

Customer Case Study

BT Wholesale

Reduces Call Center Role and Costs
in Processing Customer Requests

Solution:
Workforce Productivity

Product:
BEA WebLogic[®]
Enterprise Platform[™]
BEA WebLogic Integration[™]

Industry:
Telecommunications

Country:
UK

**Business challenge: complex business process management
across the extended enterprise**

The company needed to reduce order fulfillment cycle time and cost of goods sold, simplify and automate core business processes to reduce operation expenses, and enable rapid business-to-business integration for the demand and supply chains.

Solution: integration platform

WebLogic Integration provides a complete solution to meet BT Wholesale's integration requirements.

Results

- Enables BT Wholesale to reach new customers and increase demand chain and supply chain visibility. "BEA will enable us to accelerate time-to-market"
- Radically simplifies complex billing, order management and supply chain process
- Delivers a unified, simplified and extensible platform for BT Wholesale's application infrastructure.

Benefits

- Greater visibility across the BT Wholesale value chain
- "Flexibility, performance and the ability to integrate legacy applications into a multi-tier architecture"
- "With BEA's help, BT plans to address enterprise-wide Integration challenges".

BT Wholesale is the largest provider of telecommunication services to enterprises in the UK and Europe. BT Wholesale uses WebLogic Integration to reduce operating costs, stimulate demand, improve supply chain visibility and streamline core business processes. WebLogic Integration uniquely enables BT Wholesale to meet its near term business objectives while providing a strategic solution for IT simplification and driving down operating costs.

Business challenge

BT is one of the world's leading providers of telecommunications services and one of the largest private sector companies in Europe. BT Wholesale, a business division within BT, provides comprehensive telecommunications network services to more than 400 communications providers and operators.

Founded in 1982, BT Wholesale employs over 30,000 people in the UK to manage its massive networks and exchanges. These services enable international operators and larger corporations to seamlessly access the UK network. To deliver these services, BT Wholesale leverages partners such as Nortel, Telsis, Cisco Systems, and Unisys to provide IP, voice, data networking, e-business, and mobile solutions.

To meet aggressive revenue projections and cost reduction pressures, the company needed to significantly change its business processes and simplify its enterprise IT architecture. Its architecture includes billing, workforce management, and customer relationship management systems such as Clarify, Siebel, and other packaged, legacy and custom applications. Current business processes, spanning over 22 systems with an excess of manual interactions, have become costly and difficult to maintain.

Cost and the inability to scale to meet new demands limited BT Wholesale's ability to respond to existing customers and to expand into new markets. Integrated and streamlined business processes were therefore critical to BT Wholesale's continued growth and success.

As in most large enterprises, BT Wholesale manages its business as an extended enterprise: customer requests drive business processes across BT Wholesale's multiple enterprise systems and extend to its network of trading partners and suppliers.

Today, customer requests are processed via one of two channels: BT Wholesale's call center or direct interfaces into BT Wholesale's Siebel applications. Both methods are manual, requiring human intervention, and imposing high operational costs. Since these methods are manual, they do not scale well. Though they enable BT Wholesale to conduct daily operations and respond to customer requests, they are difficult to manage and costly, and limit BT Wholesale's ability to efficiently service its customers.

BT Wholesale is also faced with the need to rapidly expand its customer base to meet anticipated revenue growth. Reducing the cost and complexity of fulfilling orders and automating the process of adding new customers to the network are key to BT Wholesale's success. BT Wholesale senior business and technical teams identified "complexity" as the common issue across BT Wholesale's extended enterprise and the most significant roadblock for BT Wholesale's near-term business objectives.

Solution

BT Wholesale had already made an enterprise-wide investment in BEA WebLogic Server® and BEA eLink™, which since 1999 has provided a rock-solid infrastructure for integrating BT Wholesale's both custom and packaged billing, trouble-ticketing and order management systems. To reduce IT complexity and improve extended enterprise processes, BT Wholesale made it a high priority to implement a business-to-business (B2B) gateway and further internal enterprise integration.

"We like BEA's roadmap, we have a lot of confidence based on our experience to date that BEA does deliver on its promises."

Sean O'Donovan, Solutions Architect, BT Exact Technologies

"We see the B2B gateway as being a key component in BT Wholesale's systems solution going forward and a key factor in its future success and prosperity. It will provide a single face to the customer, insulate them from the complexity of our internal processes and systems and enable us to offer an unprecedented range of products and services rapidly and at the right price. In addition it will allow us to offer and manage these services in a manner that best suits the diverse needs and varied technical maturity of our customer base," said Sean O'Donovan, Solutions Architect with BT Exact Technologies, which is co-developing the solution for BT Wholesale.

BT's internal consulting organizations, BT Exact Technologies and Computing Partners, conducted an in-depth review of integration solutions. Both organizations reviewed and tested solutions from a set of integration vendors including IBM and WebMethods.

BT required a comprehensive solution and, as one of the largest enterprises in the UK, was looking for a strategic technology partner with proven enterprise software experience and a solid reputation.

"There are a number of products in this space," said O'Donovan. "We like the fact that BEA WebLogic Integration offers B2B integration, application integration, and business process management as a part of the overall solution."

After the rigorous evaluation process, BT Wholesale chose BEA WebLogic Integration. BEA WebLogic Integration meets BT Wholesale's functionality, architecture and performance requirements, providing a comprehensive solution: business process management, enterprise application integration and business-to business integration.

“Having gone through quite a rigorous technical evaluation, we’re confident that BEA WebLogic Integration will meet our needs and has no significant weaknesses, and we’re reassured by the fact that it’s built on BEA WebLogic Server,” added O’Donovan. “We like BEA’s roadmap, we have a lot of confidence based on our experience to date that BEA does deliver. We actually see this as something which distinguishes BEA from some of its competitors.”

BEA WebLogic Integration enables BT Wholesale to leverage nearly three years of enterprise-wide investments in BEA and to extend its IT team’s existing knowledge of Java technology for both development and integration. BT Wholesale has standardized on BEA WebLogic as the platform for its IT infrastructure. BT Wholesale uses BEA WebLogic Server and the BEA WebLogic Enterprise Platform™ as the development platform for its strategic custom applications.

“We recognize the flux in this industry over the last few years, and the number of players that are no longer in this business, and certainly it is our view that BEA will continue to be a successful player in the B2B market for the foreseeable future,” said O’Donovan.

BEA WebLogic Integration allows BT Wholesale to extend its integration capability to Web-based, customer facing applications. BEA WebLogic Integration serves as a centralized integration hub, greatly reducing the number of point-to-point connections between applications, managing the back-end process as part of one seamless transaction, and reducing information “silos”.

Result

The B2B gateway currently enables BT Wholesale customers to submit purchase orders and repair requests online and in an automated fashion. The Business Process Manager component of WebLogic Integration provides the engine that will soon drive BT Wholesale’s end-to-end business process: from customer request to fulfillment to billing.

This automation guarantees faster communication, shorter cycle times, and more efficient order processing, ultimately reducing BT Wholesale’s reliance on its call center. The company projects that it will ultimately save in the order of £2.77m alone over 3.5 years with its B2B gateway, simply from reducing the development effort involved in e-enabling its product set by using ‘out-of-the box’ components available within BEA WebLogic Integration.

British Telecommunications plc, the parent company, selected the BEA WebLogic Enterprise Platform as the foundation on which to build an integrated set of “Common Business Services” across its global enterprise.

“With BEA’s help, we plan to solve a number of integration problems,” said Steve Barnes, Manager of Integration Technology Infrastructure at BT. “These include improving and enhancing legacy integration, integrating Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications (and others), and providing a consistent, scalable, open and manageable platform for delivering e-business applications.”

“We chose BEA after extensive evaluation against competing solutions and a comprehensive in-house trial,” continued Barnes. “We needed flexibility, performance and the ability to integrate legacy applications into a multi-tier architecture. It was clear that BEA had a product strategy that was directly aligned with our own requirements for high scalability and availability.”

“BEA will enable us to accelerate time-to-market by moving to component-based development for new applications—BEA will provide us with the ‘glue’ to make this happen,” said Barnes. “We have chosen a strategic solution to ensure that we have a highly integrated systems set.”

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Steve Barnes, Manager of Integration Technology Infrastructure at BT

About BEA

BEA Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: BEAS) is a world leader in enterprise infrastructure software, providing standards-based platforms to accelerate the secure flow of information and services. BEA product lines—WebLogic®, Tuxedo®, JRockit®, and the new AquaLogic™ family of Service Infrastructure—help customers reduce IT complexity and successfully deploy Service-Oriented Architectures to improve business agility and efficiency. For more information please visit bea.com.

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