Center-to-Peer-to-Center

A model for building maximal value from peer services

Characterisation of center services

- Can support large-scale operation
  - Very large data volumes
  - Usually single-enterprise
- Very good for “tracking”
  - State management and workflow
- Typical examples:
  - Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
  - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Modern architectures: J2EE, .NET
  - RDBMS data storage and management
  - Web interfaces
  - XML/HTTP interfaces (Web Services): SOAP, XML-RPC et.al.

Characterisation of peer services

- Can scale to an unlimited degree
  - No central resource bottlenecks
- Can be very fluid and ad-hoc
  - Collaboration largely under the control of end-users
  - (Groove): secure inter-company, inter-location, even offline
- Can be highly interactive *and persistent*
  - Instant messaging, chat
  - (Groove): continuous synchronisation of persistent information
  - (Groove): Structured activities – “tools”

Leverage

- Limitations of typical center services:
  - Inter-organisation use has problems
    - Firewalls, access control management, security
    - Systems integration
  - Inter-organisation appears as an edge-case
    - The wider issue is “location independence”

- Limitations of standalone Groove peer services
  - “uncontrolled interaction”
  - Ad-hoc is useful but needs to be put to business use

- **Integration can provide enormous business value: leverage new flexibility at the ‘‘edge’’ of the organisation**
- **Good models (architectural forms) are needed**

Model: Center-to-Peer-to-Center

One useful leverage model, with examples

CPC model

- Center system creates a peer interaction space
  - Triggered by a “managed event” in the tracking system
  - Context for this “managed event” is already available
  - People are needed to act on this event
- Individuals join the space to collaborate
  - In context
- Result of the personal collaboration is fed back to the central system
  - Usually the result is a very small amount of data
    - “Yes/No” decision
    - Recommendation

CPC example: ‘‘Partner Relationship Mgmt’’

- This example is described by Groove Networks’ “PRM scenario” and “GDK PRM sample”
  http://www.groove.net/solutions/scenarios/prm-example.gtml

- Partner Web Site = central portal
- Link: “connect to customer support”
- Groove space brings in customer, support, engineering
- Problem resolution result is published back to the portal FAQ

- This is “nearly CPC”: the peer interaction is facilitated by the central portal but not created by central “managed events”

CPC example: HR performance review

- Human Resources system
  - "Managed Event" (an event being tracked by the HRMS)
  - **"XYZ is due for a performance review"**
- HRMS knows the *context* for the performance review
  - Employee history
  - Organisational structure
  - Policies and procedures
- Places this context into a "peer space template"
- Passes this template to the responsible person
- Person opens the template
  - A Groove space is immediately created
  - Space contains all the necessary context (documents, checklists…)
  - Other individuals invited (even automatically) to participate
- Result: status and a one-page document (form)
  - Submitted back to the central HRMS using SOAP

CPC example: competitive intelligence

- Competitive Intelligence system
  - Tracks external information relevant to the company
  - For example in a Lotus Notes application
  - **Analyst classifies a new Görtner report as ‘‘needs response’’**

- Intranet Web page shows all “response needed” items
- Corp.Comm managers check this page regularly
- Click hyperlink: central system creates a 2kb XML document which is the “response decision space template”
- Groove space created immediately for this user, with
  - The source article
  - Intranet KM search and Web search page for other related info
  - Automatic invitations based on company expertise
- Quick forum for discussion, collaboration on response (using Word), decision on format (internal memo, press release, etc)
- Results sent to central CI system and publication system

Common threads

- Central system track
  - status
  - large volumes of information
- Peer services provide the right context for action
  - The right people
  - Intensive space for interaction around a structured topic
  - Automatically populated with the appropriate background
- Result of the peer interaction is sent back to the center
- Context of the peer interaction (the Groove space) may be *completely disposable*, or can be archived once finished

Implementation

- Central systems extended in very simple ways
  - Generate XML “space template” with context
    - Typically 2kb – 10kb only
    - Can be created “batch” then distributed by email
    - Can be created “on the fly” by (eg.) servlet / JSP
  - Accept structured results
    - HTTP POST
    - SOAP
    - Typically this facility will already be present with a Web interface
- Groove tools
  - “Bootstrapped” with context information
  - “Automatic invitation” capability

Result

- CPC systems provide a structured implementation model for peer services
- Highly effective
  - Extends and leverages existing investments
  - Very little infrastructure requirement for peer deployment
  - Easy to use
- Dramatic value in business terms: rapid response
- There are other models too, but this is a good place to start

More information

- For more information on implementing CPC processes in your company, contact

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