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Sales Executives and Managers, This Mobile Solution's for You

SAP's New Mobile xApp Boosts Productivity by Untethering Routine Tasks

Laptops and mobile devices already provide some flexibility to workers on the move – but, in many cases, not enough. Executives, managers, and sales reps still need frequent access to information and applications that rely on a tethered network connection. Even for simple tasks like looking up customer contact information, entering account data, or pulling an analytic report, sales executives and managers still find themselves routinely calling the office or booting up their laptop – just to complete their day-to-day work.

To fill this gap, SAP has developed a new composite application, **SAP xApp Mobile Business Connection** (SAP xMBC), specifically tailored to the business needs and work habits of sales executives and managers.

SAP xMBC is built using the tools, platform, and modeling capabilities – which we discussed in an earlier *SAP Insider* article¹ – delivered with the latest release of SAP NetWeaver Mobile (see sidebar on the next page). The fifth SAP-provided composite application dedicated to mobile users,² this application is designed to streamline the “busy work” that sales executives and managers face, in turn boosting worker productivity and improving the bottom line.

Help Sales Executives Do What They Do Best – Sell!

A sales executive performs both *sales-related* and *non-sales-related* activities during a typical day. Sales-related activities are those actions that can be linked directly to making a sale – giving a sales presentation to an important decision maker or finalizing

the quote for a prospect, for example. Non-sales-related activities include everything else – from responding to a customer's service request to providing a manager with the quarterly sales forecast. One of SAP xMBC's key purposes is to help sales executives minimize time spent on non-sales-related activities, allowing them to spend more time selling.

To do this, SAP xMBC provides a collection of capabilities that enable sales executives to access information and perform many common tasks using a mobile device. Sales executives can use SAP xMBC to:

- Look up sales order status, service requests, or even the phone numbers of key customer contacts
- Stay informed of key customer activities through handheld-based alerts and direct access to activity histories
- Better coordinate internal resources to address customer needs; from any location, SAP xMBC users can provide more immediate service to clients

Consider this example: Customer A needs an update on his service request, so he calls his sales executive – who happens to be on site with Customer B to close a new deal – looking to schedule a technician's visit. To help Customer A (and he is under a lot of pressure to do so), the sales executive would typically need to call back to the office to research the status of this customer service request. This would take time away from his immediate task with Customer B and could result in delays and miscommunication with Customer A.

But with a few clicks through SAP xMBC on his BlackBerry, the sales executive can quickly find the root of the problem: The service request has been ranked “low priority” based on limited information



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¹ See “Introducing Project Mobile Fast Track: A Quick and Easy Approach to Mobilizing Your Business Processes” in the July-September 2006 issue of *SAP Insider* (www.SAPinsideronline.com).

² SAP's additional composite applications for mobile users include SAP xApp Mobile Sales, SAP xApp Mobile Service, SAP xApp Mobile Asset Management, and SAP xApp Time and Travel. See www.sap.com/solutions/mobilebusiness for more information.

✓ **NOTE!**

SAP xMBC is ready to use out of the box. For any customized or industry-specific business needs, SAP customers and partners will be able to easily build and deploy their own mobile composite applications using the new modeling capabilities of SAP NetWeaver Mobile.

Consider SAP xMBC your mobile “assistant,” helping you with routine tasks so you can focus on more strategic activities.

provided by Customer A. The rep can then immediately escalate the issue, and in a short time, the service request is assigned to a field engineer. Armed with this information, the sales executive can give Customer A an update – all from Customer B’s parking lot! SAP xMBC empowers sales executives, wherever they are, by connecting them to the enterprise at all times, enabling them to better serve their customers.

But it’s not just sales executives who can benefit from mobile access to applications and information.

Unchain Your Managers from Their Desks

Today’s business managers, whether or not they travel frequently, are not typically glued to their desks throughout the business day; in any given week, a manager could be dashing off to meetings, collaborating with coworkers, or visiting customer sites. Yet managers are still responsible for managing projects, people, and resources, and they need to perform many tasks – approving a purchase request or viewing an analytic report, for example – that rely on a plugged-in network connection.

Consider a manager that is about to meet with an important customer but is unaware that this customer has a critical service issue that hasn’t been addressed promptly. To access this customer’s account information and service history, the manager would typically have to boot up her laptop or call the office.

With SAP xMBC, the manager can use any mobile device – a BlackBerry, a Windows Mobile Smartphone, or a Nokia Smartphone, for example – as an extension of her office-based laptop or desktop; she receives an alert about the customer’s current status on her handheld. With this information and a few clicks within SAP xMBC, she can assign the issue to one of her go-to service representatives, providing better, faster service to a valuable customer *before* she walks into the meeting.

SAP xMBC effectively acts as an “assistant,” enabling managers to complete routine tasks regardless of where they are. With SAP xMBC, managers can:

- View a comprehensive KPI report through a handheld device, react to any problems, and take corrective measures immediately
- Review and approve personnel or financial requests on the road
- Subscribe to and receive alerts for key events relevant to their role so they’ll always be “in the loop”

Don’t Interrupt Regular Workflow Just Because Employees Aren’t at Their Desks

With SAP xMBC, collaborative work between sales executives, service representatives, and their managers becomes more fluid, creating value in an increasingly mobile workplace. Managers and sales

A New Technical Framework for Making Business Processes Mobile

To fulfill business needs for mobilizing key functionality, IT teams are turning to SAP NetWeaver Mobile, the holistic, modular platform that helps them create, deploy, and manage mobile composite applications. Through this platform, SAP is delivering standard composite applications – like SAP xMBC – that leverage enterprise service-oriented architecture (enterprise SOA) to deliver immediate business value. Because SAP xMBC is built on a purely model-based environment, customers can leverage, change, and customize the composite application to meet their specific needs easily and quickly.

Within SAP NetWeaver Mobile is the mobile application modeler. This modeler provides a visual, code-free modeling environment – SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer³ – that’s tailored to create sleek mobile applications and use enterprise services already available from various SAP and non-SAP applications. This modeling framework makes the composite application design process nearly as simple as dragging and dropping building blocks into place. Coupled with the corresponding runtime-generation capabilities for a wide range of mobile devices (Windows Mobile, BlackBerry, and Nokia) and other UI channels (Duet and SAP NetWeaver Voice), these capabilities allow businesses to rapidly create multi-channel composite applications that will quickly extend the value of mySAP Business Suite.

³ For more on SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer, see “Visual Composer or BEx? Pick the Right Tool for the Right Application” by Scott Cairncross, Prakash Darji, and Derek Johnson in the July-September 2006 issue of *SAP Insider* (www.SAPinsideronline.com).

reps can react quickly and accurately to customer requests, increasing their productivity even if they're on the move. They can leverage the tools they need immediately – without having to log on to their laptop, call someone back at the office, coordinate appointments with customer service, or perform any other routine tasks that could create a time lag.

Conclusion

Sales executives and managers aren't always at their desks, so they need untethered access to the applications and information they consult repeatedly throughout their workday. Filling this space in the mobile market, SAP developed the new SAP xApp Mobile Business Connection specifically for these mobile workers. Built on top of SAP NetWeaver Mobile's modeling framework and online capabilities, SAP xMBC is ready for quick implementation, out-of-the-box use, and immediate and noticeable investment returns.

SAP xMBC helps sales executives minimize time spent on non-sales-related activities and enables managers to perform routine tasks without relying on a network connection. The result? Improved internal collaboration, bolstered customer relationships, and boosted sales productivity. ■

With SAP xMBC, collaborative work between sales executives, service representatives, and managers becomes more fluid, creating value in an increasingly mobile workplace.

Additional Resources

- www.sap.com/solutions/mobilebusiness
- "Introducing Project Mobile Fast Track: A Quick and Easy Approach to Mobilizing Your Business Processes" by Hansen Lieu in the July-September 2006 issue of *SAP Insider* (www.SAPinsideronline.com)