

What Can BPM and BPI Do For You?

Ever wonder if the latest greatest technology can help you? Do you wonder what would happen if you step back and took a look at your business process workflow in an end to end manner? Would you learn how to be more efficient and more profitable? When you hear business process improvement (BPI) and business process management (BPM), do you know the difference between the two? If you do know, then are you like most business owners, wondering what problems could be solved and what components are part of a BPI/BPM Assessment and if your business could benefit by a business process impact study? To do this we first need to look at your business process workflow in an end to end manner. Consider that a task is a collection of organized processes that you the business owner or manager organized to complete one of your business activities. It does not matter the size of your business, your workflow tasks include processes that will occur in a sequential or parallel manner. Your sequential processes operate and are linked/worked one after the other. Your parallel processes occur simultaneously and reflect the way you operate daily. Large or small, your business process workflow contains many of these tasks, subtasks and steps. After your business has been operating for a while, business process become out of sync because the normal execution and interaction of your team with customers and suppliers means unknowns occur and business workflow by their nature become complex, disjointed and out of sync. The ability to manage your processes and keep them operating at peak efficiency becomes harder and it then becomes harder to keep your business healthy. Trying to keep your personnel in sync with your business processes and their supporting technologies is even harder. To understand this more, you need to understand the makeup or architecture of your business and what tools would be considered. This architecture and tools are in use everyday and hence drive your efficiencies. The architecture consists of the following:

- Communications Tools - Your communication tools consist of the processes, methodologies and workflow software applications that your organization uses on a daily basis to conduct your business. This layer is used by your personnel daily and your customers experience the results daily. This layer drives your business and your workflow management.
- Support Technologies - Your technology supports your business communication tools and provides specific capabilities that individually, hinder or enable your business operation at a system or computer level. Support technologies consist of your vendor products, their proprietary or open source capabilities. Included at this layer are the standards that may drive your business. This layer supports and drives your communication tools and your business environment.
- Integration Collaboration - The integration and collaboration of your communication tools across your supported technologies has the potential to provide your business with a major positive impact. This integrated layer, BPM workflow, SOA, service oriented application as examples, drives and delivers the business benefits. This would be considered the new end to end business process. This end to end business process is supported by four key technologies that are installed in your business and should be evaluated to ensure synergy. These four key communications technologies, internet, office, voice and CRM, make up an end to end business process and are considered to be the IOVC layer.
- Internet - arguable every thing runs through the internet. The internet consist of more then a website, it is also web services and your email strategy. Your customers may only come through the internet. Today if you are not on the internet, you are missing business exposure, revenue and your potential customers are missing you.
- Office - your office operations are driven by a set of business processes that whether formally designed, inherited or grew out of spontaneous interaction due to day to day demands, they are the heart beat of your operation, which means they drive the efficiency of your operation.
- Voice - people talking to people ensure services, problems and solutions are handled in a timely and accurate manner. Your telephone system must provide more then just voice communication, it should provide value added mobility services that sets you apart from your competition.
- CRM - Customers contact you/your people to buy products and services and to rectify a problem. This customer interaction should be used to build a strong customer relationship. Your people, using your customer interaction process will make all the difference in retaining or losing customers. Understanding the architecture, the technology and the IOVC components, you can now make a fair assessment about the benefits of learning whether a business process improvement (BPI) and business process management (BPM) assessment can help you. If you train yourself, you would learn what a business process is and you would learn how to define your key business processes. You and your team would be able to define what tools are used in identifying your business processes. The team would learn how to document the existing business process by developing process maps. More importantly, they would be able to identify which workflow tasks or steps add value. Then the team would identify and work to eliminate those business steps that fail to add value. At this point in the assessment, the team starts to transition from identifying and knowing what steps to improve and moves to working on a deployment solution. In deployment the team collectively understands and discusses what to do when the identified solution conflicts with business policy or a current external process. The goal of the team is to make it functional within your organization. The solution then gets implemented and becomes operational. On an ongoing basis the team needs to ensure continued success, the group must manage the business process. This requires a complete understanding of current routines, future goals and the gaps in between. This is considered business process management or BPM. Another factor to consider, when learning about BPI and BPM is you should consider how you should learn? You should learn in the manner that is related to how you work. For BPI/BPM assessments to be effective, the best way to learn is in a situational manner which enables you to identify and manage your specific business processes. You may want to consider having customized courses or consulting that can be defined to target your specific situation. In summary, implementation of a business process workflow management system with proper understanding, people, education and learning in a situational environment, one can first identify the process, and then analyze the process, move on to improving and deploying the process. Finally, you monitor and manage the process to make radical improvements within your business. Will you benefit? Consider that your personnel work daily to complete specific business processes using business process technology that you have within your business. You learn to better utilize what you do and therefore can gain tremendous benefits. You should become intimately involved and learn about managing business processes that are a part of your day. In today's business environment, we continuously strive for a more effective business

process operation and a firm with actual hands on experience can help you learn and apply these strategies. That is because business process improvement and business process management have become essential tools to just about any organization.

About the Author

Greg provides small business solutions as an internet and office technology consultant. At [TechOSS Business Process Improvement Solutions](#) Greg helps people succeed through the use of integrated IOVC communications technology.

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