BMC Bridges Project and ITSM Worlds with Latest ITBM Release

Event

BMC Software released a significant enhancement to the IT Business Management solutions as of 3/31/2011. Among other improvements, the release integrates BMC's project portfolio capabilities (in the Demand and Resource Management module) with its Change Management solution.

Context

The need for better "business management" of large-scale Information Technology (IT) investments and operations is an ongoing industry theme. In general, EMA believes enterprise IT is under-managed relative to peer enterprise functions such as manufacturing operations, supply chain management, and commercial product development. The phrase "barefoot cobbler's child" is commonplace in the IT industry, signifying the fact that while IT automates the rest of the enterprise, its own value chain is poorly understood and fragmented.

BMC acquired ITM Software in 2008, a vendor of an integrated "business of IT" suite, and has renamed it to IT Business Management. Over the past two years, BMC has worked to integrate this acquisition with its Remedy Action Request System based platform towards the objectives of better cost and risk transparency, demand and portfolio management, vendor management, and IT governance.

The 7.6.04 Release

While this release has several enhancements, its primary focus is clear: Integration of BMC Demand and Resource Management to BMC Change Management. This is a **bi-directional integration**:

- Project managers can create and track change requests directly from their project management interface.
- Operational changes can easily be "rolled up" into releases and governing maintenance projects.

Other enhancements include an improved product installer, and improved internationalization and multi-currency support.

EMA Perspective

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES® (EMA™) analysts believe that the Project/Change integration is a strategically important foundational step for these BMC products.

Enterprise IT management professionals are well familiar with "the wall" – the notorious boundary between development and operations, over which new systems are "thrown." The historic friction here runs deep, and many development initiatives fail when challenged with the operational constraints that frequently arise in the release and deployment processes.

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In terms of IT management systems, one can see "the wall" clearly in the silo-like isolation of project management and IT service management tooling, a segregation that EMA believes is coming to an end. Historically, projects seek percentage allocations of staff (e.g., "Sue the database administrator is assigned 25% to Project X"). Service management applications, on the other hand, are typically ticket-driven: Incidents, Changes, Problems, Service Requests, and so forth.

Projects often generate service management tickets, but these are typically managed ad-hoc by the project manager and team. Some service management applications (especially when user customized) may ask for a project ID as one form of business sponsorship for the service activity. But in general, such integrations are the responsibility of end-user organizations, nor are there fully integrated views of the service impact of a given project.

The consequences of this disconnect can be dire for the IT staff, since management has no visibility into the combination of project and service demand. At a practical level, the project manager who is relying on "Sue the DBA" to complete deliverables by end of week may not realize that Sue has four other production changes that week as well. Sue's manager also may not have an integrated view into that demand.

Conversely, there is always concern about the quantity of "lights-on" activities in the large IT organization, i.e., the concept of "run" the business versus "grow" or "transform" the business. Change requests and the time spent on them are sometimes viewed as merely operational effort, regardless of the business driver. By grouping such changes into releases that can then be rolled up into ongoing maintenance projects, a truer understanding of "operational" spend can be gained. (EMA would recommend that such maintenance projects then be tied to an ongoing sponsoring IT service, for full service portfolio management.)

The trend is away from large, risky, "big bang" projects towards smaller grained Agile iterations of new functionality.

The need for such approaches has been compounded by development trends away from large, risky projects with "big bang" deployments, towards smaller-grained, agile iterations of new functionality. The "DevOps" movement is an important new trend in this regard, in its quest to make the deployment of new functionality so seamless and risk-free that it can be done several times a day if desired (Humble and Farley 2011). Applications of the Lean practice of *kanban* are also gaining traction as a means of IT demand management (Anderson 2010). All such practices will require much tighter integration between the project and operational worlds.

Therefore, from both a resource management and IT responsiveness perspective, the most important integration objective in IT management bridges the long-standing "wall" between development and operations. Practically speaking, bridging this divide requires integrating traditional PMO concerns with IT operational processes such as incident, problem, change, and service request. This is especially important in areas where IT resources tend to be shared across many projects and are also responsible for operational efforts.

Other IT vendors are also selling "universal queue" solutions bridging the project and operations areas. In the future, EMA predicts cross-pollination from true Manufacturing Resource Planning domains, especially those tackling the "job shop problem," Critical Chain project management, and cross-queue prioritization. The increasing concern over multitasking also contributes to this trend. Expect to see more sophisticated algorithms to help manage such "universal queues;" this will in turn require a level of analytical sophistication for those administering these tools.

All such advanced applications, however, require first the basic integration of the project and operational worlds, and BMC is taking important steps in this regard. EMA expects that integration with incident

and service request management will follow as well. Another avenue to consider would be integrating the issues, risks, and action items typical of project management into the same universal queue.

Finally, internationalization is important and often overlooked by US centric markets. BMC's investment on these fronts shows BMC's ongoing full commitment to this platform.

About BMC

Business runs on IT. IT runs on BMC Software.

Business thrives when IT runs smarter, faster and stronger. That's why the most demanding IT organizations in the world rely on BMC Software across distributed, mainframe, virtual and cloud environments. Recognized as the leader in Business Service Management, BMC offers a comprehensive approach and unified platform that helps IT organizations cut cost, reduce risk and drive business profit. For the four fiscal quarters ended March 31, 2011, BMC revenue was approximately $2.1 billion. Visit www.bmc.com for more information.

References

- Anderson, David J. (2010). *Kanban: Successful Evolutionary Change for your Technology Business*. Sequim, WA, Blue Hole Press.
- Humble, Jez and David Farley (2011). *Continuous delivery*. Boston, Addison-Wesley.