

ZAPTHINK ZAPNOTE™

RAMCO SYSTEMS *SERVICE-ORIENTED BUSINESS PROCESS DELIVERY*

Analyst: Jason Bloomberg

Abstract

A primary reason many enterprises seek to implement Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) is to enable flexible business processes that respond to changing business needs. One category of emerging software solutions that companies need to achieve this goal is a Business Process Platform that provides an environment for users to create business Services and compose them into Service-Oriented Business Applications (SOBAs).

Ramco Systems, a new entrant in the SOA marketplace, has recently announced such a solution as part of their Business Process Delivery System which enables organizations to take a model-driven approach to Service creation and composition. The Business Process Delivery System provides over one thousand pre-configured business Services, business intelligence capabilities, and SOBAs for vertical industries offer flexibility and agility with respect to both infrastructure choices as well as processes.

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Combining SOA and BPM

Today's organizations require technology that facilitates agile business processes that respond to business change. However, much of today's traditional Business Process Management (BPM) tools are mired in the programmatic, traditional mindset that encodes business process as a pseudo-programming language, and design tools that do little more than hardwire inflexible business processes. While many companies still invest significant sums in traditional business process modeling, management, and monitoring tools, those tools often produce little more than documentation or "shelfware" that serves to guide development for what the business process should be or how the business process used to be, but not the actual business process as it exists in the current environment. In fact, surmounting the challenges of the inflexibility of business process tooling is one of the motivations for Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA), an approach to organizing information technology (IT) resources to better meet changing business needs. While organizations increasingly realize SOA's role within their Enterprise Architecture, it is also important to note that enterprise software must itself be Service-oriented.

The fundamental challenge is that most organizations lack flexible representations of their business processes that are simultaneously easy for humans to interpret and automated systems to execute. Similarly, for those organizations that have invested in runtime business process tools, such tools have traditionally only covered the business processes that are fully automatable, and only in a discrete fashion. In other words, the subset of automatable business processes implemented in runtime process tooling run separately from the other processes in the organization, requiring human interaction to determine how to correlate independent processes. As a result, human activities, rather than corporate IT systems, implement many business processes, resulting in fragmented, partially automated, and inflexible processes throughout the organization. Work items that IT should automate in an efficient and productive manner instead rely upon email, telephone, faxes, and paper memos. Clearly, companies must advance the state of their business processes if they have any hope of making their businesses as a whole more flexible.

Ramco Systems: Service-Oriented Business Process Platform

To address this need for more flexible, automated business processes, Ramco Systems has built a Service-oriented Business Process Platform that delivers on the promises of BPM by leveraging SOA best practices around business process and Service composition. The solution offers a broad set of pre-configured business processes, spanning a variety of industries. Ramco calls the resulting suite their *Business Process Delivery System* (BPDS), which is a combination of processes, a technology platform, and a development and delivery environment.

At the core of the BPDS is the Ramco *Business Process Platform* (BPP), which is a business process modeling and Service composition solution. The Ramco BPP aligns business processes and Service-Oriented Business Applications (SOBAs) through a model-driven approach that enables organizations to change those applications on demand as business

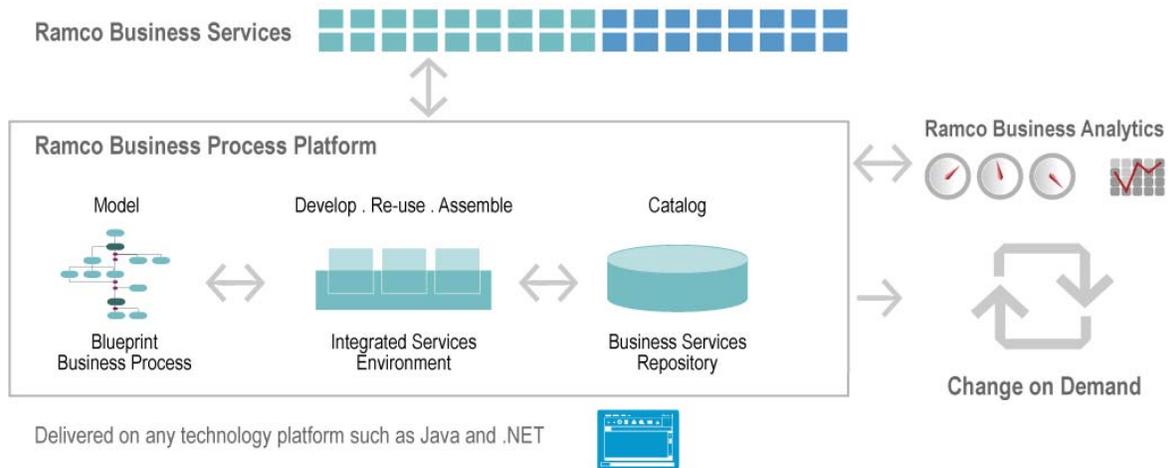
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requirements change, as shown in the figure below. Thus, Ramco approaches application development in a model-driven, Service-oriented fashion, by modeling and managing applications independently from the underlying infrastructure. With this “model-to-code” capability, the Ramco BPP automates the process of building SOBAs by integrating dynamic process modeling, a Business Services Repository, and a Service composition environment.

Ramco' Model-Driven Business Process Delivery



Source: Ramco

The BPP, therefore, is a modeling and assembly environment that companies can use to develop the business model, orchestrate the different processes that make up the model, build the user interfaces for the different processes, and then deploy those processes in a production environment. The BPP also enables users to modify or update the model and its business processes in order to meet changing business requirements, and the BPP is then able to automatically put those changes into production.

Ramco's BPP leverages existing investments in application infrastructure and supports an organization's transition to SOA. The Ramco BPP provides a standards-based architecture that works with most technologies and infrastructure platforms. The BPP enables legacy integration by offering asset discovery that automatically extracts business rules and business logic from legacy applications and brings them into the modeling environment. The BPP also includes the Business Service Repository, which stores and catalogs pre-configured and newly created business Services and related assets for use in assembling new SOBAs. The BPP then converts these assets into new business Services that users can compose into new SOBAs.

In addition, the Ramco BPDS includes a library of more than one thousand pre-configured business Services that users can deploy in the BPP to create new SOBAs or update existing ones. These business Services are reusable, Service-oriented implementations of particular business processes that represent best practices across a variety of verticals, including banking, insurance, manufacturing, and retail. The third component of the BPDS is Ramco Analytics, a business intelligence offering for managing, monitoring, and reporting on business processes and other critical business data in an executive dashboard environment.

Ramco Business Process Delivery System Features

Ramco BPDS

Overview:

The Ramco Business Process Delivery System is a suite of products that help enterprise customers automate and evolve business processes by enabling the construction and configuration of Service-Oriented Business Applications.

Features:

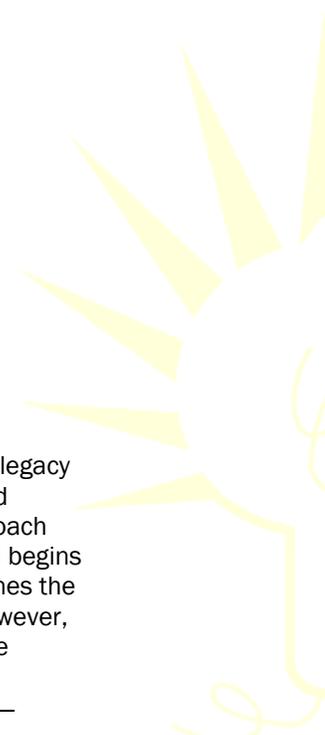
- **Business Process Platform** – A business process platform that models businesses processes, creates new business Services, and assembles SOBAs in a model-driven fashion.
- **Ramco Business Services** – Pre-packaged business processes that Ramco users can deploy in the BPP to create new or update existing enterprise-level applications.
- **Ramco Analytics** – An analytical environment tied to the BPDS that supports KPI, Balanced Scorecard, and other business intelligence activities including management, monitoring, and reporting.

Value Propositions:

- Improved business agility from leveraging the ability to change on demand, thus enabling systems to change when the business changes.
- Improved governance and compliance via the automatic updating of all documentation.
- Addressing competitive pressures by enabling companies to move quickly and speed their time to revenue, supporting dynamic business relationships, and increasing IT systems efficiency.
- Making IT a competitive differentiator by unlocking value that has historically been trapped in silos, reducing cost and complexity of business processes changes, and lowering application development time and cost overall.
- Responding to changing business needs by delivering flexible business systems, enabling the reuse of business Services, streamlining change management, and leveraging existing infrastructure assets.

The ZapThink Take

Many organizations make the mistake of tackling SOA from the bottom up—identifying legacy assets, exposing them as Services, and hoping that the end result is a Service-Oriented Architecture. But in practice, this approach rarely works. A more business-centric approach follows a top-down, business process-focused approach to SOA, where an organization begins with their processes, decomposes them to identify business Services, and then combines the top-down approach with the bottom-up approach to build the appropriate Services. However, top-down approaches by themselves are not viable in that they often result in the same



shelfware problems as BPM systems of old. What organizations require is an effective combination of top-down and bottom-up Service definition approaches. Combining these approaches, however, is quite challenging, and requires special software for organizations to achieve their agility goals.

The Ramco BPDS offers such a specialized solution. By taking a model-driven approach to building SOBAs, Ramco enables the flexible implementation of business processes by supporting easily changeable business Services and the SOBAs that compose them. Furthermore, the BPDS offers flexibility with respect to key infrastructure choices, running equally well in .NET and J2EE environments, including support for WebLogic, WebSphere, and various open source alternatives. This flexibility offers a high degree of choice among deployment options for customers. As a result, the Ramco BPDS allows customers to implement SOA and quickly achieve the benefits of flexible business processes without restricting future infrastructure or platform plans.

Profile: Ramco Systems	June 2007
Funding:	Public company (India market)
Vice Chairman, Managing Director and CEO:	P. R. Venketrama Raja
Employees:	More than 1,800
Product:	Ramco Business Process Delivery System
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URL:	http://www.ramco.com
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Related Research

- *webMethods* ZapNote (ZTZN-1212)
- *ComActivity* ZapNote (ZTZN-1208)
- *Cordys* ZapNote (ZTZN-1199)
- *Process-Driven SOA* White Paper (WP-0143)



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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