



2009 BPM & Workflow Handbook: Spotlight on Government

Layna Fisher (Ed)

Future Strategies

\$75.00 300 pages

Reviewed by Paul Harmon

Before there were BPM there was the Workflow Management Coalition (WfMC) – a group of software vendors and user companies that exist to promote best practices in workflow analysis, design and implementation. Each year for the past many years, the WfMC has issued a handbook capturing the state-of-the-art in workflow practices. For the past few years they have expanded their focus to include articles on BPM (or, more often BPM Software). The most recent handbook, released in 2009, features a special section on BPM and Workflow practices in government.

If readers are not involved in government work, they may not realize how active this area has become. The governments of Australia, Canada and Denmark have developed process frameworks that states or provinces can share to standardize fiscal, police and welfare practices. The Swedish military developed comprehensive process architecture to guide them in transitioning from a more conventional military organization to one better adapted to UN peacekeeping missions. A US Air Force officer leads a special Supply Chain Council SIG on the use of SCOR in government, and the government of the UK leads in the development of the popular ITIL standard. In other words, some of the most advanced work in BPM development today is being done by government BPM practitioners.

About half of the 2009 Handbook is made up of articles on Government issues and the other half is focused on more traditional BPM/Workflow topics. To give you a sense of this, here is a list of the contents.

Section 1—Spotlight On BPM In Government

An Open Letter to President Obama: It's Time To Fix Broken Government

Clay Richardson, Senior Analyst, Business Process Management, Forrester Research, US

Measuring Readiness for BPM: Insights from Corporate Entrepreneurship and Organizational Change Research

Daniel T. Holt, Air Force Institute Of Technology, USA

Streamlining Research and Development Case Files at the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL)

Charles Joesten, PMP, ICOR Partners LLC, USA

How Converging Methodologies and Technologies Effect Adoption and Success of BPM

Linus K. Chow, Oracle Corporation, USA

Optimizing the Institution for Corporate Development in Uruguay

Lucía Wainer, Corporación Nacional Para El Desarrollo; Juan J. Moreno, Integradoc / Universidad Católica and Martín Dauber Integradoc, Montevideo, Uruguay

- Delivering Case Management with BBM in the Public Sector: Combining Knowledge with Process
Michael White, Singularity, UK
- BPM in eGovernment: A Genuine Virtual Counter
Cédric Tumelaire, City Of Waterloo, Belgium, Laurent Bagnoud, University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland And Rémy Tzaud, Xpert.Ivy, Switzerland
- Transforming Health Care through Enterprise Architecture and BPM
Christine Robinson, CSC, United States
- Delivering Strategy through Process: Sapocase Study
Marietjie Lancaster, South African Post Office, Dr. Michéle Booyesen, Pétanque Business Specialists, South Africa
- Managing Change with Re-Usable Assets For Government Agencies
Dr. Setrag Khoshafian, Pegasystems Inc., USA
- Streamlining the Congress of the Republic Of Peru E-Government
Rocio Angelica Sanchez, Congress of the Republic Of Peru, And Amy Wyrton, Colosa, Inc., Peru
- Processes Systematization of the High Court Of Justice (Mexico) 137
Juan Chacón, Vanina Marcote; Pectra Technology, USA

Section 2—The Business Value Of Workflow and BPM

- Application Provisioning in the Cloud
Jon Pyke, Cordys, Netherlands
- Business Transformation Blueprint—BPM as Key Enabler
Vinaykumar S. Mummigatti, IBM Global Business Services & Tom Bobrowski, Capgemini, USA
- Financial Crisis Front Line: SNSbank
Eric D. Schabell & Stijn Hoppenbrouwers, SNS Bank & Radboud Uni. Nijmegen Netherlands
- Leveraging Best Practices through a Human Process Management System
Jacob P. Ukelson, D.Sc. CTO Actionbase, Usa
- People Relationship Management: Completing the BPM Value Proposition
Roy Altman, Peopleserv, Inc., USA

Section 3—BPM in Standards and Technology

- Two Strategies for Handling Models: Preserving vs. Transforming
Keith D Swenson, Fujitsu America, Inc., USA
- A Design Methodology for BPMN
Michele Chinosi & Alberto Trombetta, University Of Insubria, Varese, Italy
- The Auto Optimizer
Robert M. Shapiro & Hartmann Genrich, Global 360, United States
- Open Source Workflow Management Systems: A Concise Survey
Ricardo Garcês, Tony De Jesus, Jorge Cardoso* and Pedro Valente, University Of Madeira, Portugal *SAP Research, Germany, *University of Coimbra, Portugal
- Extending XPD L With The temporal Perspective
Denis Gagné, Trisotech, And André Trudel, Acadia University, Canada
- BPM SAAS as the Foundation of a Cloud-Based Post-IT Enterprise
Wolf Rivkin, B-Wave Software Llc.

As one expects from a collection of articles like this, some are very interesting and others not so interesting. One thing is certain, the days when the Workflow Handbook only focused on software implementations or on standards used in software work is long past. They are serious

about the BPM in the title and have a number of good articles on process work that are quite independent of workflow concerns.

For example, Daniel T. Hold from the Air Force Institute of Technology is concerned with understanding when an organization is ready for change. He has done an impressive review of the organizational change literature to provide readers with a checklist of things one might want to consider in assessing whether a group is ready for change. In the same spirit Marietjie Lancaster, Carien Venter and Michelle Booyset describe how they approached rolling out a new process in the South African Post Office, overcoming the natural human resistance to change with careful planning.

Michael White, of Singularity, discussed how most government organizations organize their processes to deal with cases (e.g. a social security pensioner applying for benefits, a hospital organizing to treat a patient) and how cases require special techniques to capture and model the flexibility they typically exhibit. White focuses especially on the problems of automating the management of cases.

Juan Chacon, Vanina Marcote of PECTRA Technology and Luis Ramirez of ACERTI discuss how they worked with the High Court of Justice in Mexico to develop a process framework that would support the government's e-government commitment. Other articles reported eGovernment initiatives in Belgium and in Chile.

Among the non-government articles, there were articles like the one by Vinaykumar S. Mummigatti of IBM and Tom Bobrowski of Capgemini that describes the key role that BPM plays in business transformation and an article by Eric D. Schabell and Stijn Hoppenbrouwers of SNS Bank and Radboud University Nijmegen Netherlands on how SNS Bank has transformed their bank by introducing open, online processes to streamline their customers interaction with the bank.

I particularly enjoyed an article by Roy Altman of Peopleserv that discussed the way process automation support people, who provide the real value in most business processes. This article provides some interesting insights into exactly how one can think about the value people add.

Workflow technology is hardly an independent technology anymore. It has been largely absorbed into the broader BPM movement, and this is reflected in this handbook. Broadly the Handbooks have traced the history of concerns that have driven the workflow vendors. Today, a quick glance at this Handbook suggests that those involved in the WfMC, just like those involved in other BPM and BPMS efforts, are interested in a wide range of concerns, from strategic transformation and business process architectures to process redesign and job design. There are still the papers on workflow standards that the vendors are working on, but they aren't nearly as important as they used to be. This community has shifted from a focus on how to automate processes to how to help organizations improve their performance. And this handbook, in particular, has a lot of how BPM practitioners are working to help public organizations define and improve their business processes.

Altogether it's an interesting set of articles with much good advice and several nice case studies of successful implementations. There is little that is revolutionary here, but there is much that can help a practitioner who is faced with a major process change project. Moreover, this particular handbook will be of special interest to anyone involved in attempting to apply BPM to a government agency, and I especially recommend it to government BPM people.

BPTrends LinkedIn Discussion Group

We recently created a BPTrends Discussion Group on LinkedIn to allow our members, readers and friends to freely exchange ideas on a wide variety of BPM related topics. We encourage you to initiate a new discussion on this publication or on other BPM related topics of interest to you, or to contribute to existing discussions. Go to LinkedIn and join the **BPTrends Discussion Group**.