

IFS eVolve™



INDUSTRIAL & FINANCIAL SYSTEMS 

IFS eVolve™

Doing business in cyberspace: e-business

In the last years of the old millennium, the Internet became part of everyday life, both for individuals and companies. In nearly every corner of the world, people who know how to use the Internet can communicate, inform, and do business globally with the click of a mouse. Small companies with information-based products have become global players overnight. These companies move their products directly from sources to the consumer, with the Internet as the only communications and transportation media. Surviving and thriving in this Internet world requires much more than just a great Web site. It requires the ability to grow and adapt to the industry's rapidly changing environment. It means that the front office marketing and sales departments, the back office financial operations, supply and distribution chains, and engineering and manufacturing efforts are all structured to meet e-business demands.

Through the Internet we do not just reach our customers, we also reach our suppliers, partners, and employees. In short, we have been given a new medium that allows us to cheaply, quickly, and effectively create and maintain global relationships as easily as we maintain relationships around the corner.

Create and strengthen your business relationships

With the Internet, relationships are not just maintained. They are strengthened and built upon. Value is added to relationships with suppliers and partners, customers and consumers.

While the commercial use of the Internet is scarcely five years old, we have already seen revolutionary

challenges in several industries such as computer hardware and software procurement and distribution, book distribution, and lately, in publishing and music. However, for most industrial sectors, the potential of the Internet lies not in a revolution that involves throwing out your existing business operations, but in evolution, which means improving the way business is already done by adding new value to your relationships and processes. The question is how to do it.

Whether you are doing a little or a lot of business on the Internet now, you certainly are aware that if you don't plug your entire enterprise into a solid e-business strategy, you won't be able to meet customer demands, keep suppliers on track, or stay ahead of the competition. What you are looking for is an easy, affordable way to make the transition from your present operations to today's most advanced e-business. The way to do it is IFS eVolve.

What is your e-business strategy?

Analysts and other industry experts advise that if you don't have a good e-business strategy, your business is in serious trouble. That may seem a bit drastic, but no one denies that the Internet touches everyone. For most, it will be a positive experience that will significantly increase competitiveness. Nevertheless, without a well-thought-out strategy, the danger exists that you can quickly lose the competitive and market advantages it has taken years to establish. With IFS eVolve we provide you with a methodology and approach to e-business that puts you on the right track.

IFS eVolve takes you from good advice to firm action. After analyzing the effects of e-business on



your business, the relationships that can be affected, the effects on the supply and distribution chains, the core processes that are in focus, and the potentials for increasing income and reducing costs, IFS eVolve focuses on formulating a strategy that exploits the potential benefits of e-business in your company.

IFS eVolve Workshop

To help you determine the full effect of e-business on your business and to direct attention to business areas with the greatest e-business potential, we begin eVolve with a workshop.

E-business overview

We lay the groundwork for the IFS eVolve Workshop by presenting an up-to-date overview of e-business. Since the concept has been bandied about both in the press and the marketplace, there is a risk of confusion about what e-business really means for your business. Therefore, we start out by defining our terms, so that we can put the impact of e-business into perspective.

Business value chains and relationships

The greatest impact of e-business is on our relationships throughout the distribution and supply chains. All along the way, there are opportunities to reduce friction and costs, to smooth out the relationships, to speed up processes, to increase the flow of information, and, most importantly, to become more competitive.

Sizing up the competition

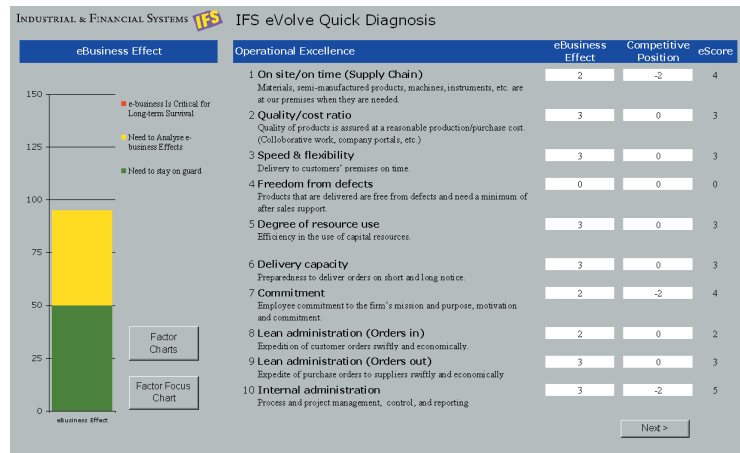
While we focus on relationships, we need to also size up how the competition is

doing. Have they gotten started? Are they breezing ahead, or are they behind? If the competition is using e-business capabilities to deliver products to customers anywhere, anytime, more quickly, and at a lower price, your business is in jeopardy. On the other hand, a bad start can be worse than no start at all.

Quick diagnosis

After a common meeting ground has been established, we do a quick diagnosis of the perceived effects that top management feels e-business will have on the enterprise.

The focus is on three value disciplines that together define the strategic position of the enterprise: Operational Excellence (how business processes contribute to company performance), Customer Relationships (how your company interacts with the marketplace), and Product Leadership (where your products and services stand in the market and against your competitors). By using a combination of the perceived effects of e-business in these three areas and the position of your company in comparison with the competition, we can measure the magnitude of the effects of e-business on your business. In addition, we show which areas to focus on in the ensuing eTrack Study.



IFS eTrack™ Study

Where to begin

At the eTrack Planning Meeting, the results from the eVolve Workshop are reviewed so we can confirm the focus of the eTrack Study. Emphasis is on identifying areas where e-business has the most potential to improve your competitiveness.

Focus on the core processes to add value and maximize your e-business payoff

Core processes are those that can give your business a leading market position. We build on these to increase your customer relationships, product leadership, and operational excellence. The focus of the analysis is to find the key relationships where e-business can add value in the form of greater customer loyalty, sales growth, shorter lead times, reduced costs, and a strengthened brand image on the marketplace. Alternatives should be considered, for example, outsourcing of non-core processes. Naturally, the economic effects of redesigning the core processes are also evaluated as part of this analysis.

Mapping out your e-business strategy

When the effect of e-business on the core processes has been thoroughly investigated, we map out a clear-cut e-business strategy and plan of action for your company. The eVolve approach is not to throw out

smoothly running operations, but to seek to improve them in a step-by-step manner.

Evolution, not revolution, will enable you to still move quickly, but with much less risk. The purpose of the strategy is to identify the best e-business solution for maximizing your e-business payoff.

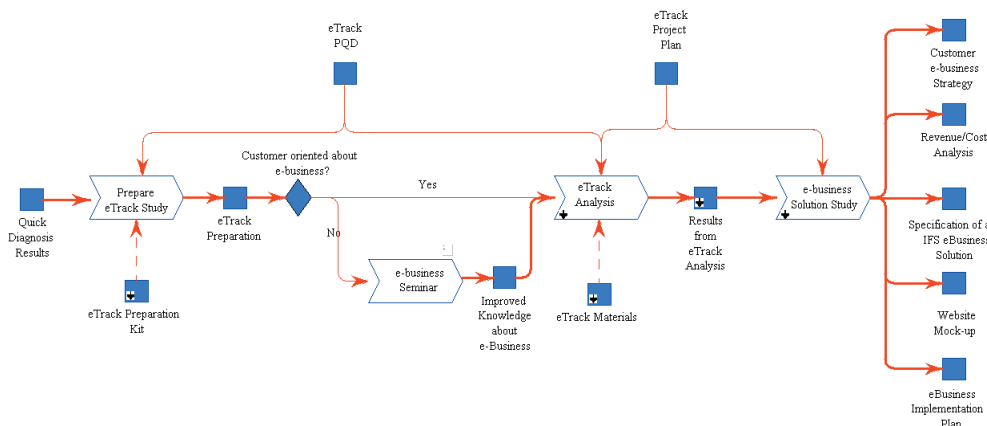
This is not easy, since success will be determined by how well you integrate your front-office and back-offices processes with e-business. If you choose the wrong technology or business systems, and your web site cannot handle the traffic, your business may suffer dire consequences.

Testing website ideas in a mock-up

eTrack spurs your creative instincts. Many ideas pop up that need to be tested. Therefore, as part of eTrack, we employ a Mock-up Shop that, in a few days, can professionally design a web site mock-up to test e-business ideas as to viability, usability, and feasibility.

Evaluating your e-business payoff and the game plan

We now move into the evaluation stage of the eTrack Study. After formulating an implementation plan (milestones, resource allocation, risk analysis, etc.), the income effects of implementing the strategy are evaluated and set against the costs of implementation in order to determine expected payoff. The sum results of eTrack provide a sound basis for the executive decision to move ahead.



About IFS and IFS Applications™

Industrial & Financial Systems, IFS AB, develops and supplies business applications that span the entire demand and supply chain. The company's approach to e-business allows customers to move step-by-step from their present operations to a solid e-business strategy that seamlessly integrates web storefronts, front office applications, and back office operations right down to the shop floor.

The IFS business concept is to increase a company's freedom of action and competitiveness by offering integrated solutions consisting of standardized business components. IFS uses proven, third-generation component technology that makes it easy to add a wide variety of new e-business or ERP capabilities.

IFS Applications includes web-based enterprise

application components, Internet storefronts, connectivity to other enterprise application solutions, collaboration with process control systems, a variety of e-commerce engines, and customer relationship management (CRM) applications. IFS Applications includes over 50 functional business components for improving business processes in medium-sized companies to large global enterprises.

IFS is the world's fastest-growing enterprise among the major vendors of business applications. The company has 3,200 employees with products sold in 39 countries around the world.

If you need further information, e-mail to info@ifsworld.com, contact your local IFS office or visit our web site, www.ifsworld.com.

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