

21st Century Success: *Business Brief 8 – Process Innovation*



Enable Workflow Processes Innovation

Leaders at the recent CEO roundtable emphatically stated that innovation is not an option—it's a requirement for 21st century success. To keep up with rapid industry changes, fierce competition, and short windows of opportunity, companies must adapt quickly to the demands of the marketplace.

So if an organization is truly committed to being intentionally innovative—then the leaders must integrate dynamic workflow ability into their collaboration infrastructure. What does this mean to the average information worker? It means that everyone has the ability to spot new trends, adapt or improve processes, initiate new products, and anticipate demand, customize solutions, or simply streamline tasks. In turn, the additional business intelligence will enable information workers to dynamically choreograph their tasks and processes across the extended enterprise.

Benefits from Workflow Process Innovation

Obviously, as the information worker benefits, so does the organization. Many people quote the following benefits from deploying a dynamic workflow solution:

- Streamlining business processes and increasing automation
- Providing shorter process cycle times
- Optimizing operational and resource efficiency
- Enforcing corporate standards and policies
- Empowering the right people with the right content, enabling better decision-making
- Reducing the complexity of working with remote offices

Keep in mind, however, what we said earlier: many organizations have invested huge sums of money and resources into systems that didn't produce the expected returns. The lesson learned was that technology on its own is useless—it's not a "fix all".

The companies' information workers must lead the software and the workflow process and not vice versa. Companies rely far too much on technology to solve problems. Edison has been our model for success via innovation. It seems obvious that we should ask, "What would Edison do?" Edison would use the software in two ways: first, as a catalyst for change; and second, to support the changes. It is this approach that leads to the greatest savings and return on investment (ROI). Looking at one without the other is a foolhardy approach destined for failure.

Using software as a catalyst for change is not a new idea, but so often overlooked. It can be used as a great way to involve the people affected by any change to workflow processes and make them responsible for improvements. Many times the underlying process is not fully understood, this is true across the organization. Being forced to capture the process makes people think about what and why they do what they do. Often what can appear to be a routine process on the surface is highly complex in reality.

A recent example comes from one of our customers. The company was having a problem in processing invoices in a timely manner. This resulted in late payments and a disgruntled supply chain. An analysis of the existing process revealed no fewer than 50 steps involving multiple departments. When revealed to the people involved there was an immediate will to improve the situation. Now underpinned by a workflow process solution there are no late invoices, and subsequently the process has been tweaked several times to further improve efficiency.





Business Brief

The Business Brief provided is a section from Actify's white paper series called 21st 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 21st 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 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.