

## ZAPTHINK ZAPNOTE™

### BLUENOTE NETWORKS CONVERGING VOICE AND APPLICATION SERVICES

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#### Abstract

As Service-oriented Architecture (SOA) expands in usage and viability across enterprise IT, an increasing range of business processes, systems, and modes of user interaction are coming to be thought of in the Service-oriented perspective. In particular, most enterprises depend as much on their voice-based interactions with customers, employees, partners, and stakeholders as they do other forms of interaction. Therefore, it only makes sense to consider how SOA approaches can leverage voice capabilities as Services throughout corporate processes and applications.

A champion and pioneer in the space of interactive communications, BlueNote Networks is heralding this era of voice-enabled SOA through its SessionSuite™ Business Communications Platforms. These software products enable businesses to consider voice in a more complete fashion, leveraging it both within existing business processes as well as enabling a new class of voice-enabled business processes.

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## Heralding the Era of Voice Services

Over the past decade, companies have come to understand the value of Service-enabling their various applications and business processes as a means of providing the agility, loose coupling, and composition benefits that they have long sought from their existing systems. And increasingly, these companies have come to realize the benefits of SOA in the form of drastically reduced cost of integration with increased flexibility and agility in the face of heterogeneity and change. Additional benefits include reduced redundancy and variability in IT capabilities, increased visibility, compliance, and governance in their IT and overall business efforts. However, companies have critically overlooked one key aspect of their business operations: their voice-based interactions with customers, employees, partners, and stakeholders.

While voice is going through a renaissance in the era of Voice-over-IP (VoIP) and Internet-based telephony, the corporate systems through which voice flows are still relegated to the architectures and technologies of the 1980s and 1990s. A truly complete SOA that considers *all* of the corporate assets as Services must also consider voice in such a light – specifically as voice Services.

What is the scope of voice Services? Basic voice Services comprise anything that companies currently consider the domain of telephony systems and private branch exchanges (PBXs). This includes call initiation, forwarding, transferring, adding and dropping parties to calls, conferencing, interactive voice response (IVR), and other common telephony functions. Basic voice Services are typically provided via standalone telephony systems that are not integrated with other applications or business processes.

However, enhanced voice Services in an SOA environment can provide significant value to an organization that chooses to embed them in their existing, mission critical business processes. For example, companies can initiate conference calls from within their customer relationship management (CRM) or portal applications, embed voice Services within sales or procurement processes, or make IVR systems dynamic and responsive to business process change. Indeed, any business process or application that can consume a voice Service can be thus transformed and enabled. In this environment, organizations can migrate away from their legacy hardware centric telephony systems with their cumbersome Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) that are very difficult to integrate with applications, to an environment where voice becomes another reusable Service in an enterprise applications framework.

The business benefits of embedding voice Services in business processes are significant. Companies can further leverage and modernize their existing legacy voice system investment, gaining the reusability, agility, and flexibility they need from a system they might have perceived as isolated and impervious to change. This approach can also facilitate the eventual migration from those legacy voice systems to pure software-based IP telephony. Furthermore, once voice Services become ubiquitous within the organization, companies will be able to quickly create and deploy new business processes and applications that deliver the value of voice Services to the organization such as increased productivity, greater efficiency, lower operational cost, and faster response to new business opportunities. As a result, telephony is no longer an isolated island within the firm but rather a resource that can leverage the power of convergence with integrated voice Services and tools that enable IT professionals to voice-enable any business process.

## BlueNote Networks SessionSuite Platforms

Addressing this need for voice and application Service convergence, BlueNote Networks offers the *SessionSuite family of Business Communications Platforms*. SessionSuite Business Communications Platforms deliver software-based voice and video interactive communication services to organizations that are either already on their path towards SOA adoption or are looking to do so at some point in the future. The product suite offers enterprises, software vendors who serve enterprises, and solution providers a means to quickly and easily incorporate Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)-based interactive communication services into common business applications, Web sites and portals, and business processes using standard interfaces and technology.

The SessionSuite family of Business Communications Platforms consists of the following products that provide the features, Services, and tools necessary for building and deploying real-time interactive communications as Web Services in an enterprise applications architecture:

- *SessionSuite Enterprise Edition* is a standalone IT software application that enables an enterprise to economically deliver popular calling features and advanced voice Services, such as integral voicemail and conferencing, to distributed users independent of their location and network. It can leverage existing investments in traditional PBXs and VoIP systems to improve productivity and user collaboration by leveraging the Internet to economically reach globally distributed workers, customers and partners.
- *SessionSuite SOA Edition* is a superset of the Enterprise Edition that provides a Web Services SDK to enable organizations to rapidly build business processes, applications and Web site voice features that incorporate the full suite of SessionSuite interactive communication Services. With the ability to initiate phone calls, correlate data with calls and allow business processes and applications to affect call handling, SessionSuite SOA Edition provides extensible tools to build innovative, customized voice-based applications.
- *SessionSuite Desktop* is a Windows-based personal communications assistant that integrates telephony functions with business applications and common desktop applications to improve worker productivity. The application delivers integrated voice capabilities to personal computers and can be optionally used to augment a companion desk phone or mobile phone.
- *SessionSuite WebCaller* adds interactive communications to Web sites and browser-based applications, enabling enterprises to enhance and improve customer interactions by embedding real-time voice communications directly into Web pages. WebCaller is highly customizable, lightweight telephony client that is well suited for a wide variety of applications including: portals, kiosks, customer-facing Web sites, Web 2.0 and thin client software applications, and Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions.

What differentiates BlueNote Network's approach from others who seek to simply utilize computer telephony (CTI) interfaces on existing monolithic PBX systems is that their suite has been built from the ground up as a collection of modular Services that can provide both basic and enhanced voice capabilities, development tools for application and Web Services integration, and management for the composition of voice Services in a Service-oriented manner. This enables Services at varying levels of granularity as well as providing control over call routing and other aspects of voice processes more so than functionally limited legacy APIs to tightly-coupled, proprietary phone systems. Call rules and call processing appear in standard XML format for composition and process execution. The BlueNote SessionSuite products can also deliver calls to users in a location-independent manner that can traverse firewalls, as well as provide a means to register users in a device-independent manner so that users can be tracked wherever they move. The system can use existing corporate directories and security / authentication mechanisms which further simplify user profile management.

While traditional PBX vendors have started to expose limited APIs on their systems, the BlueNote offering is considerably more diverse by providing an application-centric, Internet-facing software solution, like Skype, for the enterprise, while leveraging Web Service APIs for quick and easy integration into applications infrastructure. However, in sharp contrast to Skype, where organizations have no control over what users are doing with Skype on the corporate network nor can this Service be integrated in a business-oriented SOA framework, BlueNote Networks gives organizations a means to provide the economical and global reach benefits of Skype-like voice Services but in a secure, controlled and managed environment. The SessionSuite platforms can manage users, user registrations, and calls that need to be encrypted from a security perspective while still allowing organizations to realize the benefits of IP telephony such as cost, reach, and flexibility.

**BlueNote Networks SessionSuite****Availability: Now****Overview:**

SessionSuite Business Communications Platforms deliver voice, video and other real-time interactive communication Services to extended enterprise users as an integral part of an enterprise IT applications architecture or Service Oriented Architecture (SOA).

**Details:**

Unlike traditional voice solutions based on centralized PBXs, SessionSuite is comprised of modular software components hosted on industry-standard servers and distributed throughout the network to best meet an enterprise's specific topology, scale and functional needs. It provides voice-enabled Web Services and reduces capital equipment and operational expenditures by integrating incumbent IT Directory Services along with authentication and authorization Services, allowing enterprises to treat voice similarly to other IT data-center applications.

**Key Differentiators:**

- *Voice Services provided through standards-based, telephony abstracted Web Services interfaces*
- *Voice Services integrated with business applications and processes within an SOA framework*
- *Flexible, modular, and scalable standard-based environment for integrated voice Services*
- *Incrementally deployable to modernize existing infrastructure investments such as PBXs*
- *Secured access, ease of management, and global reach for users regardless of location*

## The ZapThink Take

Traditional PBXs and phone systems are focused on one thing and one thing only: the telephone. That limitation means that the business processes and the applications that underlie those processes are separated at more than arm's length from the voice systems that may influence those processes. In an era where convergence is on every business executive's mind, the notion that voice systems and applications can somehow continue to exist in an isolated, non-integrated, and non-Service Oriented world is inconsistent with the path companies are now following. As such, BlueNote Networks' offerings don't simply represent an evolution in the way that enterprises build voice systems and applications, but rather signal a change in the way that companies embed voice capabilities into all of their business processes.

Since traditional PBXs are all about the phone, you can't simply expect to Service-enable a PBX and get the Service-oriented benefits that companies expect. Rather, the voice system as a whole needs to be conceived in the light of SOA and Services must exist at a wide range of levels of granularity to provide value to the company as its business processes change. As such, we expect solutions like those provided by BlueNote Networks to gain significant validation and attention as the market for both SOA and converged voice applications grow.

## About BlueNote Networks

Profile: BlueNote Networks	February 2007
<b>Date Founded:</b>	January 2005
<b>Funding:</b>	Investors: Fidelity Ventures, North Bridge Venture Partners, Commonwealth Capital
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## About ZapThink, LLC

ZapThink is an IT advisory and analysis firm that provides trusted advice and critical insight into the architectural and organizational changes brought about by the movement to XML, Web Services, and Service Orientation. We provide our three target audiences of IT vendors, service providers and end-users a clear roadmap for standards-based, loosely coupled distributed computing – a vision of IT meeting the needs of the agile business.

ZapThink helps its customers in three ways: by helping companies understand IT products and services in the context of Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) and the vision of Service Orientation, by providing guidance into emerging best practices for Web Services and SOA adoption, and by bringing together all our audiences into a network that provides business value and expertise to each member of the network.

ZapThink provides market intelligence to IT vendors and professional services firms that offer XML and Web Services-based products and services in order to help them understand their competitive landscape, plan their product roadmaps, and communicate their value proposition to their customers within the context of Service Orientation.

ZapThink provides guidance and expertise to professional services firms to help them grow and innovate their services as well as promote their capabilities to end-users and vendors looking to grow their businesses.

ZapThink also provides implementation intelligence to IT users who are seeking guidance and clarity into the best practices for planning and implementing SOA, including how to assemble the available products and services into a coherent plan.

ZapThink's senior analysts are widely regarded as the "go to analysts" for XML, Web Services, and SOA by vendors, end-users, and the press. Respected for their candid, insightful opinions, they are in great demand as speakers, and have presented at conferences and industry events around the world. They are among the most quoted industry analysts in the IT industry, and their recent book, *Service Orient or Be Doomed!*, is the leading book on the business concept of Service Orientation.

ZapThink was founded in October 2000 and is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland. Its customers include Global 1000 firms and government organizations, as well as many emerging businesses. Its analysts have worked at such firms as IDC, marchFIRST, and ChannelWave, and have sat on the working group committees for standards bodies such as RosettaNet, UDDI, and ebXML.

Call, email, or visit the ZapThink Web site to learn more about how ZapThink can help you to better understand how SOA will impact your business or organization.

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