



Vendor Data

Ultimus

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Founded: 1994

Ownership: Private

Employees: 200

Total Revenue: NA

Key Partners:

- Microsoft
- IDS Scheer

Reference Accounts:

- SpectraSite
- Nexus
- Microsoft

Key Product:

Ultimus BPM Suite

Number of Installations:

1000+ production customers

Risk Assessment

In business for almost 10 years and completely self-funded and profitable for seven of those years, Ultimus is a solid technology company. That said, there is little awareness of Ultimus outside its core user community.

Now that Ultimus has positioned itself within the BPM market, there may be more direct competition than previously.

Ultimus has made a decision to support Microsoft's platforms exclusively. Companies that have adopted pure JAVA platforms may view this as a risk to their infrastructure.

Product Brief

Ultimus BPM Suite

Company Overview

Ultimus was founded in 1994 with the objective of creating a universal workflow automation tool. Over a 1000 customers later, the private, profitable company offers a road-tested BPM suite to the market. With operations in twelve countries and deployments in more than sixty, Ultimus is a global organization that provides a horizontal solution across business industries. Little known outside its niche, Ultimus has been operating under the radar screen until recently, and is now surfacing as a company with a compelling Microsoft-based BPM solution. A recent \$10 million infusion of outside funding is intended to help get the message out that Ultimus is a contender in the BPM market. Prices for Ultimus BPM suite start as low as \$25,000, with average deal sizes between \$75,000 and \$150,000.

Company Strategy

- Offer ways to put the product in the hands of prospects, including free Process Designer evaluation, workshops, and paid pilots.
- Provide a solution that is easy to deploy and change with minimal coding. As an example of this strategy, Ultimus offers pre-packaged coded components, called FlowBots, to encourage faster BPM development and simplify integration.
- Focus on broadening its global market presence by combining an indirect channel (though partnerships with leading VARs in each market) in addition to establishing a direct presence in many markets.
- Leverage enterprise commitments to .NET, COM, and Microsoft platforms.

Implementation Strategy

Process Analysts use the Process Designer to map a business process, and can then use its simulation capabilities to define deployment scenarios and identify preliminary bottlenecks. BPM Studio (including Process Designer) is designed for use by teams of developers or administrators or business users, and can share repositories across them. It includes granular security and access control, down to the level of steps within a process. For defining a workflow, users can use Process Designer or BPM Studio, while users can leverage existing spreadsheet knowledge for managing data. For user interface creation, the product includes a variety of forms support as well as a developer's kit for the creation of custom interfaces. Integration with existing systems is accomplished through 12 pre-packaged "Flobots" that connect to Microsoft-oriented data sources (Excel, Exchange, Word, .NET, etc.) as well as databases, XML, and other IT sources. The "Org Chart" functionality enables organizations to easily manage roles and functions. Ultimus also offers integration kits for further customization, and integrates with existing reporting tools to run business-oriented reports.

Competitive Landscape

Business Process Management (BPM) is the current hot spot for enterprise-scale technology solutions. Organizations are beginning to understand the benefits associated with automating business processes, and standards-based products with intuitive interfaces and fast implementation times are entering the market.

Competition for BPM solutions comes from three main existing categories: traditional document management companies such as FileNet and Staffware, traditional workflow and process modeling companies such as IDS Scheer, and EAI vendors such as WebMethods, BEA and others. Vendors in each category are repositioning their products to address the market interest in BPM.

Ultimus is a convert from the workflow tools market, and is making the transition to BPM solution. With the company's established customer list and global presence, Ultimus has gained success that many BPM start-ups long for. The company's lack of brand recognition is a challenge, however, in this crowded market-place, and Ultimus is challenged with rising above the noise of the market.

The solution's Microsoft platform and strength in code-free BPM are two areas that may help Ultimus rise above the fray.

Critical Success Factors

- Boost awareness in US BPM market through targeted marketing efforts. Ultimus has been a "sleeper" BPM company, without as much market recognition as it deserves attention for.
- Target several verticals with message to communicate benefits of Ultimus BPM Suite for their business problems.
- Build strong partner network globally to boost sales, while investing in increased penetration of the US market in the near future.

Upside Analysis

Originally conceived as the "Excel for workflow processes," Ultimus BPM Suite provides easy-to-use BPM solutions for the mid-market masses. The solution's goal is to make deploying and changing BPM easy, and as a result it minimizes programming. Ultimus BPM Suite achieves this by providing Process Designer, which is a graphical process modeling environment, BPM Studio, and a friendly spreadsheet metaphor for managing data. Similarly, the client choices for Ultimus BPM Suite range from Microsoft Outlook to a thin browser, enabling users to interact with the solution in a familiar interface.

The Ultimus BPM Suite is particularly well suited for organizations that want a Microsoft-focused workflow/business process management solution, as well as companies that want a mature product that's been available for years. In addition, Ultimus does have worldwide support and coverage, making it attractive for companies with international locations. Organizations that have EAI requirements will probably need to invest in 3rd party products or may want to consider other, more EAI-focused BPM products.

Ultimus finds itself in a crowded marketplace, attempting to carve out a niche above all the din. While the company is fortunate to have an impressive installed base, its relative anonymity in the BPM pure-play market presents a challenge, and the company should ramp up marketing efforts to spread awareness. Upside Research believes that Ultimus' decision to support Microsoft platforms provides it with specialized expertise, and as a result the company may have better luck than other newer entrants to the BPM market. The strength of the product's automation and human workflow capabilities make it a compelling solution in this young market.

About Upside Research

Upside Research is a research and consulting firm focused on helping clients put application development, Web services, business process management, integration, and enterprise infrastructure challenges in perspective. Upside Research helps organizations find practical ways to achieve their IT goals and profit from the diversity of a changing technology landscape.

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