as it opens wider possibilities of better customer experiences and improved process flexibility which are key for agile enterprises.

## Mobile BPM

Enterprises have started aggressively enabling mobile devices to handle more business processes. Improvements in device architectures and software are beginning to blur the lines between BPM use for tablets and laptops although mobile BPM remains a few steps behind other enterprise applications like CRM and Business Intelligence (BI). While challenges remain with regard to form factor limitations and security for mobile BPM, a few key vendors are making waves as they extend processes to more remote workers. Currently, Appian is leading the mobile BPM market as they make good use of native apps on the different platforms, and their Tempo interface is optimised for mobile form factors. IBM and Pegasystems Inc. also have formidable mobile enablement capabilities on their business process management platforms.

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## Analytics & BPM synergies

For analytics to be actionable, analysis must work in conjunction with process which in turn yields intelligent business process management. By having more real-time intelligence and analytics directly feeding automated processes via mobile, social and cloud mechanisms, an organisation can see trends, issue actions and measure the results through reports delivered by enterprise social media. The application of SMAC to business processes essentially creates visibility on what peak customer experience looks like to anyone in the organisation, across hierarchy and outlines what someone should do when actually interacting with the customer.

When it comes to improving and optimising business processes, visibility is one of the most important

attributes of a BPM platform. Most of the commercial BPM products now provide complete process visibility with real-time analytics to help business users quickly and easily make changes to processes. The built-in dashboards make it easier to recognise performance issues in real-time and take corrective actions when needed. In order to operationalise insights from big data, or apply contextual information from mobile engagements, business processes must be redesigned to apply those insights. The path breaking real-time event correlation and predictive analytics technology via CEP helps orchestrated business processes identify scenarios in real-time and trigger meaningful actions.

## BPM in cloud

In this article, BPM in cloud refers to an internet-based approach outside traditional on-premises computing architectures. BPM being tied to the core business activity does not seem a great candidate for such cloud migration but IBM, Cordys, Appian and others have created cloud versions of BPM systems and web-based BPM modelling tools that work in the cloud. So now, BPM too is being enabled, measured and monitored for the cloud.

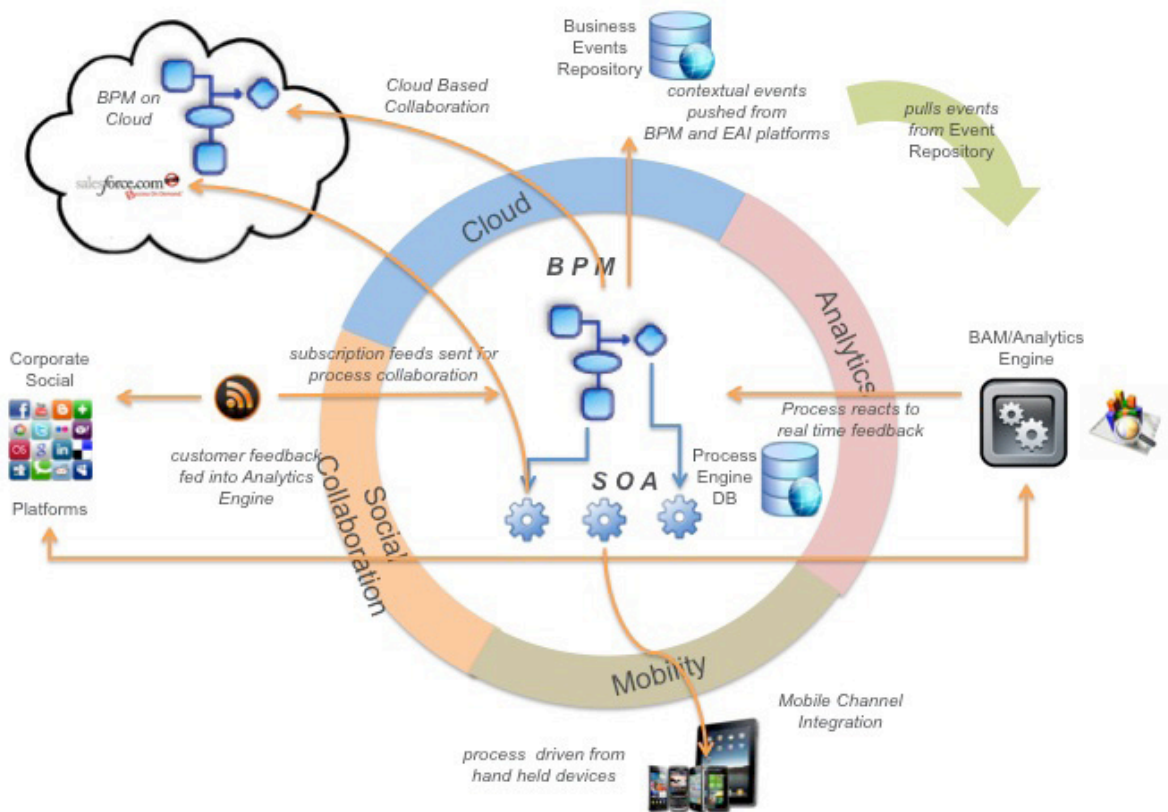
Business process management projects increasingly rely on integrated approaches to Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) and cloud computing and SOAs incorporate modular reusable business services that have clearly defined and standardised interfaces. As a result, these architectures maximise reuse and business agility and enable rapid business change.

Issues to consider when moving BPM to the cloud include the types of process involved, their complexity, the number of interfaces involved, and the state of the databases. Moving to the cloud may be an opportunity to consolidate apps and go across multiple platforms, but this is an area where planning and caution should be employed.

## BPM as orchestration hub for SMAC layer

In view of the seamless synergies exhibited by BPM with SMAC technologies in business process optimisation initiatives globally, BPM implementation experts have started to position BPM as the hub for enterprise process integration and leveraging it as a flexible glue structure for SMAC enablement of enterprise business processes. This implementation pattern is providing enterprises with much needed flexibility in embarking on multi-channel process enablement with a higher degree of static and dynamic analytic support and metered system resource utilisation capabilities.

The diagram below depicts the seamless integration pattern of social, mobility, analytics and cloud platform with enterprise BPM implementations.



Here, social media incorporates more external data sources such as experts and customer voices, and context data into the entire life cycle. Social media can enhance and provide more information about the situational context and social media will also support additional analytical techniques, such as network analysis in order to support decisions regarding the next best actions; this also allows for better collaboration and crowdsourcing.

Mobile device support gives individual contributors and supervisors 24/7 access to work to sustain responsiveness, and to allow for mobile interactions within the process context, especially in global operations. Expanded active analytic capabilities in such areas as Business Activity Monitoring (BAM) and CEP provides broader and better predictive analytics, deeper and interactive dashboards, better real-time visibility into performance, more timely alerts, improved process intelligence and better context awareness.

With more and more BPM product vendors integrating SMAC enablement capabilities in their offerings,

enterprises can leverage the finer aspects of social and mobile BPM with analytics support and less upfront cost of ownership via cloud-based deployment models. Choice will lie with enterprise business process custodians, whether to jump onto the SMAC bandwagon for BPM or stick with traditional BPM capabilities. The decision will be purely based on the extent of 'intelligent business process requirements' within their enterprise context. BPM as an enterprise transformational platform has matured enough to be viewed as an enterprise process hub which can be SMAC enabled to realise its full potential in helping achieve an organisations immediate and future business goals successfully.

### About the author

Sajeev Nair is General Manager & Practice Head for BPM & EAI in Mindtree. With over 17 years of industry experience, Sajeev is a technical authority in the transformational technologies of BPM, SOA and CEP (Complex Event Processing). His areas of specialisation are Agile BPM, BPM and Social Media Synergies, BPaaS (Business Processes as Service). He is a regular contributor in technical forums and also a speaker at SOA & BPM vendor events.



### About Mindtree

Mindtree (NSE: MINDTREE) delivers technology services and accelerates growth for Global 1000 companies by solving complex business challenges with breakthrough technical innovations. Mindtree specializes in e-commerce, mobility, cloud enablement, digital transformation, business intelligence, data analytics, testing, infrastructure, EAI and ERP solutions. We are among the fastest growing technology firms globally with more than 200 clients and offices in 14 countries.