

Adobe Interactive Forms and SAP NetWeaver Extend Power of Enterprise Systems



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Increasing competitive pressures are forcing organizations to find new ways to maximize investments in enterprise systems and improve key business processes, from streamlining employee administrative tasks to enhancing customer services. Traditionally, paper has played a central role in many business processes. Its familiarity and universal access make it a natural interface for collecting data from and sharing information across diverse groups. Unfortunately, efficient business processes generally end where paper processes begin.

Successful organizations today are bridging the gap between people's comfort with paper and the flexibility of Web, wireless, and enterprise technologies. Together, Adobe Systems and SAP AG are delivering interactive forms solutions that automate key processes by extending powerful enterprise systems to more employees and to partners and customers. Organizations can leverage the openness of SAP NetWeaver, a comprehensive integration and application platform, and the Interactive Forms Solution Powered by Adobe to enable users to reliably receive information from, and submit data to, structured core systems.

The interactive forms solutions are built around Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) technology and SAP NetWeaver for rapid automation of business processes. The result is that organizations can cost-effectively move

from inefficient, document-based workflows to integrated, electronic processes that securely and reliably link enterprise systems with end-users inside and outside of firewalls.

Highly Adaptable Applications

We deal with paper documents every day, whether completing forms to apply for jobs, securing loans from a bank, submitting expense reports to our supervisors, or applying for government programs. In return, we often receive more paper documents as follow-up to our requests. Obviously, handling paper has become second nature to many of us.

To succeed, interactive forms solutions have to feel the same as working with paper. Materials delivered electronically need to have the same quality appearance and easy accessibility as documents that people have long received on paper. Not only does this simplify the transition from paper to digital workflows, but it also helps organizations retain professional, branded images in every interaction.

With Adobe PDF, organizations are delivering electronic documents exactly as intended to users anywhere on a variety of devices, including desktop computers and tiny handheld devices. Once forms are received, people can use Adobe Reader software to enter information into specified fields and return completed forms,

without altering the secure content on those materials.

Interactive Forms Solutions

SAP NetWeaver provides an open platform for developing and deploying interactive forms in Adobe PDF. Using Adobe's leading form design tools and working in SAP solution development environments, staff can easily drag-and-drop document elements to create interactive forms that recipients can complete online or offline (see **Figure 1** on the next page).

Document components, such as fields for entering customer information, form-field calculations, and inclusion of branded communications, can be added to forms without programming, speeding time-to-value for organizations deploying interactive document services. Validation features within form fields help ensure that end-users enter the right type of information in the right field, further speeding transactions and helping guarantee high-quality data from end-users.

Adobe PDF: The De Facto Standard for Interactive Forms

Electronic forms can streamline thousands of routine business processes, from automated completion and

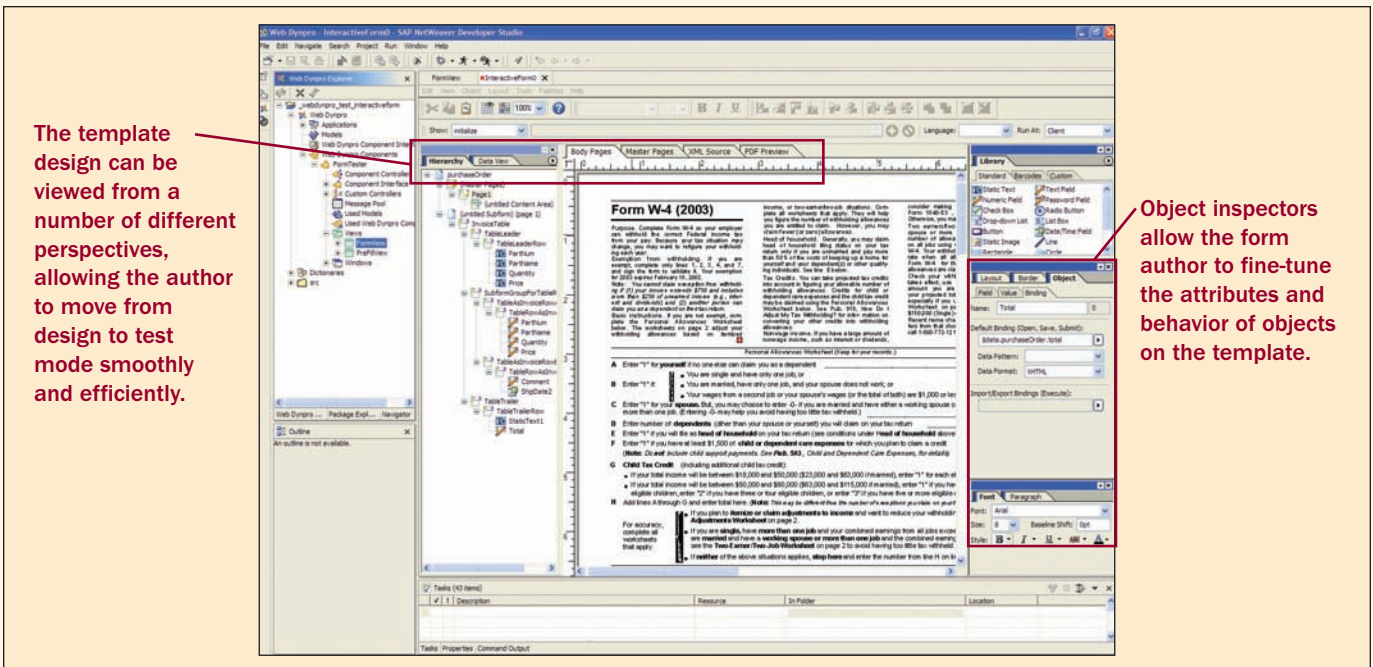


Figure 1 Adobe Designer Integrated into SAP NetWeaver Developer Studio

submission of government forms to electronic handling of customer orders for products. And this is only the beginning.

For years, platform- and application-independent Adobe PDF files have been the de facto standard for efficient, reliable delivery of electronic materials worldwide. People with free Adobe Reader software can open, complete, and electronically submit documents containing XML data. Because Adobe solutions and SAP NetWeaver support technology industry standards, organizations can easily integrate interactive forms into operations today and in the future. This flexibility expands the variety of processes that can be automated, while minimizing development and maintenance costs.

Rapid Time-to-Value

The efficiencies gained from interactive forms solutions are realized inside and outside of organizations. Customized marketing documents created on-demand and containing current product

information help speed customers' buying decisions. In addition, the ability to complete business forms online or offline gives end-users the freedom to work at their convenience, ensuring greater adoption of automated processes.

Within organizations, the benefits are equally noteworthy. The costs to print, store, process, and archive documents fall dramatically — as do the errors traditionally associated with manually copying, reviewing, and routing materials. Also, automatic saving of information from interactive forms into enterprise systems improves the reliability of business data by reducing manual data-entry processes.

Extending the Power of Enterprise Systems

Demand for interactive forms solutions is growing daily. Government agencies worldwide are permitting citizens to download forms in Adobe PDF from their Web sites, fill them in, and digitally submit completed materials. Large

financial institutions have automated the creation and delivery of custom loan applications and allow potential borrowers to return completed forms for rapid processing. Internally, business workflows have improved as well, with employees easily sharing, reviewing, and digitally processing documents from dispersed project teams and outside partners.

With interactive forms solutions built on open, scalable platforms — SAP NetWeaver and the Interactive Forms Solution Powered by Adobe — organizations are successfully connecting customers, partners, and suppliers to core applications, without jeopardizing system content. End-users benefit from the power of enterprise systems, while comfortably working with electronic forms that feel similar to the experience of using paper. For organizations, interactive forms solutions deliver on the true benefits of real-time computing as data and documents move reliably across an extended enterprise.

For more information, please visit www.adobe.com.