SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model

By Thomas A. Curran, Gerhard Keller, Andrew Ladd

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SAP, the leading vendor for client/server software in the large system marketplace, has now created a package called R/3 for smaller companies. This book, written by R/3 experts from SAP, shows how to successfully analyze and implement business process reengineering using the R/3 software package. Covers the benefits of business process reengineering, how companies are using client/server in their reengineering efforts, the architecture of R/3, the R/3 Reference Model, the uses of the R/3 blueprint, business scenario models, and the market for client/server application development tools. For application developers and programmers working in client/server environments.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

For those interested in redefining the way in which their business does its business, *SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model* is worth a perusal. Authors Curran and Keller define their central idea--*business engineering*--as a method by which information technology is used to design and reengineer business processes, such as sales and distribution, instead of simply automating them. And as is clear from the title, this concept is explored almost exclusively within the context of SAP R/3.

The book is broken down into four sections: "Business Engineering," "Process Engineering," "Architecture," and "Framework & Tools." These segments follow a sliding scale that goes from MBA esoterica to practical application to behind-the-scenes implementation. The first section is dedicated to such things as mapping out global goals and identifying the organization processes that need to be reengineered. Next, the authors get more fundamental, looking at ways in which SAP R/3 can enable a retooling of existing practice, illustrating this thought via case studies. Lastly, the book examines the details of an R/3 system and the tools in the R/3 arsenal. A terrific discipline-spanning volume, *SAP R/3 Business Blueprint*'s one shortcoming is that it never addresses a world in which SAP R/3 might not be the ultimate answer to an organization's efficiency problems. But perhaps it wasn't meant to. *--Sarah L. Roberts-Witt*

From the Inside Flap
Preface
This book is intended for the wide range of business professionals who are interested in knowing more about process orientation in business and the implementation of these concepts in R/3, SAP's client/server business application suite. It provides an inside look into the conceptual framework and strategy behind SAP's business engineering initiative. Most of all, the book explains the fundamentally different approaches to business change between the use of process model templates and the consulting method known as business-process reengineering, which promotes a zero-based business analysis and modeling.

Based upon our research and experiences, we have found that business professionals too often maintain an "at war" mentality toward their data processing departments and systems. Fed up with the jargon garden of technospeech and sick of the endless meetings needed to get everyone reading from the same page, business professionals, line managers, and system users crave a consolidated knowledge-based system that describes business processes in their own terms. This need was the spark that ignited the ideas in this book. Companies are paying millions to professional consultants to "implement" standard business processes, and yet there is no common language on which to base their discussions or their process descriptions.

A guide to the Reference Model of the R/3 system, this book is written for business executives, senior decision makers, business engineers, and members of R/3 evaluation and/or implementation teams, along with students and academicians devoted to understanding business and information technology. We have attempted to make the book specific enough to satisfy the expert, but general enough to provide a good overview for the capable newcomer. Our main objectives are to:

Help senior decision makers understand the business benefits of the R/3 Reference Model

Explain the methodology behind the Business Blueprint Examine the human and organizational requirements

for change Provide detailed descriptions of key business-process scenarios so that business people can determine if a particular scenario applies to their business Describe the features and tools available for the evaluation and implementation of R/3 Document for the first time the deep process knowledge contained in the R/3 system and use it as a benchmark for explaining business in general

For business leaders either currently or about to be involved in new business design, this book will explain SAP's Business Blueprint. To that end, we have labored to explain the R/3 Reference Model clearly, keeping the big picture in mind, especially for those who do not want to get too bogged down in technical detail. Part 1, Business Engineering, examines the business theories behind the R/3 Reference Model and its implications for optimizing business. Where possible, we draw on real business examples and interviews with some of the most successful R/3 implementers around the world.

Part 2, Process Design, will be of special interest to business users working in the fields of sales, production, procurement, controlling, finance, human resources, and asset management. This section works through a number of organizational and functional scenarios and explains how the R/3 system aids in the streamlining and structuring of key processes of different business areas. We cover primary value activities such as sales and distribution, production planning, procurement, and external accounting. We then move on to the supporting value activities, human resources management, business planning, finance, and controlling. Here and throughout, we draw from many real-life examples of how various companies have put R/3 to use.

For the IS staff member, programmer, or developer engaged in business design, Part 3, Architecture, Framework, and Tools, describes where R/3 fits in the overall scheme of information technology and enterprise application systems. We first explore middleware transaction management and application distribution in R/3. We then discuss the framework and infrastructure, focusing especially on the R/3 Repository and Business Framework. Finally, we examine the Business Engineer, SAP's latest platform for planning and configuration applications.

The last chapter documents the momentous change in application landscape that is being driven by business blueprints and the plethora of new technology alternatives ushered in with the advent of the Internet. We call this the New Age Enterprise, a future vision for how SAP and others will need to adapt their products in this new era. In the New Age many common business practices and theories will change, but the most prominent will involve business-process thinking and the assembly and delivery of applications. This challenge will be a significant one for SAP and its counterparts in the enterprise software industry.

On one hand, this book provides a comprehensive overview for those who are currently considering SAP as a solution for their business reengineering problems. On the other, for those who are already familiar with R/3 and would like to know more, we offer a holistic approach to explaining how key parts of the R/3 system are integrated. Ultimately, we hope to satisfy in part the growing need in the current business community to know more about business engineering with R/3.

From the Back Cover

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Let SAP's R/3 change the way you think about business engineering

This book is a businessman's bible about business process design. Using SAP's leading enterprise software product R/3 as a backdrop, it is the first book to explain the structure and content of common business processes that management deals with on a daily basis.

The authors paint the future of business process change by giving the reader the terminology, content, and technology behind an evolving standard for enterprises in the new age(the business blueprint. Here is a collection of process and object descriptions that are the basis for streamlining your company in the future. The book explains how to understand the process content of systems like R/3 and apply it to your company.

Most business software is applied on top of existing structures, to mimic old-fashioned methods and procedures. R/3 allows users to design and model processes all along the value chain, crossing functional and organizational boundaries, to achieve true integration.

SAP R/3 Business Blueprint uses three main sections to present this paradigm in a style that is accessible across the organization:

- Business Engineering sketches the big picture for high-level decision makers, without getting bogged down in technical detail. Senior managers can gain familiarity with the major features and tools available under R/3, and learn the most important aspects of its evaluation and implementation.
- Process Design details R/3's applications to such specific fields as sales, production, finance, and human resources. Practical business process scenarios are used throughout the book to show R/3 in action in a variety of settings.
- Architecture, Framework, and Tools provides nuts-and-bolts information for IS professionals. A thorough overview of the technical specifications and structure shows how organizations can easily implement R/3 to improve stabilization and communication across departments and processes. In particular, this book explains the impact of new technologies such as Windows(NT(and the Internet on future business process design. It considers the scenarios that companies will need to integrate based on a common business process understanding.

Developed by an international team, SAP R/3 Business Blueprint draws on nearly a decade of client/server history in organizations around the world to present a complete, inside look at this powerful tool for enterprise-wide business engineering.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Victor Elam:

Nowadays reading books be than want or need but also be a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book this improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want feel happy read one having theme for entertaining including comic or novel. Often the SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model is kind of publication which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

Gladys James:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information presently can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider whenever those information which is inside former life are challenging to be find than now's taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you get the unstable resource then you understand it as your main information you will have huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen in you if you take SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model as your daily resource information.

Elaine Moore:

SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model can be one of your basic books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to set every word into pleasure arrangement in writing SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model yet doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource information that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

Charles Trask:

Are you kind of active person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your day to upgrading your mind ability or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you have problem with the book than can satisfy your short period of time to read it because all of this time you only find publication that need more time to be learn. SAP R/3 Business Blueprint: Understanding the Business Process Reference Model can be your answer because it can be read by an individual who have those short time problems.

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