
FlowMark—A Workflow Manager



By Carolyn Cummiskey

IBM FlowMark is a workflow manager that enables enterprises to control their business activities—regardless of the nature of their business. IBM is offering solution developers the opportunity to use FlowMark free of charge.

As business processes become increasingly complex, planning and managing diverse activities and resources become a greater challenge. Controlling the execution and movement of work within a company can take as much time and resource as doing the work itself.

Workflow technology is particularly important as organizations re-engineer their business processes. Why? Because a thorough knowledge and understanding of how work is currently being done is necessary in order to redesign and improve the way a large enterprise operates.

A workflow management tool such as IBM FlowMark enables re-engineering because it forces companies to fully describe their business procedures. Workflow technology is ideal for pointing out problems in a process. It can also be a diagnostic tool for assessing the quality of the business process. In essence, it enables organizations to constantly redefine their business by streamlining processes and increasing productivity.

Automated workflow systems can help speed tasks and processes. With a workflow system in place, the flow of information-based activities and tasks can be automated, compressed, and analyzed. Once a process is computerized, the software will assist in re-engineering, by

allowing specific procedures to be monitored and measured.

Workflow software is used to monitor operations. Once a process is controlled by a workflow system, a company can measure how long the process takes, how much time the average employee needs to perform a task, and the number of rejects and approvals.

IBM FlowMark

IBM FlowMark is a workflow manager that gives an enterprise control of its business activities—regardless of the type or nature of the business. It can automate complex business processes that people do every day—often in volume. It is a state-of-the-art, object-oriented, distributed application that can run as stand-alone software or as part of a client/server system. Current implementations run on AIX and OS/2 servers with support for OS/2, AIX, and Windows clients. Multiple servers can also share a single database.

FlowMark can help you precisely define, document, test, and control your company's business processes—opening the way to improved productivity and better teamwork. It can automate routine tasks, which reduces errors.

FlowMark's graphical editor can help you build a workflow model. You can define who performs each task, which computer programs are to be used with each task, what other tasks must be completed, what data is required before starting each task, and how information flows between task activities. All this information is stored in a FlowMark database.

When business conditions change, FlowMark enables you to design new processes or update existing processes quickly and efficiently; you can add or remove activities, change their order, or assign them to different people. FlowMark can improve daily operations and keep processes moving.

FlowMark for MVS™, now in limited availability, enables users to integrate mainframe- and LAN-based applications, using IBM's object technology. It will ultimately provide MVS Server capability. FlowMark can be easily integrated with other products such as IBM's ImagePlus®, VisualInfo™, or Lotus Notes.

FlowMark Partners in Development Program

The FlowMark Partners in Development Program provides an opportunity for professional developers to try IBM FlowMark. There are no fees to participate in the program.

The program provides technical support and help to solution providers to integrate IBM FlowMark into their products and services. Professional developers, integrators, and resellers who sell commercial software and/or services are eligible to participate in the program.

FlowMark Partners in Development provides participants with the following services:

- ◆ Free use of FlowMark code, documentation, and tools
- ◆ Technical support
 - No charge
 - Toll-free 800 number
 - Possible provision of higher-level support, if warranted
 - Broad skills base, high customer satisfaction
- ◆ Vendor advocacy provides answers to your nontechnical questions
- ◆ Membership in complementary IBM Developer Assistance Programs, such as IBM Image PID Program
- ◆ Participation in IBM Partnership programs and other marketing activities
- ◆ Listing of your product or service in online catalogs

IBM encourages participants in the program to incorporate elements of FlowMark into their solutions offerings as well as to present features, benefits, and strengths of IBM FlowMark to their clients.

See the box on this page for requesting more information about the program.



FlowMark Partners in Development Program

For membership information about FlowMark Partners in Development, send your name, company name, address, plus phone and fax numbers to the following:

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