

Not so new ...

Already in 1995, workflow management technology was offered by many vendors. This is illustrated by the article “CeBIT-Rundgang/Vom Modellierungs-Tool bis zur komplexen Anwendung Workflow: Dokumente gleiten elektronisch von Hand zu Hand“ in Computerwoche of March 1995. The article (in German) describes the vendors offering workflow management systems at the CeBIT in 1995. In 1995, the CeBIT in Hannover was the biggest IT fair in the world, with 755.000 visitors.



Link: <https://www.computerwoche.de/a/cebit-rundgang-vom-modellierungs-tool-bis-zur-komplexen-anwendung-workflow-dokumente-gleiten-elektronisch-von-hand-zu-hand,1112505>

CeBIT-Rundgang/Vom Modellierungs-Tool bis zur komplexen Anwendung Workflow: Dokumente gleiten elektronisch von Hand zu Hand

Datum: 03.03.1995

Workflow, oder zu deutsch automatisierte Vorgangsbearbeitung, kann der Messebesucher sowohl als Management-Konzept wie als Erstellungs-Tool, aber auch als fertige Applikation finden. Der typische Anwender kommt aus der Versicherungs- oder Bankenbranche, aus Kommunen und oeffentlichen Verwaltungen. Doch auch im Vertrieb, in der Programmierung, im Business Process Engineering und zur Steuerung von Produktion werden Arbeitsablaeufer in mehr oder weniger flexiblen Schritt- und Instanzenfolgen ueber Workflow- Komponenten geregelt. Die Angebotspalette weist allerdings erhebliche Unterschiede im Funktionsumfang auf. Wer nicht Aepfel mit Birnen in einen Topf werfen moechte und sich selbst ein Bild vom gegenwaertigen Stand der Services, Produkte und Konzepte machen will, mag dem Rundgang folgen.

The article mentions workflow management vendors active 30 years ago, such as:

- Staffware
- CSE Systems Computer & Software-Engineering
- Filenet
- Digital Equipment
- Workparty
- IBM
- Lotus
- Software Ley (COSA)
- Oracle
- InConcert
- Etc.

Having used several of these workflow management systems (in particular Staffware, InConcert, COSA , IBM, FileNet, Oracle, etc.) makes me nostalgic reading this. It shows that process automation and process improvement has been around for longer than we think. Let me just mention people like Michel Zisman and Skip Ellis who already worked on this in the 1970-ties.

Below is a (poor) translation of the Computerwoche article:

CeBIT Tour/From modeling tool to complex application Workflow: Documents glide electronically from hand to hand

03.03.1995

Workflow, or automated process handling, can be found by trade fair visitors both as a management concept and as a creation tool, but also as a finished application. The typical user comes from the insurance or banking sector, from local authorities and public administrations. But workflow components are also used in sales, programming, business process engineering and to control production processes in more or less flexible sequences of steps and instances. However, there are considerable differences in the range of functions on offer. If you don't want to lump apples and oranges together and want to get your own impression of the current status of services, products and concepts, you can follow the tour.

Right in Hall 1, at stand number 5D4, there is a stand sponsored by the Austrian company CSE and run by the Workflow Management Coalition (WMFC) standardization committee, which currently has 108 members worldwide. In addition to manufacturers, it consists of representatives from universities, system houses and management consultants. They have set themselves the goal of standardizing the interfaces of workflow products.

CSE Systems Computer & Software-Engineering GmbH, based in Klagenfurt and with two branches in Salzburg and Vienna, was elected as the European office of the WMFC at the beginning of 1994. Emma Preininger will be available during CeBIT to provide information and discuss the work of the committee. CSE presentations on consortium topics can be heard at the IFABO computer trade fair, which takes place in Vienna from April 25 to 29, 1995.

At CeBIT, CSE will be represented by its partners with its "Workflow" product: Softpro in Hall 3, Stand 17, Lorenz Orgasysteme in Hall 5, Stand B16, Garmhausen and Partner at the Informix partner stand in Hall 3, Stand C3, B&S Carosoft in Hall 6, Stand A36 (Enac) and SNI Berlin in Hall 6, Stand A36 (Enac).

Imagery Software Inc. from Bedford, Massachusetts, will be exhibiting at the same address as CSE, Hall 1, Stand 5D4. The US manufacturer of imaging software is a wholly owned subsidiary of Eastman Kodak. The workflow features of the software range on offer are based on further developments in image processing. According to the manufacturer, "Groupstore" enables the design of an expandable distributed system for image, file and storage management in workgroups. The entire product family is based on "Netware 4.0" from Novell and a transaction-oriented SQL database.

Filenet GmbH, Bad Homburg, resides with its established, database-based product "Workflo" on Stand 5A2 in Hall 1. In addition to applications based on the product, some of which have been realized with partner companies, the manufacturer will be showing the "Visual Workflo" toolset, which is designed to allow processes to be changed without programming.

The Digital Equipment GmbH stand is located almost in the middle of the hall at 4H2. The topic of workflow is represented at DEC with the product "Linkworks". This is an event-driven ad-hoc workflow that users can put together using templates that can be accessed with point and click. A client-server system serves as the basis - with Macintosh computers or Windows PCs on the client side, with Unix machines as the server and relational databases - usually from Informix or Oracle - as the repository.

Additional workflow tools are also shown, which enable fax connections or imaging integration, for example. While the technical demonstration will be carried out by DEC, VW Gedas from Berlin and Inteco from Filderstadt will be showing applications for local authorities and the public sector in a partner corner.

If you are looking, you will hopefully also find the SNI workflow management system "Officeworld Workparty" in Hall 1. Siemens- Nixdorf Informationssysteme AG will be presenting customer solutions for banks and insurance companies as well as for industry and public administration. An example from the manufacturing industry shows a company-wide solution for accelerating international business processes, according to the provider. Workparty is based on a modular architecture and has interfaces to various IT and office platforms.

Olivetti is represented in Hall 1, Stand 4I2, with a workflow application, a demonstration of the council information system of the city of Bonn.

You also have to look for the IBM product "Imageplus/400". However, the area can be limited by the provider to Hall 1 or 2. The workflow solution offers document and folder management with process control functions. According to IBM Deutschland Informationssysteme GmbH, interested parties can find products that support workgroup computing and workflow concepts in both halls.

Hall 2

Hall 2 is home to the strongest technology provider in the field of workgroup computing, Lotus Development Corp. The German company from Munich and its partners will be presenting demo solutions based on "cc:Mail" or, as in the case of the following companies, "Notes".

"Notes" as realized by the following companies.

- BDL Computer + Software Systemhaus GmbH, Berlin
- Becketal GmbH, Munich
- Commtrain Consulting AG, St Gallen
- Compunet Computer Consult GmbH, Cologne
- Debis Systemhaus DCS GmbH, Aachen
- Gedys Software Consulting GmbH, Braunschweig
- Haus Weilgut GmbH, Ettlingen
- Information Management Consulting, GmbH, Mammendorf
- Kasten Consulting GmbH, Leverkusen
- MEL Dr. Neuhaus GmbH, Hamburg

- NIS Norddeutsche Informations-Systeme GmbH, Ralsdorf
- Retarus Network Services GmbH, Hoehenkirchen-Siegertsbrunn
- Sercon Service Konzepte fuer Informations-Systeme GmbH, Boeblingen
- Teamwork Software and Consulting GmbH, Paderborn
- Tinzic (Germany) GmbH, Cologne
- Unilink Informationssysteme GmbH, Dresden
- Whats Up Informationsmanagement AG, Unterhaching
- H/B Consulting GmbH, Ettlingen
- Edcom EDV Training and Service GmbH, Munich
- DSA GmbH, Cologne
- Analysis GmbH, Petersberg/ Marbach
- Pavone Informationssysteme GmbH, Paderborn
- C & L Unternehmensberatung GmbH, Department K 3, Hamburg
- Systor AG, Herrenberg
- Isocor Germany, Thomas Eggers Sales & Marketing Consultant, Munich
- Visolution Inc, Helsinki

Notes and cc:Mail allow transparent and interoperable applications. Lotus divides workflow into routing, coordination and the actual productive application area. The division corresponds to the categorization of their entire groupware system into messaging, document management and services.

Workflow routing is based on the "store and forward" principle for e-mail, while document management is used for coordination. The workflows are stored in a template library. From there they can be reused or distributed. Notes applications can be managed via a Notes database or relational systems that are connected with the help of messaging or database lookups.

Notes is available on four Unix operating systems: Open Desktop from SCO, HP-UX, AIX and Solaris 2.3. In addition, the product runs on Windows, OS/2, Macintosh, NLM and Windows NT.

Only on the client: Notes competitor MS Exchange

Microsoft's main stand is also located in Hall 2. Here you can get a first impression of "Exchange", a Notes competitor product that is supposed to give Lotus a run for its money. According to Microsoft, it is about to be delivered. A beta release of the Exchange client can be seen. The software giant is also presenting the workflow tool "Electronic Forms Designer" (Eforms). It is suitable for designing forms, sequential routing and registering external sources. Eforms is based on Visual Basic and the MS Mail communication service and provides ready-made templates.

As a Microsoft partner, RKK Informationssysteme GmbH, Hamburg, will be exhibiting in Hall 11, Stand A62. Management Informations Systeme GmbH (MIS), Darmstadt, with a workflow application and the company Dialogika can be seen on the main MS stand.

SAP denies lifting for legacy systems

At the next stand, a German flagship company invites visitors to linger: "Up to now, R/3 has not had active user management," says SAP manager Peter Ruediger. But in version 3.0 - the first versions are expected to go out to selected customers in July - this is set to change.

"Business Workflow" is the name of the information and user management module, which is to be set up "above" the SAP level. However, according to Ruediger, the higher control level does not eliminate the integration of business processes. Workflow is by no means seen as "a fresh cell cure for old systems". Interested parties are invited to visit Ruediger from Monday to Saturday and Matthias Blume in the following days. Some workflow templates will already be on display in individual applications.

Hall 3

Software Ley GmbH will be represented three times in Hall 3: At CCI, stand D 32, Sybase, stand C 10, and Informix, the software company from Pulheim will be presenting "Cosa" for computer-aided processing. According to the provider, Cosa provides tools for modeling, analyzing and simulating process and organizational structures.

The software for electronic processing corresponds to the WfMC reference model. In addition, the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) is to certify the package in accordance with the ITSEC (IT Security Evaluation Criteria) E1 standard. For use, 300 MB disk space is required on the server and at least 20 MB on the client. Unix, OS/2 and Windows NT are possible server operating systems, DOS, OS/2, Unix and Windows on the client side.

At the Oracle partner stand in Hall 3 B 29, ISB Institut fuer Software-Entwicklung und EDV-Beratung GmbH, Karlsruhe, will be demonstrating workflow as part of a process management system that is currently being used as a test installation in various state offices. From the assignment of a file number to the creation of further documents and the allocation of individual documents, a repository enables both a rigid and a flexible implementation of the workflow principle.

Partner concepts for fluid processing

The Oracle stand is also home to another provider. Procad GmbH und Co KG from Karlsruhe is presenting a workflow management concept. It integrates functions for controlling the product development and release process, for blocking documents for review and processing steps, for forwarding documents within networked working groups and for notification. The concept is implemented with the engineering data management product "Pro*File". It manages product data, CAD models, drawings and documents in the technical office. There are interfaces to the following CAD products, for example: Pro/Engineer, Euclid, Cadra, Autocad, Proren as well as to word processing and DTP systems.

Also in Hall 3 and on the Oracle partner stand B29 is Promatis Informatik GmbH & Co. KG from Karlsbad. It will be presenting "Income", a tool for planning workflow systems, using a case study realized with the help of partner company Vision Software Plc, Dublin.

The object-oriented "Piuss Penta" has a so-called "workflow configurator" with which, according to the manufacturer, PSI AG fuer Prozesssteuerungs- und Informationssysteme, Berlin, flexible order processing can be tailored. The product, which will be presented in Hall 3 at Stand B57, can be integrated into other workflow management systems.

At Stand D64 in Hall 3, Consulting fuer Office und Information Management GmbH (COI) from Herzogenaurach will be offering applications ranging from document management and electronic form processing to company-wide workflows based on "COI-Businessflow", according to the tool's manufacturer.

According to Carlos Bonas, half of the VW-Gedas stand C09 is dedicated to the topic of workflow. The Berlin-based company markets the DEC modular system "Linkworks" under the name "Synergy for Windows". To this end, both its own coded solutions, such as a council information system, as well as those from third-party providers, including a program for building permit procedures, were integrated into the DEC system.

The target groups for the VW Gedas applications are local authorities and public administrations. The company's own ideas for the further development of the Policom project initiated by the federal government will be presented at the trade fair. It deals with Berlin-Bonn communication, which has become necessary due to the relocation of the ministries. In particular, it deals with the integration of electronic appointment schedulers, the barcode-based division of digital data and paper-based data as well as a mobile desk.

ICL will be presenting its own product "Teamflow" at stand E03. Teamware partners are also represented here: Carano Informationssystem GmbH, Berlin, and LBB Computer GmbH from Riebnitz-Damgarten. Carano will be presenting a workflow desktop. LBB will be showing a sales organization and control system as well as a PPS system. The products of both sub-exhibitors have been integrated into "Teamoffice" from ICL.

Hall 4

In Hall 4, Stand H 03, Dialogika GmbH, Saarbruecken, together with Kappmeyer + Partner GmbH, Saarbruecken, will be showing a multimedia example process as used in aircraft maintenance. According to the supplier, the application integrates spoken dictation or comments, graphics and video sequences alongside the usual written text.

A PC with multimedia equipment and the Dialogika product "Multidesk" as well as the authoring and multimedia system "Insight into Information" or "Insight into Multimedia" from the partner company are sufficient for such an application. Anyone wanting to find out about the innovations in "Multidesk Access 2.0", a workflow management system for MS Office, will have to go back to the Microsoft partner stand in Hall 2.

Sales immersed in the flow of information

On the first floor of Hall 4, H54, interested parties from sales and service organizations can visit the CAF partner stand to see what MSP Systems GmbH, Leverkusen, understands by a workflow system for sales representatives. "Snap for Windows" will be presented in conjunction with "Remoteware" as a central communication management system which, according to the provider, enables an unlimited number of connections to external remote and local network users. The distribution of documents can be taken into account depending on individually defined business processes with viewing, forwarding and approval notes.

Hall 5

In the next hall, IABG mbH, Ottobrunn, will be demonstrating the "Prominand" process control system on stand G10, which, according to the manufacturer, is particularly suitable for the banking and insurance sectors. An excerpt of a banking environment in real use will be shown.

Communication Information Technology GmbH (CIT), Berlin, on the other hand, will be presenting its "Workflow Analyser" product at Stand A57 in Hall 5, a tool for modeling and optimizing business processes.

The provider understands workflow analysis as "gradually running through various scenarios and examining different forms of operational organization". The results can be compared with the help of a simulation of "what-if cases". Accordingly, the tool consists of three components: the modeling component, which is based on SADT (Structured Analysis and Design Technique), the simulation module, which converts the SADT models into Petri nets, and the evaluation of simulations using MS Excel.

The "Staffware" workflow engine from London-based Staffware Plc, based on a central database server, can be viewed on stand B65 of AIC Software & Consulting, Sulzbach. AIC will be showing exhibits from the field of business process engineering, whereby the workflow product is linked to a modeling and simulation level that was implemented with "Structware" from Obus GmbH in Ismaning.

Applications from ongoing projects will also be presented. For example, the exhibitor has developed a customer service and complaint processing system for Lufthansa as well as a workflow management system for sales support. The user, Gas-, Elektrizitaets- und Wasserwerke Koeln AG (GEW), can provide information on this topic itself - the project managers will be available for this purpose at CeBIT from March 13.

Hall 11

From Hall 5, the workflow-savvy manager takes a long walk to Hall 11, directly to Stand B14. "Inconcert" is a database-supported workflow management system for designing and optimizing business processes. It originates from the Xerox business unit Xsoft and is marketed in Germany by Rank Xerox GmbH from Duesseldorf. The object-oriented client-server tools will be demonstrated at the Novell partner stand. According to the provider, typical areas of application are project management, publishing, public administration and order processing. The tool can also be used in computer-aided software development (CASE).

Hall 18

Hall 18 offers a special banking show this year. Pavone Informationssysteme GmbH has contributed to the realization of the workflow component of a comprehensive banking branch solution with its in-house product "Groupflow". The Paderborn-based company is also represented as a partner on the Lotus stand in Hall 2.

On a joint stand with M+S Elektronik in Hall 18, Stand A24, CRI Deutschland GmbH will be presenting the client-server-capable workflow management products "Life*Flow", "Life*Odin" and "Life*Office". The Frankfurt-based software company is targeting banks in particular, but also industrial and service companies. While Life*Flow supports transaction management, Life*Odin is an archiving system. Scanners, printers and optical storage media can be connected. According to the provider, Life*Office is an office communication system.

Hall 20

The workflow solution "Diaprod" from Seitz GmbH, Pforzheim, is based on the standard modules of the SAP R/3 software. Diaprod is available for the areas of PPS and sales. According to the provider, Diaprod can be used to control and coordinate business sub-processes, automatically

trigger subsequent steps and collect and merge the execution of parallel processes. A demonstration of the scope of services awaits interested trade fair visitors at Stand C25 in Hall 20.

Hall 21

Hall 21, Stand C30, is home to Hosoft GmbH from Munich. Their product "Cora II" is intended for use in production development environments and helps to avoid costly downtimes and waiting times. The tool has functions that manage the data and documents that are generated

and documents and can track and control workflows.

Hall 23

At the Debitel stand in Hall 23, A42, Business Systems Consulting, Gesellschaft fuer Betriebswirtschaft und Systemloesung mbH (BSC), Bodenheim, will be presenting its Notes-based information management program "BSC-Info". The application software, which is used by German employers' associations, includes archiving, document management, process management and mailing modules.

European workflow growth market

Turnover in dollars: 1993; 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997; 1998.

Germany: 15.1; 20.8; 27.1; 35.3; 45.6; 58.6.

France: 13.0; 17.8; 23.2; 30.2; 39.1; 50.2.

Italy: 11.5; 15.8; 20.6; 26.9; 34.7; 44.6.

Netherlands: 4.3; 5.9; 7.7; 10.1; 13.0; 16.7.

Spain: 2.9; 4.0; 5.2; 6.7; 8.7; 11.2.

Sweden: 2.2; 3.0; 3.9; 5.0; 6.5; 8.4.

United Kingdom: 14.4; 19.8; 25.8; 33.6; 43.4; 55.8.

Source: Ovum

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