



Interview with IBM's Philippe Alles

As a leading executive in IBM's international middleware organization, Philippe Alles has unique insights into iWay Software's IBM-complementary technology and its partnership with IBM. Mr. Alles became director of IBM's middleware sales force in France, Belgium and Luxembourg in 1996. In 1999, he assumed responsibility as sales manager for IBM's WebSphere Business Process Management products for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). Information Builders Magazine spoke with Mr. Alles at IBM's European headquarters in Paris.

IB MAGAZINE - How would you say our two companies work together in Europe and what is your role in the partnership?

ALLES - Basically our two companies work together to deliver complementary products for business integration. For example, iWay Software licenses IBM's primary WebSphere Software platform as the basis of your own integration products. On our part, IBM in Europe offers our customers iWay productivity tools for accessing legacy data and applications.

My role in the partnership has two aspects. First, I sell iWay products to IBM customers. When it's appropri-

ate, we offer iWay products as part of our own enterprise solutions. Second, I'm responsible for partnerships—both independent software vendors (ISVs) and systems integrators. So in both aspects of my job, I get iWay's and IBM's joint resources focused, enabled and engaged in IBM Business Process Management (BPM) offerings for our customers' benefit.

IB MAGAZINE - What is the IBM Integration platform and why are iWay and IBM using each other's platforms?

ALLES - IBM and iWay are both middleware companies with products that are complementary. Our organi-


zation develops, markets and sells middleware solutions based on IBM WebSphere Application Server, WebSphere MQ Integrator and MQSeries products, along with technologies from partners like iWay Software. This flexibility gained IBM WebSphere recognition and acceptance as a strategic e-business platform. That's the primary reason our customers and partners like iWay Software select WebSphere Platform strategic products as a foundation for their own product portfolio.

IB MAGAZINE - You just mentioned several IBM products. What do they do?

ALLES - They're components of our rich and structured portfolio of BPM products. Our product portfolio covers every aspect of integration, from application flows to internal and external business process management.

First of all, there are IBM messaging products for "internal" integration—meaning BPM applications inside a customer's firewall. IBM MQSeries is the foundation of these products. It's a world standard and a core technology for tying mission-critical applications together in heterogeneous environments. We also offer IBM WebSphere MQ Integrator (WMQI)—formerly MQSeries Integrator. It provides a hub and spoke framework for routing, transformation and enrichment of





message flows, so companies can tie each application into a fully recoverable, multipoint environment.

Next come our “external” integration products built on WebSphere for B2B-type applications outside the firewall. IBM WebSphere Partner Agreement Manager creates a secure, auditable B2B environment that gives partners, suppliers and customers access over the Web while simultaneously shielding the company’s internal processes. Finally WebSphere Business Integrator supports end-to-end Business Process Management for every process inside and outside the enterprise, so companies can build automated processes from enterprise applications and run them with or without human intervention.

IB MAGAZINE - Can you describe the vision behind IBM’s BPM products?

ALLES - IBM envisions an industrial-strength, 24/7 infrastructure with all the flexibility and scalability required to seamlessly reach every application, data source or business process. It has to minimize the time and hence the cost of evolution by helping companies to leverage existing data, applications and business processes, as well as going forward with mergers and acquisitions and initiatives like CRMs, ERPs, Web integration and B2B processes. Our vision is based on our WebSphere software platforms, which provide just such an integrated, architected environment for managing both internal and external business integration.

IB MAGAZINE - How does iWay Software fit into IBM’s vision?

ALLES - For one thing, iWay Software and IBM certainly share the same vision. We both have a long middleware history combined with strong customer loyalty, which has helped us to understand what companies need and then provide solutions. And, obviously, iWay Software fits into IBM’s vision because iWay licenses WebSphere Application server and

MQSeries products for your solutions.

But beyond this, iWay and IBM have complementary approaches to integration. iWay enables multiple types of applications and data sources to work with our BPM environment, so IT investments all can work together within IBM’s middleware framework.

IB MAGAZINE - How do IBM BPM products and iWay products work together?

ALLES - iWay tightly integrates IBM WMQI with a universal adapter framework of over 140 iWay Intelligent Adapters. These iWay adapters include classes such as e-Business XML Exchanges, EDI systems, transactions, application servers, green-screen applications, data warehouses, relational and legacy databases, application packages, 3GL and 4GL applications and messaging systems.

iWay achieves this through a plug-in suite that adds 6 new nodes to the WMQI palette. These iWay nodes provide code-free integration between WMQI and many application packages, EDI networks and eBusiness XML applications. iWay-supported environments include Ariba, Broadvision, CommerceOne, cXML, ebXML, FIX, SWIFT, i2, J.D. Edwards, Oracle e-Business Suite, PeopleSoft, Pivotal, SAP and SAP Portals, Siebel, Swift, Vantive, HIPAA, EDI, Microsoft BizTalk Server, xCBL, XBRL, OAGIS, RosettaNet and many others.

IB MAGAZINE - What competitive advantages do customers get when they have both IBM BPM and iWay environments?

ALLES - IBM and iWay provide customers with the ability to build a scalable environment together. By scalable, I mean the environment can evolve from the first level of integration, using simple message flows, all the way up to business process management—including the ability to reach every application or data type in the customer’s IT portfolio.

So the main competitive advantage is obvious. If your environment does not scale, key new services that have to work on D-day cannot be integrated on time. Another advantage is getting fully supported industrial-strength products. No company can afford to have a mission-critical environment that lacks 24/7 support.

These are just two of many advantages. For customers, the most interesting thing is the competitive advantage we jointly provide as our value proposition.

IB MAGAZINE - What kind of sales and support structure are you creating to support IBM and iWay users in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA)?

ALLES - For the IBM EMEA team and myself, the key is for IBM and iWay to operate together consistently, for example, by sharing education about the overall value proposition for customers. We have started that process to jointly train our teams and educate them about our joint value proposition.

We also have imported the iWay set of products to IBM EMEA demonstration sites. In this way, we can show our largest prospects how valuable the combination of our offering together with iWay’s is. Many other sales activities are underway and we expect our joint references to be able to speak for us soon.

IB MAGAZINE - Thank you, Philippe, for your insights. ☺

For more information about iWay Software’s integration solutions based on IBM WebSphere and MQSeries technology, visit www.iwaysoftware.com or call toll-free in North America, (866) 297-4929. Philippe Alles can be reached by email at p_alles@fr.ibm.com.