CREATE APPLICATIONS EASILY WITH VISUAL COMPOSER TOOL

Many standard IT applications do not give business users the rich, visually appealing Internet experiences they demand. But the usual alternative – creating innovative applications from scratch – can be difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. The SAP NetWeaver® Visual Composer tool lets IT specialists and business analysts create model-based, flexible applications quickly, without writing a single line of code. The result? Streamlined business processes, lower IT development costs, and satisfied employees and customers.

To create new IT applications that increase business value, organizations must innovate. They must design prototypes rapidly and do it at a sustainable cost. And they must enable end-user self-service, to maximize user adoption and resolve the gap between business needs and IT reality.

Achieving innovation is not easy. And achieving it through traditional technology, which often involves custom or "from scratch" application development and deployment, can be difficult and time-consuming. Custom applications are usually expensive to develop, maintain, and upgrade. In addition, they rely heavily on continuous support from the IT department. These applications, often developed by IT groups without the business user in mind, do not provide an engaging experience – which is why customers, employees, and business partners are reluctant to use and adopt them.

For applications to deliver a rich, visually appealing Internet experience, they must be based on a user-centric application model. They must also be customizable. And they must be adaptable to each user's specific job role. The SAP NetWeaver® Visual Composer tool fulfills all these requirements and more. With this tool, a business analyst or IT specialist can create business applications quickly and cost-effectively, without having to write a single line of code.

Model-Driven Development

The model-driven SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer lets you use simple drag-and-drop techniques to develop pattern-based or freestyle user interfaces and define the flow of data between them. The result is an efficient, customized, visually rich online experience that lets your business perform at its best by letting your customers, employees, and business partners perform at their

best. Figure 1 shows the development environment, while Figure 2 demonstrates an appealing user experience developed and deployed via SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer.

The user interfaces you create can be customized using a mouse instead of a keyboard. Leveraging Adobe Flex technology, the visual composer tool provides a development model that combines the richness and responsiveness of desktop applications with the broad reach of Web applications.

The Flex technology embedded in the SAP NetWeaver platform improves users' experience with the visual composer tool in a wide range of applications including analytics, business-process automation, self-service, and online commerce. Flex products enable developers to build effective, rich Internet applications (RIAs) that blend the responsiveness of desktop software, the cross-platform reach of the Web, and the expressiveness of the Adobe Flash environment. Adobe Flex technology is embedded in SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer to harness the power of RIA for your enterprise.
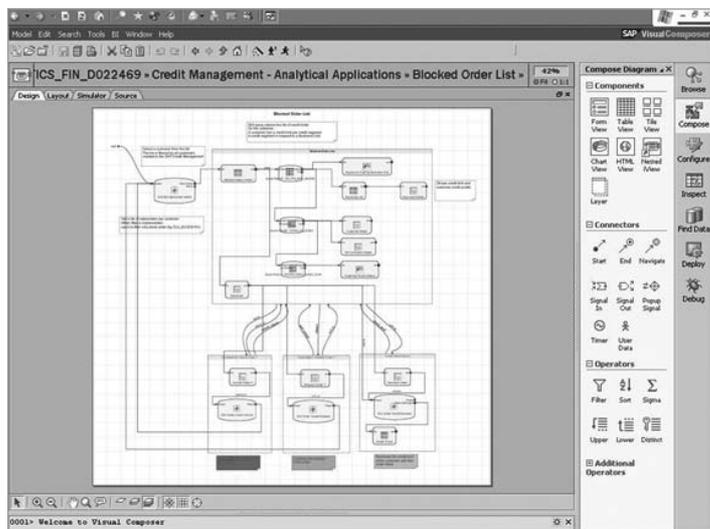
The model-driven SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer greatly accelerates the application development process and fosters business-user self-service. It enables business analysts or IT developers to compose visually rich applications that use analytic services, enterprise services, remote function calls (RFCs), application program interfaces, and stored procedures. In addition, it lets them reuse existing applications and create content using a modeling process and a visual user interface instead of manual coding.

Bridging the gap between the transactional and the analytical world, the visual composer tool is a perfect complement to existing SAP® offerings available for designing custom analytics, such as the SAP Business Explorer tool in the SAP NetWeaver Business Intelligence (SAP NetWeaver BI) component.
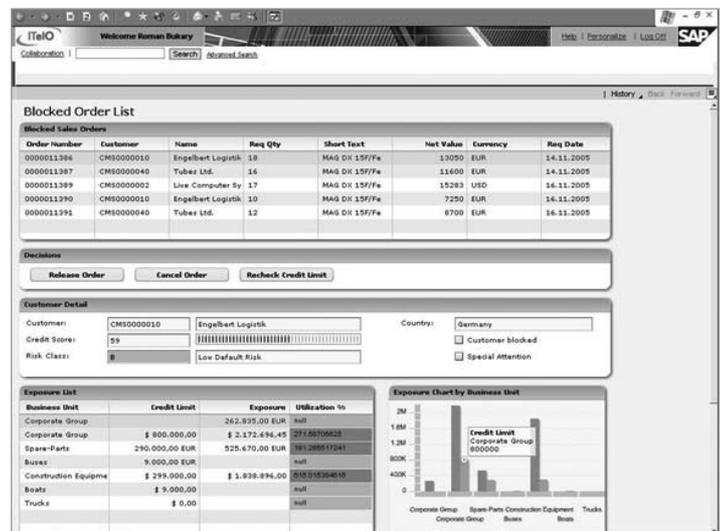

Figure 2: Sample Application Developed and Deployed via the SAP NetWeaver® Visual Composer Tool

Figure 1: Typical Development Environment

The SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer tool is based on Enterprise Services Architecture (ESA), the SAP blueprint for services-oriented business solutions. ESA enables the tool to consume Web and enterprise services and to offer a composition environment where you can quickly build new, visually appealing applications. The applications are built and deployed through the SAP NetWeaver Portal component, which gives you a single access point for modeling freestyle applications, reconfiguring existing applications, and customizing applications.

SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer can be used with a wide variety of services including transactional services from the mySAP™ ERP or mySAP Customer Relationship Management solutions and analytical services from SAP NetWeaver BI. Because it is based on open standards, it also supports many services provided by third-party tools or applications. Through its inherent connectivity kit, SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer can interface with transactional and analytical sources based on standards such as XML for Analysis or open database connectivity.

More Meaningful Business Applications

Leveraging the extensive user-interaction functions of Adobe Flex with SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer helps you build more meaningful business applications, including the following:

- Combining the transactional and analytical worlds into one integrated experience within the business process, which provides the correct context for decision making (for example, by giving the end user full visibility into a specific customer's sales history when approving a sales order)
- Developing guided, step-by-step processes that enable knowledge workers to collaborate in an analytical environment
- Providing a compelling RIA experience similar to that provided in leading online commerce applications for guided selling and guided service

In addition to the standard functionality delivered via SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer, developers can leverage Adobe Flex directly in the SAP NetWeaver J2EE-compliant environment for further custom developments.

Improved Efficiency, Lower Costs

The SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer results in a wide range of business benefits:

- It saves time by allowing rapid prototyping and deployment of innovative applications – no coding required.
- It offers a sustainable cost structure that lowers IT development and maintenance costs, since there is no code to maintain.
- It encourages self-service and buy-in from users because it is highly interactive and user-friendly.
- It improves employee productivity and customer satisfaction by providing a rich end-user experience.
- It adds business value and improves decision making by instantly providing business data to users.
- It improves overall efficiency through its streamlined development process.
- It improves user satisfaction by shortening the learning curve for new users and providing a rich, interactive user experience.

To Learn More

To find out how SAP NetWeaver Visual Composer can help your company develop innovative, user-friendly applications,[1] visit our Web site at **www.sdn.sap.com**.

To find out more about Adobe Flex technology, visit **www.macromedia.com/software/flex**.

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1. The version of the SAP NetWeaver® Visual Composer tool described in this document is a preliminary version and is not subject to your license agreement or any other agreement with SAP. This document contains only intended strategies, developments, and functionalities of the SAP® product and is not intended to bind SAP to any particular course of business, product strategy, or development. Please note that this document is subject to change and may be changed by SAP at any time without notice. SAP assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions in this document.

Powered by SAP NetWeaver

SAP solutions are powered by the SAP NetWeaver platform, the open integration and application platform that enables change. SAP NetWeaver helps companies align IT with their business. It allows companies to obtain more business value from existing IT investments and to deploy a service-oriented architecture. SAP NetWeaver reduces total cost of ownership and complexity across the entire IT landscape.

SAP NetWeaver powers mySAP Business Suite solutions, SAP xApps™ composite applications, and partner solutions. It provides the best way to integrate all systems running SAP or non-SAP software. SAP NetWeaver unifies integration technologies into a single platform and is preintegrated with business applications, reducing the need for custom integration.

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