

Moving the Needle

One Approach at “Mainstreaming” Business Process Management into Intelligent Buildings.



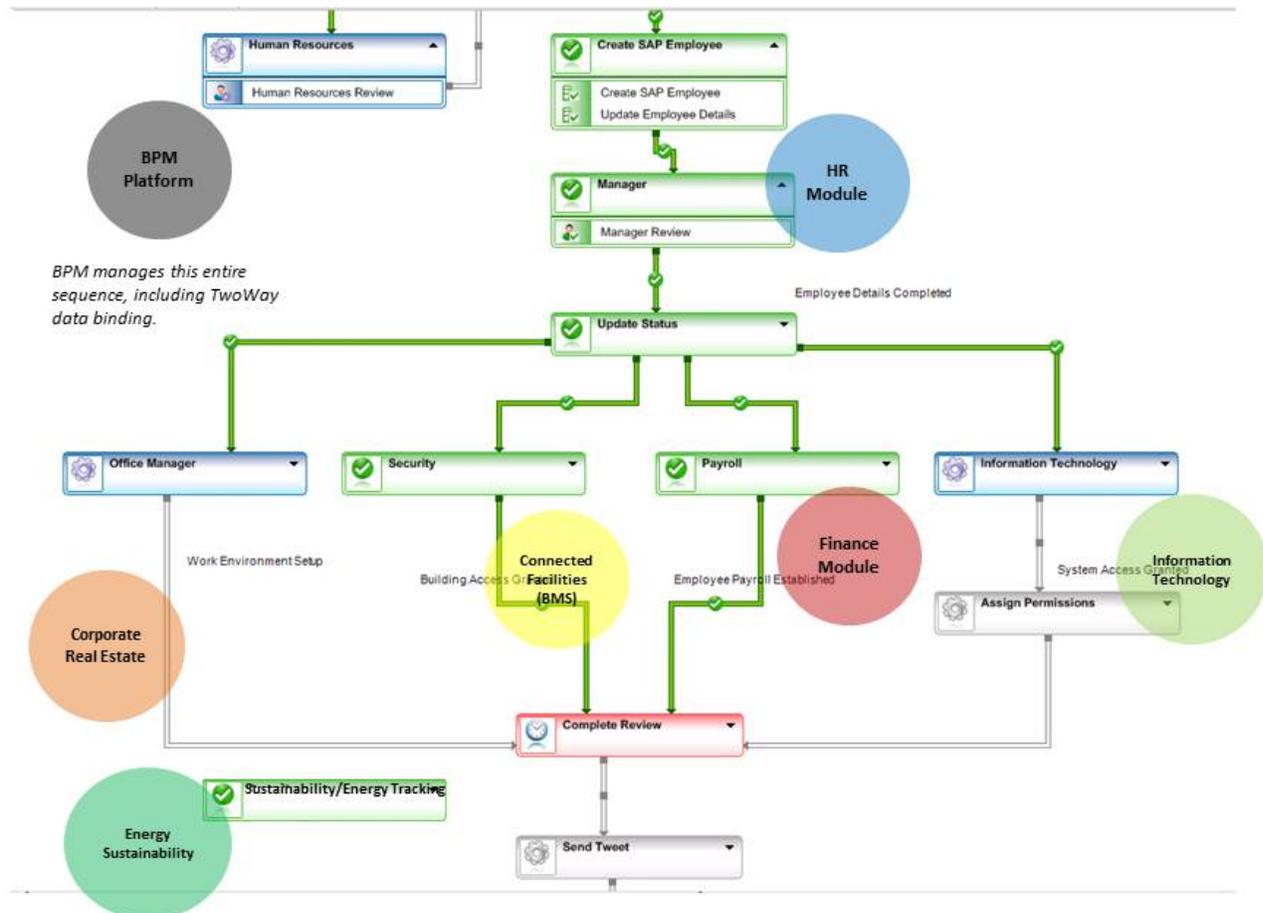
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When Jim Young and Howard Berger of RealComm presented their vision of the “[Enterprise Architecture Overview](#)” at CoRE Tech this last November, we felt it ushered in a new level of sophistication in the hopes of integrating the last business silo (facilities) into the greater

enterprise through Business Process Management (BPM). Many large enterprise clients utilize BPM to maximize business efficiencies to ensure success (i.e. clinical trials). Our experience is that in many instances these BPM solutions are elaborate deployments that automate human to machine integration of process workflows into numerous disparate back-office systems. We found measured productivity gains to be off the charts. Therefore, we were excited to learn more about the vision and its potential impact to our industry.

Although incorporating BPM into enterprise-wide architectures has been used for a number of years, it hasn’t yet worked its way into the facilities business as a mainstream solution. To date, we haven’t heard of any successful commercial examples of organizations using BPM to integrate Building Management System data with back-office systems that are bridged with true human to machine process automation. Keep in mind though; we can’t confuse workflow with BPM. BPM is an orchestration platform that leverages machine logic to instantiate human to machine business processes. See the example and the next page:

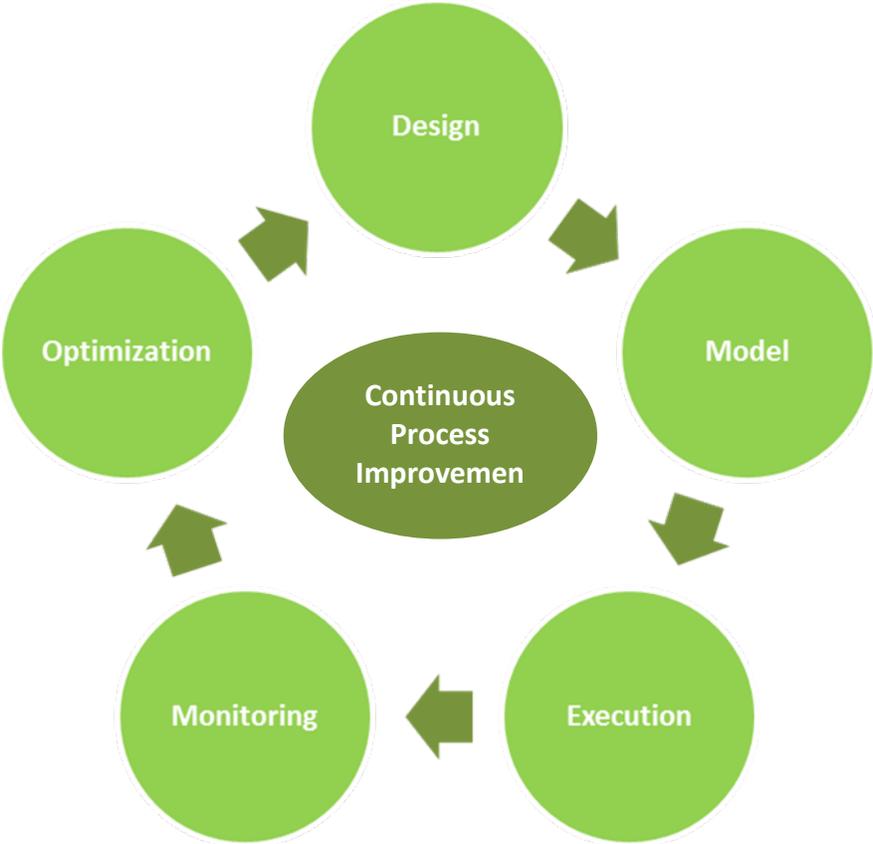
HR Onboarding BPM-Enabled Workflow Example



K2.com Workflow Example

Considering the elaborate business processes that are often used in the building management sector, and the undisputed results of BPA deployments in other business units within the enterprise, it is surprising that we haven't seen wide-scale adoption of BPM-enabled solutions in our industry. For whatever reason this is the case, it doesn't take a crystal ball to see that BPM will undoubtedly become a mainstream (or commodity) solution in our industry as Automated Fault Detection Diagnostics has become.

Nevertheless, beyond sophisticated process automation, BPM also provides us with the subsequent analysis of its transactional data that we can then use to **continuously improve our business**. Exposing bottlenecks and inefficiencies within workflow is invaluable to an organization that is focused on peak performance. BPM ensures this is the case!



We all know that Business Intelligence (BI) has become far more pervasive component of leading smart building designs. We should also be familiar with the fact that the rest of the enterprise has been using BI for years. Therefore, the insight that “multi-dimensional” data analysis could have on our ability to fully leverage BPM as a bridge connecting facilities to the enterprise, could be profound. For example, let’s say a grocer discovered that the “controlled” lighting retrofit enabled the produce department to keep its fruit out on the shelf for one more day. Now if that same organization had the ability to visualize all their building data (BMS analytics, energy, refrigeration, maintenance, etc.) against point of sales, delivery, occupancy and weather data (which most likely would be disparate data sources) and determined that the total impact, if implemented throughout their portfolio of stores (let’s say 38), could be (?). Who knows, maybe that subsidized lighting retro-fit could have a 1 month payback?

The ability to analyze this set of multiple data sources could provide a holistic view of the systemic impact the lighting retrofit had on the business. Let’s say that upon further analysis, the grocer may have found that extending shelf life by one day also provided delivery discounts, energy and maintenance savings, reallocation of employee resources, cross selling of other products that align with customer purchasing behavior, etc., etc. The point is, without the ability to visualize multiple data sources; you’d never get to this level of insight and operational performance.

The corollaries that emerge from disparate data visualization in the intelligent buildings sector could be extraordinary. However, we haven’t yet seen the commercialization of solutions that transform data from all major enterprise sources (including buildings) into one presentation layer that can be used to REALLY make better business decisions at all levels in the organization.

To operationalize this effect, BI can be used as a tool to help redefine business processes that are aligned with the organization’s key performance indicators. In other words, if we start off with a strategy to expose relevant data from operations, production, sales, distribution, etc. to a BI solution that we can then gain insight into process refinement or development, we can then use BPM to automate the solution in its entirety. Furthermore, our BI solution can be used against our BPM transaction data to move us into a state of continuous business process improvement, the pinnacle of operational excellence. Is the needle ready to be moved?