

Title: Business value from IBM Lotus Notes application development and composite applications

Abstract: In this IBM podcast, we will briefly discuss IBM Lotus Notes® application development capabilities, including composite applications (or business mashups). We will discuss the business value of the new capabilities and some examples of how they are being used, so you can tell your boss. And we will also briefly cover how you can leverage your current skills and what new skills you will want to learn to take advantage of the new capabilities -- whether you are currently coming from a Notes® software- or Eclipse™ platform-based and Lotus® Expeditor software application development perspective.

Interviewer: Amy Ewing

Presenter: Mark Jourdain

Length: 11 Minutes 03 Secs

Size: 10.3 Meg

Transcription:

EWING: Hello. Welcome to this IBM Podcast, Business Value from IBM Lotus Notes Application Development and Composite Applications. I'm Amy Ewing from IBM Lotus product marketing, and I am joined today by Mark Jourdain, who is the product manager for IBM Lotus Notes and Domino® application development capabilities.

JOURDAIN: Hi, Amy thanks for setting this up.

EWING: Mark, what is going to be covered in today's podcast, and why should listeners be interested in this information?

JOURDAIN: So, today we're going to cover Lotus Notes Application Development capabilities including composite applications -- or, as some call them, business mashups -- and the business value of the new capabilities.

You can tell your boss about the business value and you'll get better...and you'll better understand how you can leverage your current skills and possibly what new skills you'll want to learn to take advantage of the new capabilities.

Now, why should you listen? Well, obviously because Lotus Notes is part of IBM's client strategy and many companies -- probably including yours -- have a large inventory of Notes-based applications today that they can reuse -- they can leverage and extend -- to drive additional business value. And there is also potential personal benefit for you to use your existing and develop new skills.

EWING: Good. Okay, to start our discussion, can you describe IBM Lotus Notes and Lotus Domino software? I know that Lotus Notes has extensive e-mail and calendar support. What else does it have? Can you talk about its application development capabilities?

JOURDAIN: So, many people associate Lotus Notes with its powerful mail and calendar capabilities. But Lotus Notes is -- and always has been -- an application platform, and in many companies today the Notes mail application itself is customized using a small subset of those application development capabilities.

Now, with Notes and Domino you could have a high productivity application development platform for a variety of business solutions due to the built-in data

store, granular security options, the customizable presentation and navigation model and support for your custom business logic and workflow.

Additionally, you know, Notes and Domino replication capabilities provide periodic synchronization, and this allows mobile users to work offline. And also companies many times make use of this both for fail-over and also when they are, have geographically dispersed organizations.

EWING: Can you talk a bit about how companies are using Lotus Notes [software] for application development?

JOURDAIN: So, many customers make use of the semi-structured data store that's offered out of the box with Notes and Domino to build their own applications.

And also, companies integrate Notes and Domino with their ERP, transactional, relational and other back office systems using the programmatic capabilities or the accessible data model offered in Notes and Domino.

And the templating, deployment and administration model of Notes and Domino itself allows companies to supply their users with business and collaborative applications and to efficiently supply updates to those applications whenever there are new requirements.

And then with these capabilities you can see how you can quickly progress from requirement definition to prototype to application deployment.

EWING: What did Lotus Notes 8 software release add to the Notes

capabilities?

JOURDAIN: Amy, that's a good question. When most people think of Lotus Notes 8, they see the focus on the end-user appeal, you know, evidenced by the refined mail and calendar capabilities and the new sidebar that can help improve end user productivity.

In regards to business applications on Notes, there are new options that a developer could exploit to make themselves, the IT group and end-users more effective.

In Lotus Notes 8, you can provide user interfaces that combine multiple applications side by side -- including existing Notes applications, desktop applications or content from back office enterprise systems, like human resource, accounting or inventory systems.

Now, this capability called "composite applications" -- or called "business mashups" by some -- helps you provide the right information for the end-users in a similar customized interface and could help improve user responsiveness.

Now, composite applications are more than simply placing these different systems side-by-side, as you can use wiring to reduce the number of steps a user would need to take -- as compared to using those applications separately.

The enhanced architecture of Lotus Notes 8 provides this composite application capability and also lets you extend the client interface with your own custom sidebar plug-in.

And the sidebar can provide a persistent data display area and could be used to expose content from Notes applications or other systems. And as a developer you also have options to provide custom toolbar plug-ins and extend the Lotus Notes 8 menu.

Now, something else to keep in mind is that even though there is a new architecture for the Notes client, you continue to run your existing Notes applications, and you can use your current Notes development skills with those existing applications or to take those existing applications and use them in composite applications.

EWING: Good. How about an IT shop that has been using Eclipse for application development recently instead of the Notes platform? Why should they learn and use the new Notes 8 application development capabilities?

JOURDAIN: Well, the new architecture of Lotus Notes 8 [software] incorporates much of Lotus Expeditor [software], which is actually an extension of the Eclipse Rich Client Platform.

[Editor's note: Eclipse foundation is an open source community committed to implementation of a universal development platform.]

So this architecture allows companies to make use of multiple runtimes. So they can have Eclipse Rich Client Platform applications. They can have local portlets and they can make use of other extensions that Lotus Expeditor architecture provides. And they can also leverage the rapid application development capabilities that Lotus Notes and Domino have been known for.

And then also, companies can make use of the deployment and administration model from our Lotus Domino infrastructure and/or they can leverage a

WebSphere® Portal infrastructure.

EWING: Can you talk now about composite applications which are also referred to as business mashups? For the Notes developers on the call, what can we do in a composite application that we can't already do with NSF?

[Editor's note: NSF refers to Notes Storage Format.]

JOURDAIN: So, the composite application framework of Lotus Notes 8 provides developers with new options. They can provide innovative solutions now that incorporate strategic applications. They can reuse assets to deliver new solutions quicker and leverage capabilities with other runtime technologies like Eclipse Rich Client Platform applications and local portlet.

EWING: If I've been using Notes 6 or 7, do I need new skills? Can I do the same things I was doing before?

JOURDAIN: So, Amy, Lotus Notes 8 lets you make use of your current Notes developer skills, and Domino Designer 8 [software] provides a similar interface to let you work with your Notes application. So, you can use the familiar paradigms of Domino Designer and you can extend your NSF design elements -- your Notes design elements -- to use them in a composite application.

So for example, you can actually go and edit a Notes view and you can use the new view column properties to publish the value in that column for the selected document.

Or your LotusScript skills, you can use those to publish more complex properties from your Notes forms, from your views, and you could also make use of those

LotusScript skills to define actions when you use that NSF design element as a component in a composite app.

You know, we also have preassembled samples that you can download and use the code from those. And then there's also some components that you can make use of. There are as-is components that are available on OpenNTF.org.

[www.openntf.org]

Now, in addition to composite application capabilities, you also can make use of the Web service consumer capabilities available in Domino Designer 8. And also with other skills, you can use -- you can create, I should say -- sidebar and toolbar plugins.

EWING: Can you give me some examples of composite applications. And can you talk about how these examples can deliver real business value?

JOURDAIN: Amy, there are several IBM business partners who are offering composite applications solutions for Lotus Notes 8 today. For example, there are business partners who have integrated host applications so you can use your legacy host systems from within Lotus Notes.

There are business partners who have integrated executive dashboards for use from the mail by simply extending the mail -- the Notes 8 mail -- which itself is a composite application, to give executives a look at data that's stored in other systems like [IBM] DB2 or JD Edwards and to give them a dashboard look and feel directly from their mail to help them more quickly find information.

And then also internal solutions that we have at IBM are solutions that can tie our

different systems together. And the one that comes to mind is one that we use to proactively look at customers' problem reports and to work those proactively.

EWING: Thanks for the explanation, Mark. As a result of this call, I think I understand better that with the new Lotus Notes application development capability, I can do new things and do things more easily -- which can translate to a better user interface and more productive users. And I don't have to retrain Notes users because they stay with their current user interface; it's just a better interface. Where would I go for more information?

JOURDAIN: We have two additional podcasts in this Lotus Notes application development series. Podcast 2 is called Composite Applications for Lotus Notes Developers; and Podcast 3 is called Composite Applications for Eclipse and Lotus Expeditor Developers.

So, IT managers and developers in your organization will be interested in these podcasts to learn how they can leverage and extend their existing skills to develop high-value applications on Lotus Notes clients.

EWING: Thanks, Mark.

And thanks to those of you who have listened to today's podcast.

For more information please visit the Lotus Notes and Domino product page -- ibm.com/lotus/notesanddomino -- and follow the links to the business mashup and composite application resources. Thank you.

[END OF SEGMENT]