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## Five ways to get more value from your Oracle® applications

### Executive Summary

While cost efficiency is the order of the day for most enterprises, focusing solely on trimming the cost of delivering IT services can distract you from the bigger picture. In fact, the same application delivery model that helps you cut costs today, may not be the best model for creating long-term value.

Here, we've provided you with five ways to tap into the value of your Oracle applications to help differentiate your enterprise now and in the years ahead.

## Mobilize Your Applications

Real-time, mobile access to business data from your Oracle applications can radically change the way you do business to help increase productivity, accelerate processes, speed decision making and respond to customers and revenue opportunities more quickly.

However, adapting Oracle applications to be utilized with the many different types of mobile devices and platforms used today – coupled with the time and cost of provisioning, updating and supporting them – can put mobilization plans on hold.

By far, the most daunting challenge is security. In addition to meeting regulatory compliance requirements, data privacy and threat protection are especially critical, since Oracle E-Business and PeopleSoft HR applications hold your company's private financial, employee and customer information.

With the current bring your own device (BYOD) to work trend, your employees are most likely accessing your Oracle applications with their own potentially unprotected mobile devices already. So, the time to mobilize Oracle solutions to get more value – and in a highly secure manner – is now.

To ease your mobile application rollouts, you should know that there are solutions available to help you overcome the challenges above:

### Write Once, Deploy-To-Many Tools

Don't spend time and resources writing code to mobilize your Oracle applications for each mobile device and platform that comes on the market. Instead, take advantage of mobile application development tools that provide you with reusable components to write mobile applications once and run them on a range of devices and platforms.

### Mobile Workspace Management

To guard against the threats brought on by the BYOD trend, there are solutions that let you control, manage and secure your applications on a selection of personal smartphones and tablets. They create two distinct environments on the same employee-owned device: a personal workspace and a partitioned, encrypted, password-protected corporate workspace where users access business applications just as they would on a company-provided device.

### Mobile Device Management And Support

There are solutions that let you provision, update and support applications on mobile devices remotely and simultaneously to large user populations. Be aware that the quality of support is critical to user acceptance. Some SaaS-based solutions with mobile clients for your applications are delivered in a "you get what you get" model that lacks the support users need. As a result, many stop using the application.

### Mobile Apps Help Revolutionize the Agricultural Industry

A leading exporter of hay and grain mobilized a purchase order application to replace paper-based forms and weekly batch entries – and the delays they cause.

Now, buyers visit farms throughout the Western U.S. and use mobile devices and an online PO form to capture and transmit real-time data to back-end Oracle E-Business applications.

Up-to-date ordering and inventory data also improves supply and cash flow forecasting.

### Next Step

To help you obtain the most value out of your Oracle applications, look for a provider who has the solutions, tools and the support you need, along with proven mobility and security expertise to guide your mobilization initiatives.

### Make Oracle Applications Part Of Your Cloud Strategy

It's hard to focus on getting more value from Oracle applications when staff time is devoted to implementing and managing the infrastructure they run on.

With cloud services, a provider supplies, manages and supports the technology infrastructure for you. Since cost control is a high priority for most enterprises, and capital equipment expenditures are being scrutinized, the pay-per-use model of cloud services can provide a cost-efficient way to deliver IT services as an operating expense.

Further, with many of the earlier security and performance barriers about cloud adoption being addressed, there are more opportunities to expand the use of cloud services for transaction-oriented business applications, and as part of your overall cloud and IT strategy. Consider these cloud solutions:

#### Private Cloud

In this deployment model, the cloud infrastructure, whether existing in an on-premise or off-premise data center, is provisioned for exclusive use by a single company.

#### Public Cloud

This model enables you to connect to a service provider's multi-tenant cloud infrastructure via a public Internet connection and to benefit from the lower-cost advantages of a shared environment.

#### Hybrid Cloud

This is a mix of external cloud resources and a customer's on-premise IT resources. It helps protect existing investments while providing the freedom to select the service delivery model that aligns with a given business requirement or Oracle application.

### Cloud Growth

According to IDC's 2012 WAN Manager Survey, more than 20 percent of U.S. businesses currently use cloud services in their operations – primarily for data storage, backup/recovery and variable workload capacity.<sup>1</sup>

### Next Step

Instead of spending time on infrastructure management, your staff should be free to focus on getting more value from your Oracle applications. If you work with a cloud provider that offers application management as well as support services, you can have the flexibility to choose how far up the IT stack you want them to manage – from the OS to the application layer – and have the convenience of a total solution from one provider.

### Look For Ways To Optimize Business Processes

Using your Oracle applications to optimize or automate business processes can make your operations run more efficiently and at a lesser cost, which helps you get more value out of your applications.

With a proven maturity in the market, Oracle software is designed to support business processes across many industries. Yet, it also allows for modifications to support your company's specific business processes.

If you choose a SaaS model to deliver your Oracle applications, make sure your provider gives you the flexibility to adapt the applications to your specific business processes.

With some SaaS providers, a single application instance on a multi-tenant server supports the business processes for several different companies at the same time, so you must adapt your business processes to fit the SaaS application "as is," with the functionality it offers.

Your business processes should not be driven or dictated by a vendor or other companies sharing a server with you. You need the flexibility to adapt them to take advantage of new partnerships, customer feedback, emerging trends or other opportunities to drive revenue and differentiation.

If you're interested in Oracle partners that can offer subscription-based licensing, know that there are SaaS offerings that provide the benefits of subscription-based pricing, with the flexibility to configure the applications to meet your needs.

#### Optimize for Value

**Implement a self-service portal** with online tools for employees to view payroll and benefits information, update personal data, print tax forms or switch from paper-based checks to direct deposits.

**Automate the recruiting process** so job seekers can search and apply for jobs online, upload resumes, track the progress of the application and receive, accept or decline offers.

**Communications-enable your CRM application** with an instant messaging (IM) client that displays an on-screen list of subject matter experts for call center agents, along with specialty areas, current availability and contact preferences.

#### Next Steps

Look for an experienced provider with the expertise needed to assess and document the business processes currently supported by Oracle software and where additional optimization opportunities still exist.

After targeting specific business processes for improvement, a lack of time and in-house resources may be barriers to change. If that's the case, consider business process outsourcing (BPO) services. For example, a BPO provider could process payroll for you, drawing data directly from your Oracle payroll database, to accelerate the payroll cycle and free your staff from managing payroll taxes.

### Consider Implementing Oracle Modules Purchased But Not Deployed

If you haven't implemented all the modules included in the Oracle applications you purchased, you may not be getting as much value as you can from your investment. You are also missing the opportunity to leverage a rich set of capabilities those modules could offer your business – capabilities you may not even be aware of.

Further, if you're putting off an Oracle upgrade, you may also be missing the new functionality each new release can offer. Depending upon how long you've delayed the upgrade, your applications may be reaching end of support. Larger maintenance fees and performance problems may be on the horizon.

Budgetary concerns and short-term cost-cutting initiatives can be a barrier to upgrading or implementing new modules. They may also keep you from realizing long-term business benefits that could differentiate your business at a time you need to do so the most.

#### Bringing New Capabilities to the Business

To streamline and better integrate the finance and HR processes across its 36 U.S. offices, one company upgraded its PeopleSoft Enterprise applications to gain the advanced capabilities of an ePerformance module.

Now, the company can conduct in-depth evaluations of its 1,600 employees, synthesizing documentation from multiple sources. They can share and store documents, track performance and provide feedback in one system.

#### Next Steps

Arrange for a road mapping service. If you use a hosting or managed service provider, some providers include an annual road mapping service as part of your contract. During the service, they assess your current state – the applications you own, but have yet to implement or upgrade – then help you target the specific modules and functionality that could offer your business more value and a plan for moving forward.

#### Identify integration opportunities.

Look beyond the functionality provided by just one Oracle application. Think about how that application could be integrated with other Oracle applications and other software to create an entirely new way of getting something done.

#### Look Under The Oracle Umbrella

To ease integration, look for opportunities to integrate Oracle applications with other solutions from Oracle. For instance, consider a PeopleSoft® recruiting application.

Further, since the software components have already been developed and tested in a production environment, it can be faster and less costly than developing a new application from scratch, so you can introduce new functionality to your business sooner.

### Deliver Entirely New Application Experiences

While it's easier to work with pre-integrated solutions within a software suite, or with applications now included in the Oracle portfolio, there are situations where integrating feeds from multiple transactional applications – both Oracle and non-Oracle – can create new application experiences and opportunities.

For example, retailers could improve and personalize the shopping experience by integrating another vendor's mobile point-of-sale (POS) system with their back-end Oracle CRM systems. Viewing the customer's past purchase history, sales associates could recommend new items and close the sale, without the customer waiting in a check out line. For out-of-stock items, POS integration with Oracle eCommerce applications could let the associate instantly place the order online, before potentially losing the sale.

Instead of enduring a complex integration project, some providers offer development tools with pre-built application adapters, so you can write one user interface that combines information from multiple back-end business applications. To users, it looks like the data is coming from just one system.

### Integrate to Innovate

A large, \$2.5 billion healthcare organization worked with a hosting and application management provider to integrate data flows between their new PeopleSoft HR and payroll solutions and a Kronos time-keeping application, hosted by a different provider.

Now, instead of paper-based time cards and four disparate time-keeping systems, more than 18,000 employees swipe their cards into on-site time clocks in the same way. Data automatically flows into a single, consolidated PeopleSoft HCM database.

### Next Steps

Integration can be a complex undertaking with increased security risks if the data that passes back and forth between applications is unprotected. If you choose a managed service provider with system integration expertise, they can build, manage and support the interfaces and integrations that enable new types of transactions, a seamless experience for users and a highly secure environment for your enterprise applications.

**Talk to your AT&T representative to find out how AT&T can help you obtain more value from your Oracle and PeopleSoft Enterprise applications.**

1 IDC, "IDC Analyst Connection - Network-Enabled Cloud: The Next Phase of Cloud Evolution?" January, 2013.

