



ACE ASPHALT

One of largest paving and parking lot construction companies in the country.

Industry: Construction

Geography: U.S.

Deployment Summary

- Ace Asphalt is using TIBCO BPM software to model, automate, and optimize business processes, and develop applications for a range of internal business units.
- The company is integrating many homegrown applications, including HR and a process archive system, via a TIBCO web services layer.
- Ace Asphalt is automating and optimizing such existing systems as purchase order management, organizational change management, and a check request system using TIBCO BPM software.

Benefits

- Modeling processes visually using TIBCO tools has helped Ace bridge the business/IT gap and develop applications that map precisely to business-unit needs.
- TIBCO BPM tools have helped Ace standardize processes, reduce human error, and reduce costs.
- Using TIBCO software capabilities for process monitoring, Ace has created a process archive that captures and records steps in automated processes, which helps the company improve process consistency and efficiency.



“The diagrams we create with TIBCO BPM tools give us a graphic, visual representation of workflows that we can analyze with our business clients. They’re a tremendous help in clearly defining process steps and roles so we can create an application that fits our business users’ way of working.”

Steve Watts, Software Project Manager, Ace Asphalt of Arizona, Inc.



Automating and Optimizing Business Processes

One of the largest parking lot construction and maintenance companies in the U.S., Ace Asphalt paves or resurfaces over 180 million square feet per year. The company has approximately 350 employees and works on some 4,000 projects each year. Their client base of thousands of customers includes Fortune 500 companies, municipalities, major developers, and property management companies. The company also believes in being a good corporate citizen, and gives 10 percent of its profits back to the community.

Integrating Homegrown Systems to Improve Communication

Ace Asphalt has many homegrown systems, including ones for CRM, production control, scheduling, HR, and geographic information systems (GIS) – but the systems are islands of information that are connected, if at all, by a “spider’s web” of point-to-point interfaces. When a business unit wants changes made to one system, those changes necessitate changes in connected systems, creating an expanding workload for IT.

To simplify the change process, and to move away from an architecture that had created islands of information, Ace Asphalt began using TIBCO BPM tools to model, document, automate,

and optimize processes. The company also began using TIBCO software as a messaging and integration layer, linking applications so that when changes are necessary, they can be made once in the TIBCO layer rather than over and over again in all the interdependent applications.

“As an IT department, we also wanted to be more responsive to the business,” says Steve Watts, software project manager, Ace Asphalt of Arizona, Inc. “One of our goals was to simplify and shorten the change process, which would have benefits for both IT and the business.”

Optimizing the Application Development Process

Other goals included documenting and standardizing processes, reducing human errors, reducing costs – and improving recordkeeping. To accomplish that, IT created a process archive based on TIBCO BPM software. The software monitors processes and sends messages through the TIBCO bus, which are captured in a SQL database from which Ace Asphalt creates reports. “The archive ensures we have a record of the steps in an automated process and helps us increase consistency and efficiency as we build and refine processes,” says Watts.

Ace Asphalt has also used TIBCO software to optimize several processes, including those dealing with check requests, support tickets, and organizational change management. IT started with the check request process because it was the simplest and least risky, in that changing it would have a minimal impact on overall business operations. After that, IT moved on to the purchase order (PO) process, which was more complex and would have a more widespread impact. To improve the process, IT and business users modeled the existing workflow and developed a new process by examining each task, each screen, each decision point, and each role. Checking their work regularly with business users, developers proceeded to build a new process, refine it in a test environment, and deploy it to users.

“That approach to building an application is far more successful than previous approaches, which weren’t nearly so collaborative,” says Watts. “For instance, using another approach not too long ago, we created a pricing tool that did not effectively meet user requirements. That taught us just how important it is to communicate and collaborate throughout the analysis and development phases.”

The new PO system delivers a range of benefits to business users, including greater control over the entire process, and better visibility into what items have been ordered, current budget status, and accuracy of the POs. The process is also more streamlined than its predecessor. It has decreased the time to generate a PO by a third.

Integrating New Processes From Day One

IT has several projects in the works, including three for project managers that will standardize and streamline the entire project workflow – from signing contracts to completion – and all will be integrated via the TIBCO layer as soon as deployed. IT is also revamping the company’s HR system. The goal there, says Watts, is to tie the previous system and new system into the TIBCO messaging bus, then retire the old system, with no downtime for users. IT also plans to tie the production control system into TIBCO, thereby integrating it with other processes to boost data-sharing and efficiency.

“We plan to use TIBCO to create an applications web service and a separate data web service,” says Watts, “so that all applications can connect with the data they need, but no application will be dependent on another. TIBCO software will make that ‘plug and play’ architecture possible, and in the end we will have a reliable, flexible set of tools that will enable the business to do their jobs better.”

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TIBCO Software Inc. (NASDAQ: TIBX) is a provider of infrastructure software for companies to use on-premise or as part of cloud computing environments. Whether it’s optimizing claims, processing trades, cross-selling products based on real-time customer behavior, or averting a crisis before it happens, TIBCO provides companies the two-second advantage™ – the ability to capture the right information at the right time and act on it preemptively for a competitive advantage. More than 4,000 customers worldwide rely on TIBCO to manage information, decisions, processes and applications in real time. Learn more at www.tibco.com

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