

SDN and BPX: A Sounding Board for Tesoro Corp.

Applies to:

Enterprise SOA, Master Data Management (MDM), and Enterprise Portal.

Summary

Tesoro was founded in 1968 as a company primarily engaged in petroleum exploration and production. In 1969, it began operating Alaska's first refinery near Kenai. Today, Tesoro is a FORTUNE 150 company and one of the largest independent petroleum refiners and marketers in the Western United States.



Maxim V. Efimov, Enterprise Solutions Architect at Tesoro, began using SDN in 2004, and BPX in 2006. Today, Efimov relies on the Enterprise SOA, MDM, Enterprise Portal and BPX Forums to support his diverse projects. He discusses how the SDN and BPX Communities provide an important sounding board and educational resource for his work.

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Author Bio

Talila Baron is senior editor of SDN. She manages the SDN Newsletter, SDN homepage, and other special projects for SDN.

Baron: What was the challenge or "pain point" that motivated you to use SDN and BPX?

Efimov: I've used SDN to get technical information—the forums, especially. I can find solutions to any problem in no time. If SDN ceased to exist, it'd be a huge loss to me. Meanwhile, BPX provides a networking opportunity with like-minded people. It lets me keep my eye on the process side of things. Any technical solution has to be driven by business process; otherwise, the technical solution is irrelevant.

Baron: What are the most relevant industry trends or challenges that apply to your company?

Efimov: Our company is an established oil and gas refiner, turning crude oil into high-quality fuel products for our customers. Technology allows us to implement processes that improve reliability, increase operational excellence, and enhance crude flexibility.

Baron: What company-specific business challenges applied when you first joined the communities?

Efimov: There are two camps in information technology: Some people who think it's all about business process, and others who think it's all about technology. I think it's a healthy mixture. People have to meet in the middle.

Baron: What were you trying to achieve through membership to either SDN or BPX?

Efimov: SDN has forums that are invaluable; I can get the answer within 30 to 40 minutes. Without SDN, I'd have to wait three or four hours to get it elsewhere. SDN and BPX both provide a single access point for established, reliable, and fast information. Another benefit of using SDN is that there's less marketing material on SDN. You get a very specific answer to a specific question, but with no ambiguity.

Baron: Can you provide a specific example(s) of a project that you used SDN to accelerate or improve?

Efimov: I don't use SDN or BPX to support large projects, but I use the communities instead for smaller, quicker questions. I want to hear what people are doing, check my theories in the forums, and find workarounds. I want to find creative solutions, but without going into the deep-end to customize them. The communities let me make sure my solutions are in line with other people's solutions. In that way, they're an important sounding board for me.

Baron: Which specific SDN/BPX resources (forums, blogs, Wiki, etc.) did you use?

Efimov: I use Enterprise SOA and MDM forums right now, as well as BPX forums.

Baron: How does collaboration with other experts on SDN/BPX help you in your daily work?

Efimov: It's all about getting faster answers and having a sounding board.

Baron: What is the overall benefit of SDN or BPX to your business?

Efimov: Information and networking. Using BPX, I've made important contacts with whom I hope to meet in person at conferences and events. I've also met people from other industries with whom I can discuss streamlining business processes. I also got involved with ASUG because of BPX. I believe the knowledge I gain from these contacts benefits my work and my company.

Baron: What value did SDN or BPX ultimately create for your customers?

Efimov: My job is to provide strategic answers. Collaborating with other people on SDN and BPX is yielding those answers about business processes.

Baron: How has participation in SDN or BPX increased the recognition and credibility of your company?

Efimov: The end-goal is to participate, which leads to recognition of our efforts, and later, leads to credibility with end-customers. I wrote a blog on SDN on the SAP NetWeaver stack, for example, which improved my recognition by starting a dialogue with other employees here.

Baron: What are your next steps with SDN or BPX?

Efimov: I want to contribute more. The quality of information is really what drives SDN and BPX. It's what makes it great and why I'll keep going back.

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