The Power of Human Interaction

Collaboration on demand
A customer service representative (CSR) in the Singapore office of a large multinational financial software company is at her wit’s end. A major customer (a regional stock broking firm) has just called with complaints about an application used to generate financial reports for their corporate clients. Unfortunately, the application keeps "freezing" for no apparent reason. Despite repeated calls to the help desk, the same problem keeps recurring.

The CSR immediately logs on to a virtual workplace dedicated to the handling of major customer complaints, and pulls in various parties on board for an emergency online meeting: the software developer in India, the account manager in Hong Kong, and the post-sales manager in Singapore. She runs through a presentation of the issues and gives everyone access to the repository of related documents. After a quick discussion, the software developer in India notes that the software is being accessed by users who have client-based firewalls recently installed on their PCs. The firewall prevents the sending out of specific user information that the software requires for tracking and auditing purposes. The developer shows how the problem can be resolved with just a minor software reconfiguration.

Within an hour, the CSR heads back to the client site, armed with the right knowledge and confident in her ability to solve the customer’s problem, and to demonstrate the power and the promise of human interaction for a true on demand business.

The ascent of the on demand enterprise
The need to contain costs and boost productivity is forcing companies across industries and geographies to streamline their business environment. Line-of-business executives are being asked to do more with less, and to build a better business case for every investment. Forward-looking organizations are using these fiscal pressures to launch coordinated efforts toward fitter, more fluid and more responsive working environments – all geared towards delivering products and services on demand.

The ultimate reality is that the ability to respond quickly and accurately to customer needs (i.e. delivering business on demand) is fast becoming the overriding yardstick for success. For that to happen, organizations must continuously find ways of tapping into its most important resource: its intellectual capital. This intellectual capital often comes in a number of different forms: it can be written down and stored in a variety of paper, or electronic media woven into the organization’s processes, practices and procedures. More often than not, the most valuable pieces of the puzzle are kept in the heads of individuals, teams or communities, which are typically accessed through discussions, meetings, and collaboration in projects – in other words, through human interaction.

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The transformation to an on demand enterprise requires new tools and new ways of thinking, which IBM is helping to pioneer.
Collaboration and Human Interaction – energizing the on demand business

In order to exploit the power of human interaction (as demonstrated by the scenario painted earlier), visionary businesses will need to build multi-channel accessibility, real-time communications, around-the-clock availability, simplified self-service, and enhanced intra- and extra-enterprise relationships into its business processes and infrastructure. The integrated infrastructure must be capable of providing relevant and timely content and connections to the right people in the right way, whenever they need it. At the same time, it must also help ensure their ability to respond to, learn from and fully exploit today’s diverse and dynamic marketplace. In short, an infrastructure that enables full collaboration and human interaction (CHI) is needed.

CHI capabilities provide business value via virtual workplaces, portals and intranets, self-service human resource and distance learning applications, intelligent customer self-service, collaborative capabilities, mobile and multi-channel support, and other connective, enterprise-wide functions. Together, these capabilities can transform the way colleagues communicate, how employers relate to one another, and how people perform their basic work activities. For example, an effective virtual workplace solution grants users secure and consistent access to people and information — via Web browsers, conventional and wireless phones, personal digital assistants, specialized handheld devices, self-service kiosks and other channels. It can also provide employees at every level with information geared toward particular work patterns and needs — reducing time-consuming navigation and process redundancies for everyone from retail sales associates and hotel guest services teams to manufacturing managers and engineers.

All in all, an integrated, end-to-end CHI infrastructure can improve information flow across internal business units, enable more cost-effective processes, enrich collaboration, and simplify the infrastructure from which all relationships — among employees, partners, suppliers and customers — are managed. In a unified virtual workplace environment, professionals at the office, at home or in offsite locations around the world can contribute effectively and efficiently to the enterprise.

The main benefits of implementing an integrated infrastructure for CHI:

**Cost containment** – Aligning and Web-enabling the workforce can cut expenses across the organization by reducing the paper trail, decreasing head count and driving process efficiencies.

**Revenue enhancement** – The workforce has direct, timely and reliable access to enterprise information and expertise, resulting in superior customer sales and servicing.

**New efficiencies** – By leveraging digital collaboration, organizations can consolidate systems, reduce travel, facilitate communications and mitigate work redundancies. Plus, it can also help enterprises align disparate workforces to reduce coordination costs while still enjoying economies of scale.

**Innovation** – Accelerating access to expertise and facilitating collaboration and community-building across the organization unlocks and inspires innovation.

IBM Lotus Workplace

Towards this end, IBM Lotus software, the leader in collaboration, introduces Lotus Workplace - a platform that sets the new standard for collaboration and human interaction. Lotus Workplace combines market-leading collaborative capabilities with the award-winning WebSphere Portal framework, to enable simplified access to people, information and business processes, and exploits the full power of the intellectual capital in your organization.

Read on to learn more about Lotus Workplace, and how it can bring immediate benefits to your business in the on demand era.
Lotus Workplace

**Integrating people, information and business processes for business on demand**

These days, a business’s customers want more personal service, more customization, and more value – all on demand. To satisfy the needs of the growing number of on demand customers, companies must integrate from end-to-end all aspects of their business processes, in real time. That way every relevant resource is leveraged in every interaction with the customer. Without this level of integration, the lifeblood of a company - human interaction, customer data, pricing information, supply management - can’t flow through the business.

Lotus Workplace is designed to integrate human capabilities, information capital and business processes in order to fulfill the promise of an on demand business. Lotus Workplace ties together key applications and functions focused around the organizational roles and objectives, simplifies the user experience, be accessible anywhere, anytime from whatever device the user chooses, and provide the line-of-sight to important information or events relevant to the user.

**Essential collaboration and human interaction capabilities on one powerful platform**

All of the essential capabilities for collaboration and human interaction are provided by the Lotus Workplace platform, which include features like messaging, scheduling, awareness, meetings, chat, workflow, document management, content management and much more. With Lotus Workplace, they become available in any combination, delivered via an on demand model so that organizations will have the flexibility to serve different users with different requirements for collaboration and human interaction as and when needed. Customers can choose which collaborative capabilities they wish to activate, and pay only for those.

See our article “Lotus Workplace – key features and benefits in one powerful platform” for details on the individual components.

**What is Lotus Workplace?**

An innovative and powerful platform for collaboration and human interaction that integrates people with the information and business processes they need, in one secure, reliable and dynamic work environment.

**Complete collaborative and human interaction capabilities under one platform:**
Lotus Workplace provides investment protection for existing Lotus customers as all of the capabilities of current Lotus products are integrated into Lotus Workplace. In addition, existing customers with subscriptions will automatically get Lotus Workplace with the license to use the capabilities they currently use, while providing them with the flexibility to "switch on" new capabilities as needed. The platform allows a clear path today for organizations to choose what they want to implement and when. In short, existing customers will be able to keep and use existing software assets such as Lotus Notes/Domino or WebSphere Portal, and still take advantage of the capabilities in the Lotus Workplace platform.

Top 5 reasons to choose Lotus Workplace

Reason 1 – Enables a responsive, high-performance workforce that can respond more quickly and accurately from anywhere at any time, which can increase competitive advantage.

Reason 2 – Helps improve business productivity and lower costs by providing simple, integrated, personalized access to information, applications and people aligned with organizational objectives.

Reason 3 – Open-standards model extends the value of existing IT investments by integrating with many existing IT infrastructures and thousands of vertical solutions from different vendors.

Reason 4 – Can integrate multiple collaborative capabilities into a single secure, reliable platform designed for fast access to the right information at the right time, from PCs to mobile devices.

Reason 5 – Customers can activate (and only pay for) the specific capabilities that they need.

Enabling on demand businesses through the integration of people, processes and information

By integrating people, information and business processes, Lotus Workplace enables your workforce to be more responsive and efficient when handling customer, business partner and supplier inquiries. Your workforce will also be able to make informed, fact-based, timely decisions, always collaborating and interacting in line with business processes and best practices. What’s more, people are able to build resilient relationships and linkages with other people or organizations, while developing skills needed to transform their business, advance their strategy and give them unmatched competitive advantage.

To find out more about Lotus Workplace, please go to www.lotus.com/workplace
Lotus Workplace

Key features and benefits in one powerful platform

Lotus Workplace combines market-leading collaborative capabilities with the WebSphere Portal framework, to enable simplified access to people, information and business processes. A simplified, role-based user interface makes it easier for people to communicate and collaborate with others, both internally and externally. Lotus Workplace integrates multiple collaborative capabilities into a single secure, reliable platform that is easily managed, with modular capabilities that can be applied as needed to fit specific industry or business needs.

Some of the main features are featured below:

Collaboration on demand

Lotus Workplace has several team collaboration capabilities that provide a secure, scalable product that delivers on demand, web-based, easy-to-use team workspaces. By blending synchronous collaboration (presence awareness, instant messaging, web conferencing, application sharing) with asynchronous collaboration (discussion forums, membership management, document management and project management), Lotus Workplace supports both intranet and extranet scenarios - making it easier to install, use, maintain and upgrade than separate point products.

Integrated within the Lotus Workplace platform are: IBM Lotus Instant Messaging which increases responsiveness by delivering secure, real-time access to the right people in the context of a business processes using presence awareness or buddy list; IBM Lotus Web Conferencing which enables remote team members to quickly and efficiently meet, share information, and collaborate on documents without leaving their desks; and IBM Lotus Team Workplace which provides Web-based, on demand collaboration areas where teams can share information and manage projects.

Lotus Workplace is especially essential for customers who need to organize disparate teams and information associated with a particular project; need to bring together geographically dispersed teams and groups; or need extranet collaboration with supply chain partners and customers.

Advanced e-learning capabilities

Lotus Workplace includes advanced learning capabilities derived from other award-winning Lotus learning products - an open, scalable, standards-compliant suite of software components that manages and tracks both classroom-based and e-learning activities and resources, allowing organizations to address their ongoing training requirements in a cost-efficient, timely manner. An innovative portlet-based student user interface can integrate learning resources into a integrated suite of desktop functionality. Based on IBM’s WebSphere™ platform, it features a variety of new user portlets that can be customized to integrate into industry specific solutions.

Core components of the e-learning capabilities within the Lotus Workplace platform are IBM Lotus Virtual Classroom and IBM Lotus Learning Management System, which deliver Web-based, interactive training to employees, suppliers, and partners, enabling organizations to quickly and cost-effectively train a geographically dispersed audience.

“E-learning (with Lotus Virtual Classroom) has enabled us to reach more customers with flexible and cost-effective training that has greatly improved satisfaction and overall service levels.”
- Debbie Wilcox, Director of Training, Worldspan
Knowledge and content management

Lotus Workplace provides a powerful and sophisticated knowledge and web content management system that accelerates development and delivery of critical business information across your enterprise. Despite its power, it’s remarkably easy to use - instead of tying up IT staff, it simply requires standard office skills to rapidly harness and optimize the flow of information across your Internet, intranet and extranet assets.

Powering Lotus Workplace’s knowledge and content management capability is the IBM Lotus Knowledge Discovery Server, which provides information categorization and expertise location services to allow people to quickly access the right information and the people at the right time. It assists organizations to discover and apply information and knowledge to drive responsiveness, innovation, efficiency and learning. IBM positions its Knowledge Discovery software portfolio around a 4-stage knowledge life-cycle (capture, organize, locate and reuse) that helps to lay out the proper framework for building knowledge and content management solutions.

Collaborative portal solution

At the heart of Lotus Workplace, IBM WebSphere Portal provide a single intuitive interface to interact with relevant content, applications, processes, experts and information so employees, partners and customers can do business more effectively. Integrated advanced collaboration features enable users to work together more efficiently via instant messaging, Web conferencing and online team workplaces.

IBM WebSphere Portal provides a consistent, secure and personalized, point of access to information, applications, business processes and people. It lets you combine your enterprise applications into a customized, seamlessly integrated e-workplace your users can access anytime, anywhere. New Collaboration Center features let you embed collaborative capabilities — corporate white pages, presence awareness, instant messaging, team workspaces and online meetings — in any e-workplace application.

Messaging for the entire organization

Lotus Workplace provides a cost-effective way to extend the reach of your messaging infrastructure to the rest of your organization. This standards-based messaging capability integrates easily with a variety of messaging infrastructures, including IBM Lotus Notes and Domino, as well as with portals, browsers, standards based email clients, and other Lotus Workplace capabilities. In addition, IBM Lotus Workplace Messaging delivers a low-cost messaging solution allowing organizations to easily extend enterprise e-mail to users currently without a dedicated workspace or e-mail access. It can be used for mail only, or with other functions including personal calendaring. Scalable, easy-to-use and maintain, with support for SSL session encryption and additional security features, Lotus Workplace delivers messaging capabilities that can provide a cost-effective "on demand" messaging solution for the entire organization.

To find out how your organization can benefit from Lotus Workplace, please call 800 616 1873 (Toll Free), or go to www.lotus.com/workplace
Recent awards and accolades for Lotus Software

- IBM Lotus Workplace Messaging received the Basex Excellence Award 2003 for collaborative business market solutions;
- Lotus Notes was the winner of Computerworld Singapore Reader’s Choice Awards 2002;
- IBM and Lotus were listed as KMWorld’s “100 Brands and Companies That Matter”;
- A partnership between the Office of the e-Envoy and IBM Global Services won the IT category in the 2002 Best Management Practice Awards sponsored by the Management Consultancies Association (MCA) for its work on the Knowledge Network, a web based community of government officials;
- Lotus Domino won the “Best Product of the Year 2001/2002” award in the “Intranet- and Community-Software” category in Germany’s PC Magazine;
- Lotus Sametime 9.7 received the “Smart Computing, Smart Choice” Award;
- IBM was ranked 4th in Training Magazine’s ‘The 2002 Training Top 100’.