

# eBusiness: Extending the Enterprise

*eBusiness is transforming the business enterprise. The enterprise is no longer limited to the systems internal to a company, but spans the entire value chain, incorporating customers and trading and distribution partners. Success in the eBusiness environment requires adoption of methods that support this expanded model of the enterprise. Vitria BusinessWare provides a comprehensive set of tools that enable rapid development and deployment of sophisticated eBusiness solutions.*



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## **Table of Contents**

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>eBusiness: Transforming the Very Nature of the Enterprise .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>eBusiness and the Enterprise .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>A Time of Risk and Opportunity.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<b>eBusiness: Meeting Today’s Challenges.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Faster Time to Market .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Lower Operating Costs.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Tighter Relationships Along the Value Chain .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Increased Customer Loyalty .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Faster Response to Changes in the Business Environment.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<b>eBusiness: Elements for a Comprehensive Solution .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Process Automation.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Real-Time Analysis.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Internet-Based Communications .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Application Integration.....</i>	<i>12</i>
Application Connectivity .....	12
Data Transformation .....	13
<b>Vitria: Making eBusiness Real.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Satisfying eBusiness Requirements.....</i>	<i>14</i>
Process Automation .....	15
Real-Time Analysis .....	16
Internet-Based Communications.....	16
Application Integration .....	16
<i>BusinessWare: The eBusiness Platform.....</i>	<i>17</i>

**Vitria Industry Solutions..... 18**

*Telecommunications..... 19*

*Supply Chain..... 20*

## **Executive Summary**

Companies must adopt eBusiness as their business model if they're to succeed in the information age. eBusiness means using the Internet not only to generate sales but also to automate business processes across an extended enterprise. Your partner companies and your customers join you electronically in a virtual enterprise, with automated processes that span the entire value chain.

eBusiness provides the key to moving ahead in these times of rapid change and increasing complexity. eBusiness makes it possible to outsource your non-core processes effectively, thus lowering your operating costs. It gives your systems the necessary flexibility to respond quickly to change. It affords excellent opportunities to develop closer, more profitable relationships with both customers and partners.

A complete eBusiness solution comprises several key technologies. Process modeling and automation makes it feasible to introduce automated processes that span business entities. Real-time analysis enables rapid response to changing conditions. The Internet provides the communication backbone for exchanging information and messages between widely distributed, heterogeneous systems. And application integration allows you to integrate the mission-critical systems throughout your extended enterprise.

BusinessWare, from Vitria Technology, Inc., is a comprehensive eBusiness solution. Designed specifically to enable eBusiness, it encompasses all the technologies required to implement robust, scalable eBusiness processes. Moreover, its easy-to-use, graphical process modeling tools give the business side of your company the power to directly design, deploy, and maintain the business processes critical to your success.

## **eBusiness: Transforming the Very Nature of the Enterprise**

As the information revolution accelerates and widens in its impact, the force that drives it forward is the global business enterprise. In turn, the information revolution is transforming every aspect of business enterprise. Today's business environment is characterized by rapid change and increasingly complex interactions with partners and customers. This represents both tremendous challenge and extraordinary opportunity for today's businesses. In order to compete successfully in this environment, businesses must change constantly, and they must do so rapidly and deftly. They must rethink and retool their processes on a continuous basis.

We cannot stand still, resting on "tried-and-true" ways of doing business, in this extraordinary environment. As in any revolution, the stakes are huge – we can win big or we can lose big. The choice is contingent on our readiness to ride the crest of the wave. eBusiness is the critical advantage that will ensure success in this environment.

## **eBusiness and the Enterprise**

eBusiness means *automating business processes across an extended enterprise*. It requires, first of all, a new understanding of what the “enterprise” is. No longer can a company succeed with a self-sufficient, “closed box” approach, in which it performs all end-to-end processes through the value chain. That approach provides neither the speed nor the flexibility to respond to the ever-changing demands of today’s marketplace. The company must instead focus its efforts on its core competencies, and outsource all non-core aspects of its business to others – suppliers, distributors, even customers (for order placement). To do so effectively, it must coordinate, collaborate, and integrate with those outside entities – creating an extended, virtual enterprise.

eBusiness makes this extended enterprise viable. It enables a company to link together all its core and outsourced processes, to create a self-adjusting, uninterrupted process flow from start to finish through the value chain.

Suppose your business is designing, configuring, and marketing computer systems. You derive the greatest benefit by focusing on your core competencies in those areas and outsourcing the rest of the supply chain processes. You outsource component production to partners in Asia; you outsource shipping to your distribution partners; you even outsource order placement, by enabling the consumer to specify a system and order it directly over the Internet. You may handle product assembly in-house, but your real business is customer fulfillment. To succeed at this, you must manage and monitor the processes that, put together, produce the system your customer needs. In so doing, your enterprise extends far beyond the boundaries of your own company, to encompass the efforts of other entities around the world.

eBusiness provides the messaging capability to link together disparate processes – within and between business entities. It automates and regulates those processes. Further, it provides the flexibility to alter or replace those processes when conditions change. eBusiness manages the end-to-end processes of the entire value chain, creating a seamless and efficient operation. The ultimate goal of eBusiness is to increase the customer’s satisfaction by providing better products and services, faster, and at lower cost.

In the example of the company selling computer systems, eBusiness permeates the entire supply chain. Customers use the Internet to configure and place their orders, a process that directly feeds into the in-house processes of assembly, billing, inventory control, etc. The company further uses eBusiness to integrate its procurement system with its inventory control system. The eBusiness system automatically orders from suppliers as the need for replenishing various components arises. Finally, eBusiness processes

send information electronically to the distributors responsible for delivering the product and to the in-house system responsible for billing the customers.

### **A Time of Risk and Opportunity**

***“eBusiness will become the prime focus of IT spending .... Enterprises that fail to do this ... may not survive.”***

***William T. Clifford, President & CEO, GartnerGroup (July 1999)***

eBusiness is becoming integral to success in all sectors of today's economy. Whether your business is selling computers to consumers, supplying engines to aircraft companies, or offering telecommunication services to businesses – it doesn't matter. You must take advantage of eBusiness today to ensure that you'll still be *in* business tomorrow.

The competition is fierce, and the companies using eBusiness to enhance their advantage will be the ones that succeed. Competition makes it vital that you reduce costs wherever possible. It's inefficient and cumbersome for you to handle all aspects of running your business yourself. But to outsource effectively you must coordinate closely with outside companies. The more you can automate that process, the lower your costs will be. And your ability to react quickly to changes in the business environment will lower your costs even further.

eBusiness also makes it possible to increase market share at low cost. Companies that move to eBusiness tap into whole new markets – purchasing via the Internet is becoming the preferred means for many companies and consumers. The electronic purchasing market has been growing at a phenomenal pace, and will continue to do so.

To get ahead of the pack, you must adopt eBusiness as your standard way of doing business. To stay ahead, you'll need to adopt technologies that enhance eBusiness by providing automatic and flexible control over your processes.

### **eBusiness: Meeting Today's Challenges**

eBusiness provides significant advantages for companies competing in today's global markets. It streamlines existing value chains and enables new value chains that have previously been cost-prohibitive. By streamlining existing value chains, eBusiness allows companies to work more effectively with their existing customers, suppliers, and trading partners. They can share more information, more frequently, and with more accuracy. This allows them to closely coordinate their processes for maximum customer benefit.

Customer satisfaction and loyalty are enhanced, because companies using eBusiness can offer more product choices, faster delivery, lower prices, and higher quality.

These are some of the ways that eBusiness can enhance the success of your business:

- Faster time to market for new products and services
- Lower operating costs
- Tighter relationships along the value chain
- Increased customer loyalty
- More rapid response to changes in the business environment

### **Faster Time to Market**

By shortening product development lead times, eBusiness accelerates time to market for new products and services. It achieves this by enabling companies and their design partners to share design and test information more easily, as part of a collaborative online product development effort. Accelerated time to market means that you can offer more choices to your customers, and you can enter new markets faster.

### **Lower Operating Costs**

eBusiness reduces operating costs throughout the business. It greatly reduces the amount of manual processing by automating processes such as data entry, error handling, and customer service. For example, research indicates that companies that provide their customers with online access to product information, pricing, availability, and order status can eliminate up to 70 percent of their customer service costs. Further savings can be realized by enabling customers to conclude the entire order process directly over the Internet.

eBusiness also has a dramatic impact on other operating costs. By providing improved visibility of supply and demand information across the value chain, eBusiness significantly reduces buffer inventory costs, obsolete inventory costs, expediting costs, and premium freight costs. Lower operating costs means lower costs to your customers, enhancing your competitive position.

### **Tighter Relationships Along the Value Chain**

Through eBusiness, companies can more easily share information with their partners. This can lead to improved quality by allowing partners to share information on product and service failures, reliability, returns, and customer complaints. In addition, a company's internal systems can automatically dovetail

with its partners' systems, thus accelerating the total value chain. A company and its partners together become a virtual enterprise.

Even within a single company, the exchange of information becomes much tighter. One process can fire off another, at the appropriate time. For instance, the ordering process can feed directly into manufacturing and billing. Furthermore, processes can obtain real-time information about sibling processes up and down the value chain, and automatically adjust as necessary to accommodate exceptions or other changes in circumstances.

### **Increased Customer Loyalty**

eBusiness enables you to give customers what they want – faster delivery of higher quality products at lower prices. It promotes faster delivery by automating order processing, and so eliminating the time-consuming manual steps typical in order fulfillment. Processing is speeded up throughout the entire value chain, from initial order placement, through product build, all the way to the final stage of shipping. And this is particularly true when you depend on other companies for portions of your order fulfillment process. The slow fax/email/voice methods for exchange of information, requiring multiple keyboarding of the same data, become a thing of the past.

By automating processes, eBusiness also reduces the errors typical of manual processing, leading to higher quality products and services. And since, as described earlier, your operating costs have been reduced, you can pass some of those savings on to your customers in the form of lower prices.

Finally, eBusiness makes it possible for companies to develop more personal relationships with their customers. Customers are able to directly access product information and availability. They can receive automatic updates on order status, and can even track the delivery of their orders. This enhanced service to your customers is achieved without any incremental cost to your company.

### **Faster Response to Changes in the Business Environment**

Companies today find themselves in a world characterized by ever-accelerating change and increasingly complex interactions with customers and suppliers. To succeed in such an environment, companies must be able to communicate instantly with partners and customers, responding to the moment's needs. eBusiness enables fast response to changing conditions.

For instance, a company may have many suppliers, each one capable of providing many of the same products. To keep costs as low as possible while still ensuring that supplies arrive on time, the company

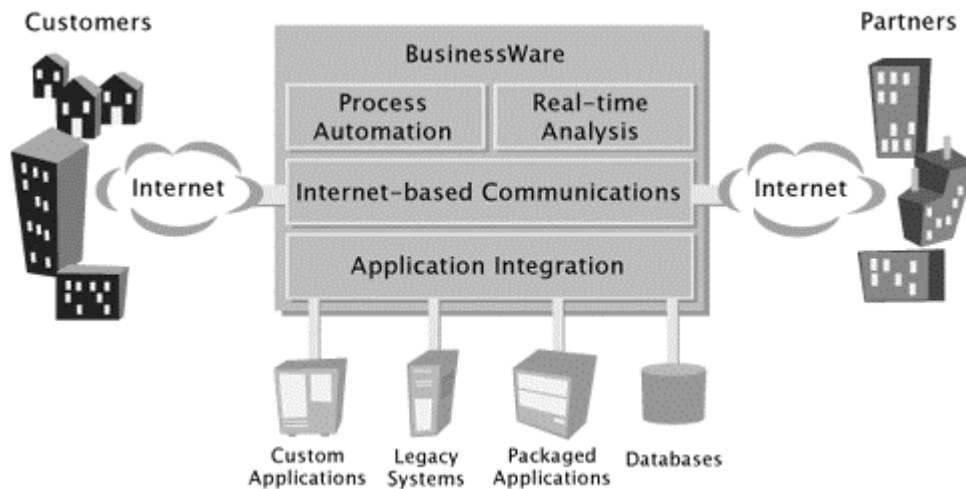
can use eBusiness to stay abreast of all product prices and availability in real-time. It can then use that information to change the mix of suppliers as needed.

## **eBusiness: Elements for a Comprehensive Solution**

A true eBusiness solution requires a software infrastructure consisting of four elements:

- Process automation
- Real-time analysis
- Internet-based communications
- Application integration

These elements work together to create a complete eBusiness system, as illustrated in Figure 1. The sections that follow describe in detail each of these elements and their significance.



*Figure 1. Elements of eBusiness*

### **Process Automation**

The first step in the eBusiness solution is to provide a method for defining (or “modeling”), automating, and managing business processes.

By means of business process modeling and automation services, business analysts can – without resorting to programming – specify cross-application and cross-enterprise business processes. Process modeling and

automation services combine graphical business models and business rules to define the flow of information between the applications that constitute the overall business process. For instance, you might define an order fulfillment process that consists of the following steps:

Receive Order > Allocate Inventory > Ship Product > Bill Customer > Close Order

Each step in the process is triggered by a message sent to one or more applications. Each step, in turn, generates new messages that trigger one or more downstream applications to perform some relevant processing. A single step may involve several applications, perhaps residing at separate companies. Figure 2 shows some of the cross-site messaging that typically occurs in such a process:

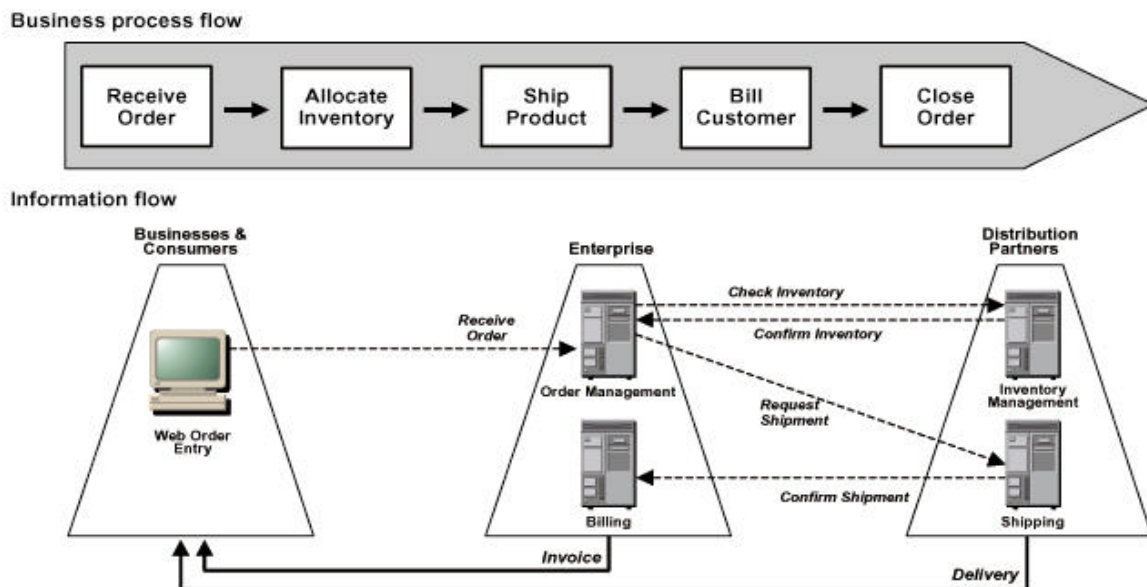


Figure 2. Messaging in an Order Fulfillment Process

The process model approach allow you to implement an automated process through manipulation of simple graphical components. It grants you end-to-end visibility and control of cross-enterprise value chains. This is particularly important in the complex and dynamic world of eBusiness.

### Real-Time Analysis

The next element of an eBusiness solution is analysis of key business and process metrics in real time. These real-time metrics can then be used to change the business process – either automatically, according to pre-defined business rules – or manually, based on in-depth analysis of the circumstances.

eBusiness demands real-time access to metrics. After-the-fact data warehousing techniques are inadequate to the rapidly changing circumstances inherent to eBusiness. Managers need instant visibility into their key business metrics, such as lead times, to stay on top of ever-changing circumstances. Furthermore, eBusiness requires tools that can deal quickly and automatically with potential process bottlenecks.

In order fulfillment, for example, it's vital to stay on top of the inventory situation. You can couple real-time analysis with process automation to create an eBusiness system that automatically replenishes inventory from suppliers as the need arises. Through real-time monitoring of processes, business managers can also adapt the overall system to changes in the business environment.

### **Internet-Based Communications**

Now that we've developed a process model for our extended enterprise and have specified the real-time metrics, it is necessary to tackle the next step in eBusiness – the actual communication between the applications that compose the process. Exchanging business information between a company and its partners and customers requires a secure and reliable method based on Internet standards.

Messaging services enable applications to quickly and reliably exchange messages using standard formats and protocols. As described earlier, there are certain data formats, such as XML, and communication protocols, such as HTTP, that are standard, widely-used, and Internet-based. A comprehensive eBusiness solution allows applications to share information using these standards across a number of different types of networks, including the Internet, VPNs (Virtual Private Networks), and VANs (Value Added Networks).

### **Application Integration**

Finally, it's necessary to integrate the IT applications – internal and external – that support all steps in the business process. Two types of services must be present to enable application integration:

- Application connectivity services
- Data transformation services

#### *Application Connectivity*

The primary issue in application integration is getting the applications to speak the same “language”, so that they can then communicate with each other.

For the most part, applications are not designed to communicate with other applications. They communicate internally using their own proprietary data formats and communication protocols. Thus, an SAP R/3 application understands only SAP data formats, like Idocs, and SAP communication protocols, like ALE. Even applications that use standard, non-proprietary data formats and protocols can be inadequate for generalized information exchange, since so many different standards exist.

Applications must take the help of connectivity services in order to integrate with other applications. These “connectors” translate the applications’ messages to and from a common set of standards – standard data formats and standard communication protocols. When an application sends a message to another application, its connector first translates the message into a standardized form. When the message is received by the target application, another connector translates the standardized message into the target application’s native format and protocol.

Common data format standards include XML, IDL, and EDI. XML is particularly valuable for eBusiness application integration, since it is not only a widely accepted Internet standard, but it is also “self-describing”. This means that applications do not need to agree on data structures prior to exchanging messages in XML.

#### *Data Transformation*

Besides translating application messages into a common data format and communication protocol, it is also necessary to convert message content to and from the specific data structures used internally by each application.

Each application has its own data structures, based on the information that it stores and uses internally. For example, suppose you need to move information from an “employee” application to a “mailing list” application. The employee application may contain records that consist of fields like last name, first name, address, city, state, country, date of birth, salary, employee number, etc. The mailing list records might be much simpler – name and address information only. Even where corresponding fields exist – such as fields that store the city – they could have different names and different internal characteristics in each application.

Data transformation services handle the conversion between different data structures. These “transformers” complete the application integration process.

## **Vitria: Making eBusiness Real**

Vitria Technology, Inc., is at the forefront of the eBusiness revolution. Vitria BusinessWare enables companies to deploy sophisticated eBusiness solutions within and across their extended enterprises. BusinessWare automates business processes that link partners and customers, and integrates the underlying IT systems that must work together to support these processes.

### **Satisfying eBusiness Requirements**

BusinessWare satisfies all the requirements of a true eBusiness platform, by combining the four essential elements that constitute a complete eBusiness solution:

- Process automation
- Real-time analysis
- Internet-based communications
- Application integration

Since BusinessWare was designed specifically for eBusiness, its component tools correlate directly with these four requirements.

Let's examine how BusinessWare satisfies each of the elements of eBusiness. In the discussion that follows, you may want to refer to Figure 3. It illustrates how BusinessWare components support an eBusiness order fulfillment process.

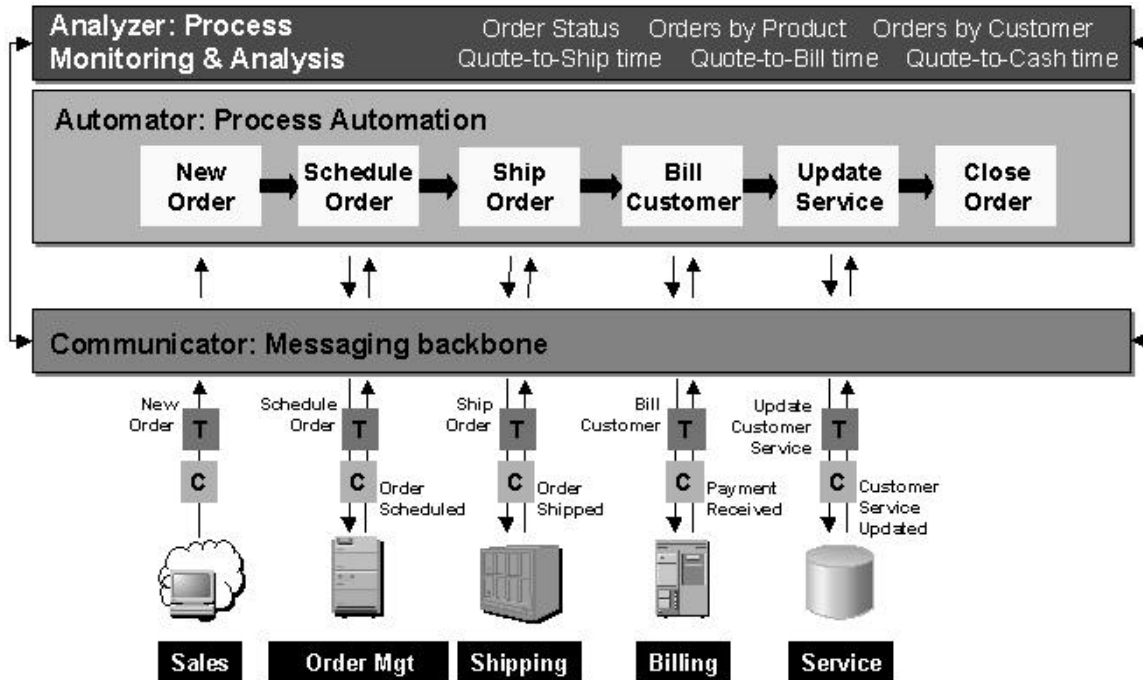


Figure 3. Vitria BusinessWare in Action

### Process Automation

As mentioned earlier, process automation involves first modeling, then automating, and finally managing the eBusiness processes. BusinessWare includes tools to handle each of these steps:

- The Modeler is BusinessWare’s process modeling component. Business analysts employ the Modeler to create graphical models of their business processes via a point-and-click interface.
- The BusinessWare Automator executes the business process models defined in the Modeler. It automates business processes by coordinating the flow of messages among the underlying IT systems.
- The BusinessWare Administrator is a graphical systems management and monitoring tool. System administrators use it to perform local or remote administration of the modeled processes.

Together, these tools handle all aspects of process automation, from initial design through implementation and maintenance.

### *Real-Time Analysis*

An essential element for an eBusiness platform is real-time monitoring and analysis of processes, with feedback loops to accommodate changes in conditions. BusinessWare accomplishes this through its Analyzer.

Analyzer selectively gathers and analyzes business and process information, throughout the extended enterprise. It provides business managers rapid access to key statistics that they need to manage their business, such as the percentage of on-time shipments. It also helps companies to identify processing bottlenecks, such as inventory shortages, so that they can take immediate action to deal with them. In addition to providing information to managers, Analyzer's results can be automatically fed back into Automator to optimize business processes in real time.

### *Internet-Based Communications*

BusinessWare Communicator provides the communications backbone that ties together the BusinessWare components and the IT systems that they integrate. Communicator provides fast and secure information delivery. It offers multiple quality of service options to ensure reliability with minimal overhead. Communicator uses publish-subscribe messaging to enable asynchronous and immediate communications over distributed networks, including both the Internet and private networks. It supports Internet standards, including XML and HTTP.

### *Application Integration*

BusinessWare's Connectors (the boxes marked "C" in figure 3) handle application connectivity, providing translation to many standard data formats and communication protocols. Of particular importance for eBusiness is the Connectors' ability to translate to XML and HTTP. Vitria provides out-of-the-box connectors for a number of popular packaged applications, messaging systems, and database management systems. It also provides a toolkit that simplifies the development of custom Connectors.

BusinessWare's Transformers (the "T" boxes in the diagram) handle the other aspect of application integration – data transformation. Transformers map data structures from one system to another. BusinessWare provides easy-to-use tools for fast development of Transformers. In addition, BusinessWare supports third party transformation tools.

BusinessWare combines the four critical elements of eBusiness into a single platform.



Figure 4. Vitria BusinessWare – the eBusiness Platform

### **BusinessWare: The eBusiness Platform**

Vitria BusinessWare was designed specifically for eBusiness – to enable companies to rapidly design and deploy sophisticated eBusiness solutions within and across their extended enterprises. As an integrated eBusiness platform, it offers a number of clear benefits:

- **Provides a Comprehensive Solution**  
BusinessWare combines the four elements of an eBusiness platform into a single comprehensive solution. This eliminates any need for businesses to purchase and integrate separate solution components from multiple vendors.
- **Leverages IT Investment**  
BusinessWare makes it possible to assemble eBusiness solutions from your existing IT systems. Thus, you can preserve and leverage your substantial IT investment. Even legacy systems can participate

fully in your eBusiness processes.

- **Scales in Scope and Complexity**

As your eBusiness needs grow, BusinessWare keeps pace. It supports high transaction volumes and enterprise-wide deployment, by employing the same distributed processing principles used by the Web. Unlike alternative “hub-and-spoke” architectures that are optimized only for single site deployment, BusinessWare relies on a “federated” architecture, similar to that of the World Wide Web, that lets you support increasing loads by incrementally adding servers anywhere in the extended enterprise.

- **Allows Rapid Response to Change**

With BusinessWare, you can graphically model your existing business processes. To change a business process, you simply change the associated graphical model. You are therefore able to respond quickly to changing business conditions.

- **Enables Mission-Critical Deployments**

BusinessWare meets high standards for performance, security, and reliability. It has been designed for superior performance to accommodate the high transaction volumes associated with the Internet. It provides secure communication across the extended enterprise through rigorous authentication, data encryption, and access control technologies. It provides high availability through multiple server redundancy and automatic failover to backup systems.

- **Easy to Use**

BusinessWare makes it possible for the business side of your company to take charge of its processes, enabling fast response to changing business conditions. By combining a graphical model processing and automation capability with a robust application integration foundation, BusinessWare lets you focus on the business objectives of your eBusiness solutions, rather than on the mechanics of solution implementation.

## **Vitria Industry Solutions**

Businesses in a number of industries are using Vitria BusinessWare to provide their eBusiness solutions. Chief among these industries are telecommunications, business services, manufacturing, and financial services. This section briefly describes two such eBusiness solutions, in the telecommunications and supply chain areas.

## **Telecommunications**

The typical ISP (Internet service provider) sells numerous types of services for connecting to the Internet. The extent of such offerings is increasing and will continue to do so, to encompass everything from dial-up connections, to cable, DSL, T1, frame relays, etc. Some of these services, such as DSL, are provided by a few large telecommunication wholesalers, with the ISP serving the role of reseller direct to the consumer.

As the number of offerings increase, so does the complexity of managing an ISP's extended enterprise of varied interactions with customers and telecommunications providers. The processes most ISPs currently use for their dial-up customers do not scale to the expanding world of multiple offerings and configurations. Nor are most ISPs able to work efficiently with multiple wholesale providers.

To enable the ISP extended enterprise, Vitria is developing a specialized solution, called *BusinessWare for Telco*. This is an "ISP-in-a-box" solution that supports the basic business needs of an ISP, in the areas of order management, billing, and customer care. It does this by creating a set of "templated" standard business processes executing on top of a set of packaged applications. Much of the functionality of BusinessWare for Telco is designed to make it easier for the ISP's customers to service themselves. For example, the ISP's retail customers will be able to:

- Pre-qualify themselves for DSL service, by tapping directly into the DSL wholesaler's qualification system over the Internet. (Prequalification is necessary, as DSL service is currently restricted by the customer's distance from the central switching office.)
- Configure and order their service selections (both DSL and non-DSL) over the Internet.
- Handle their billing and support questions online.

Vitria is currently partnering with one of the major DSL wholesalers to enable the retail customers of *its* customers (the ISPs that market DSL) to directly prequalify themselves for DSL service. This means that, rather than having to deal with two separate systems – the DSL wholesaler's system for prequalification and the ISP's system for sign-up, customers can prequalify themselves as an integral part of the sign-up process. This increases the likelihood of an immediate sale by reducing the complexity of the ordering process. In addition, BusinessWare will serve to integrate each ISP's order entry system with the wholesaler's order management system. Overall, the goals for this project are to automate the ordering process for DSL service, improve service levels, and lower operating costs. The functionality being developed here will form the basis of BusinessWare for Telco.

## **Supply Chain**

The supply chain is another application area that benefits greatly from the application integration and process automation capabilities of BusinessWare. Vitria has developed a packaged solution targeted directly to the supply chain market, called *BusinessWare for Supply Chain*.

One of the first applications of BusinessWare for Supply Chain is to support of RosettaNet. RosettaNet is a mandate from the IT industry to establish global business process interface standards for a PC supply chain involving manufacturers, distributors, resellers, and end users. The goal is to enable buyers and sellers of computer technology to do electronic business more efficiently by clearly defining their common points of interaction. Board members of the RosettaNet consortium represent over 30 global members of the IT supply chain, such as American Express, Cisco Systems, CompUSA, Compaq, Deutsche Financial Services, EDS, Federal Express, GE Information Services, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Inacom, Intel, Microsoft, Netscape, SAP AG, Toshiba Information Services, etc.

RosettaNet defines Partner Interface Processes (PIPs) for key business processes like product information, order management, and inventory management. The PIPs specify the points of electronic interaction between trading partners; they do not specify how those touch points integrate with each trading partner's internal business systems, or what processes exist to manage the interaction. BusinessWare for Supply Chain bridges that gap.

BusinessWare for Supply Chain leverages BusinessWare's process automation capabilities to model each PIP and the processing required to move information between the external business interface and the trading partner's internal systems. BusinessWare's messaging and application integration components then provide the interface that enables the actual information movement. Customers can use the out-of-the-box version of BusinessWare for Supply Chain as a template and then employ BusinessWare's powerful process modeling environment to quickly customize and extend the templates to create a solution conforming to their requirements.

"The successful deployment of RosettaNet standards for eBusiness requires new and innovative software solutions," said Fadi Chehade, CEO of RosettaNet. "Vitria's EAI solution provides an excellent platform for rapidly implementing business processes that allow trading partners to quickly and reliably exchange critical business information based on RosettaNet standards."

RosettaNet is just one of several special-purpose XML standards now emerging. Other XML business standards include cXML and Biztalk. BusinessWare, with its power and flexibility, enables companies to deploy solutions that take advantage of new standards as they arise.