



## An Overview of Procession

### What is Procession?

- It is an application development tool for business applications, but goes beyond this.
- It is a Business Process Management tool, but goes beyond this too.
- It uses the concepts of workflow, BPM, rapid application development, etc. but is also greater than the sum of those parts.
- It is a totally new way to build, maintain, monitor and continually improve business application systems.
- It is a natural way to capture a combination of business needs, expert knowledge in the organisation, and best business practise, altogether in one place – and then visualise it, use it and, ultimately, improve upon it.

### Why is a New Approach Needed?

- Packaged software often does not work the way the organisation wants to work, and is hard to customise.
- Conversely, bespoke software is expensive, time-consuming, suffers from interpretation gap and the end result is just a bespoke package.
- In either case, response to change is slow and costly. Invariably, the commercial case behind the need to change requires a swift response and a quick first pass at a solution that can then be honed later on based on experience, i.e. the continual improvement model.
- All the answers need to be known up front, which they never are, so compromise is inevitable. In real life, we normally know only what we know at the beginning and need to be able to run with that, with some assumptions, until we have learnt more by doing – business software development desperately needs to support this approach.
- IT has generally ended up with a very bad reputation for moving slowly, not delivering to the requirements and being a change inhibitor.
- There is too much room for misinterpretation in most development approaches, because the process is so drawn out and time-consuming.
- Large projects require an army of people to deliver and are costly to run. Vendors have become wise to this and their business models are often optimised to maximise their earnings from this process as much as possible.

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- Many development methodologies exist, mostly with documents about other documents, etc. all taking too long and often being far too dry or too technical to offer a good opportunity for providing feedback from the business people – the people who are usually either going to benefit or suffer from the end result.
- There is too much siloisation, with lots of separate technologies that tend to over complicate everything and generally do not properly integrate.
- There is not enough automation – there are far too many systems that just record information and do very little of the work themselves. This is definitely not the limit of what technology is capable of.
- Very limited visibility of what the software is doing, and the business logic that has been configured inside it, makes decision making difficult and leads to a general fear of change in the organisation.
- The IT industry has overcomplicated the process of building systems, due to 'specialist menace', which has alienated business people - a simple more effective way of working is needed.

## What is Procession's Solution to the Problem?

- Make it quicker and easier to build tailored systems, by creating an approach that does not require coding or code generation, and can be painlessly changed or added to later.
- Create a natural approach to the build process that non-technical people closer to the business, e.g. a Business Analyst or a suitable business person, can undertake, by talking to people in business language, and using an iterative build approach.
- Distil the essence of organisational processing, inter-departmental communication and likely automation tasks into a single product, but without creating a prescriptive approach. Let people operate however they want to, allowing them to retain their competitive edge.
- Separate business logic from the delivery method, so you can deliver any way you want to, and the people who are responsible for delivery do not have to be concerned about the business logic being employed.
- Create a visual way to map out the business process required, essentially allowing the system and the process map to be one and the same. The interpretation gap is removed.
- Provide complete auditability and visibility of the process so all the information required to spot bottlenecks and improve the process is provided, and deep analysis of the processes and their performance is possible.

## What Does Procession do?

- Procession is designed to handle core business processes, both within the front and back office, and communicate with legacy systems, including finance systems, when required.

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- It goes far beyond supporting organisational change and actually encourages it. Fear of change is removed, growth of the system becomes organic and intuitive, and the system is future proofed.
- You do not need to know all the answers at the start, they come as the iterative process continues, and as experience from using the system grows.
- Because build is quick and prototyping even quicker, direct feedback is possible from people trying the system out. This is a much better way to work.
- The process is automatically broken down into its constituent parts, so it is easier to understand, analyse, debug, amend, reuse, etc.
- Everything is stored as information so is totally flexible and reusable.
- Every process is represented visually so can be examined by anyone, including internal and external audit. Everyone can see what the business logic actually is, which tasks the system does and which the people do.
- Automatic escalations are possible, if tasks are not done quickly enough, or limits are passed, etc.
- Non-technical people in the organisation can start to take ownership for the computerisation in their business area, the business logic that has been included, and any changes that need to be made.
- The requirement for coding is either completely removed or greatly reduced.
- Procession can be used to undertake as little or as much of the process as required, either controlling manual activity or automating tasks, or a mixture of both as required.
- True management by exception becomes possible, because you capture all the common processes, differences pop out to be dealt with, when you see enough of any one exception, you expand the process to deal with it.
- It goes beyond simply service oriented architecture and becomes task oriented, providing the essential building blocks of any process to be configured as required.
- Ensures high-levels of: agility, automation, control, accuracy, visibility, speed and auditability.

### Are There Any Limitations to Procession?

- There are some things you would not build with Procession, because they would probably prove to be cost prohibitive. For example, build of an actuarial engine, or a general ledger, or a specialised technical application, such as a 3D modelling tool.
- Procession works best when it is the hub of the processes, driving everything else. It can be used just as a complimentary system but some of the full benefits of the system might not be realised in this case.

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- The core system is based on Oracle, so currently Oracle must be used as the relational database. However, this does mean it is totally reliable and scalable. Also, it readily supports connectivity to legacy systems.
- A Javascript servlet container is required to support any web enabled processes.
- The Graphical Process Designer is currently not web-based, although the rest of the product can run as either Client/Server or Web.
- Otherwise, the only limitation is your imagination!

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