

# 21st Century Success:

## *Business Brief 9 – Cross-Organizational*



### Recent History's Best Practices

Today quality is expected as a norm and is no longer the differentiator it once was. Still the problem of streamlining processes persists. Much time, effort, and money are spent in seeking ways to improve processes—from the construction of an aircraft to paying an invoice on time. Most of the workflow processes remain linear and sequential.

In a recent survey<sup>1</sup> 94% of respondents complained about how waiting for information had delayed progress on a project. And 91% complained about unwelcomed interruptions. The cost of just these two situations in a SME organization (50 to 100 employees) calculated out to be between \$75,000 and \$150,000 per year. This cost, of course, disregards the intangible annoyance “cost” measured in frustration.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when competition is fierce and speed-to-market is a necessity, an adaptive, parallel supply chain network must be in place. But there are some organizations that need something more. Some must utilize cross-organizational workflows.

### Cross-Organizational Processes

In today's business environment companies are ever expanding. There is a greater use of Eco-systems, where many functions no longer reside under one roof, or indeed within the same company. Meanwhile, they must have the ability to adapt and align quickly in order stay ahead of the competition and remain viable in the marketplace. This puts a greater pressure on being able to manage and improve workflow processes. Cross-organizational workflows are now common practice.

By taking a holistic view of the problem all parties are rewarded. For example, it was common practice for Unilever, a leading global consumer goods company, to frequently swap personnel with their customers so each had an appreciation of the others' problems. In this way it was often possible to highlight areas where business networking issues could be improved. Associating process steps with “value add” in a cross-organizational workflow is not simple, but a necessity in today's tough business climate.

As companies expand their Eco-systems ever wider this problem continues to grow exponentially. Today the only way to manage is to support business processes with a stable robust workflow solution which is fully integrated into a collaboration infrastructure system. When this is done the possibilities to see real business process improvements are within reach.

We've stated throughout that the information worker's perception of a particular tool will determine its rate of adoption. Fortunately, modern software tools make it possible for non IT personnel to develop and deploy the most complex of workflows and business processes. This has a twofold impact: first, it means that valuable IT resources are not diverted from their work; and second, accountability is more clearly identified and the results are more accurately measured. Giving ownership to the person or the team that has responsibility for the process means that any changes are embraced and not resisted when deployed. Many IT deployments and/or business process changes flounder because of a resistance or lack of “buy in” by the people that actually have to perform the tasks. Delegating the responsibility often has a spectacular impact. You have removed any opposition to change, often a major obstacle, and removed any blame culture in one simple move. The only consideration is that the software deployed must be simple to use and deploy, but today that is not a problem.

Modern workflow solutions give companies the opportunity to automate common business processes with easy-to-use drag and drop interfaces. The availability of a lightweight modeling approach enables multidisciplinary teams of decision makers to design cross-organizational workflows, easily. The focus is where it belongs—on the process of creating, innovating and collaborating about the product, purpose, people, property and the process—and not on how to use and deploy the software.

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<sup>1</sup> Insignia Research 2007



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## Business Brief

The Business Brief provided is a section from Actify's white paper series called 21<sup>st</sup> Century Success. The white paper series details the business obstacles and impact manufacturers face related to innovation, collaboration and automating processes. For more information or to obtain one of the white papers, you can contact the representative below or visit the websites listed.

## About Actify, Incorporated

Actify Inc. is an *award-winning* global leader of product data collaboration and 2D/3D visualization solutions. Actify's technology and visual collaboration infrastructure solutions help companies successfully meet the geographical, economical, and global challenges of doing business in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Actify's customers come from various industries: energy, medical and dental devices, government, defense, aerospace, automotive, industrial automation, consumer goods, white goods, discrete manufacturing, and other product-based manufacturing or service industries.

Actify products are sold through authorized distributors and value-added resellers in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Actify is headquartered in San Francisco, California. For more information please visit [www.actify.com](http://www.actify.com) or call 415.227.3800.

To discuss how Actify can help your organization create an effective collaboration infrastructure, use technology to its full potential, and be truly innovative—call today and ask for an "Information Worker Experience Strategy Assessment".

Please contact [sales@actify.com](mailto:sales@actify.com).