

## **OMI: Top-Down IT Management Likely to Go Bottoms Up**

**OMI, the top-down IT management specification from webMethods and Hewlett-Packard, is a good attempt to deal with a key IT management issue, but it will fail to receive widespread industry acceptance.**

---

### **Core Topics**

Enterprise Management: Infrastructure and Application Management

Business Management of IT: Service Management Strategies

### **Key Issue**

Which network and systems management vendors provide effective business activity monitoring solutions?

### **Strategic Planning Assumption**

The OMI initiative will fail to gain industry adoption by the end of 2003 because of a lack of integration platform and management vendor support (0.8 probability).

IS organizations and managers are always looking for tools that will help them move beyond the mere reporting of infrastructure performance — they want to also know how IT infrastructure performance will affect business processes and activities. Making IT relevant to the business is important, especially in a slow economy. Integration technology and platforms have the visibility of business processes, making webMethods' and Hewlett-Packard's (HP's) Open Management Interface (OMI) specification to manage IT infrastructure and business processes an important endeavor.

The growth of integration technology and platforms is enabling enterprises to become more agile while reducing the time it takes to do business. Yet the platforms — from vendors such as webMethods, Vitria Technology, IBM, Tibco Software and SeeBeyond Technology — have added to the complexity of IT infrastructures. They need to be managed to improve the availability of this complex environment.

## **Integration Standards**

OMI is trying to achieve what no other specification or standard has been able to — provide visibility from the business process level down to the IT components that support its execution. The key is the approach, which is top-down vs. the bottom-up proposition from the Web-Based Enterprise Management (WBEM) initiative being guided by the Desktop Management Task Force (DMTF). For more information, see "Will NSM Become CIM-ple?" T-14-3558.

OMI's goal is to enable business-impact analysis by understanding the effect of the failure of IT components on a business process, while providing data on IT availability from the perspective of the (business process) end user. This is needed to

### **Gartner**

Entire contents © 2002 Gartner, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this publication in any form without prior written permission is forbidden. The information contained herein has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information. Gartner shall have no liability for errors, omissions or inadequacies in the information contained herein or for interpretations thereof. The reader assumes sole responsibility for the selection of these materials to achieve its intended results. The opinions expressed herein are subject to change without notice.

develop an effective service-level management strategy. OMI bases its architecture on open standards such as XML, Simple Object Access Protocol and HTTP to concentrate on the development of a business process (and related infrastructure) information model, not necessarily how to access it.

### **Standing Out**

Integration platform vendors are constantly searching for competitive differentiators in a market that consists of more than 50 vendors. Along with other leading vendors, such as IBM/Tivoli and Tibco Software (using its Hawk package), webMethods has begun using management capabilities as a differentiator. Moreover, its application integration and middleware technology is heavily focused on the needs of the Global 2000, which makes up a significant share of webMethod's installed base. Its installed base has a significant investment in network and systems management (NSM), which contributed to its decision to partner with HP on the development of OMI and its subsequent agreements with other members of the NSM "Big Four" — BMC Software, Computer Associates and IBM/Tivoli.

HP's OpenView business unit also operates in a highly competitive NSM market that has more than 100 vendors. Integration platform management is becoming an increasingly important issue. Vendors such as HP are trying to gain a foothold by providing smart plug-in capabilities that include the management of webMethods' integration broker technology while trying to extend its scope of enterprise management. By partnering with webMethods on OMI, HP gains access to webMethods' installed base and has an opportunity to displace some of the other NSM vendors in these accounts.

### **OMI's Poor Future**

Although webMethods has taken an interesting approach, the company, along with the other management vendors, faces some daunting challenges. These include:

- *Data model population.* Like the SNMP specification found in traditional NSM implementations, the data model in OMI is left up to the vendor to populate. Few independent software vendors (ISVs) have taken the step to publish information already captured within their products and make it available in an SNMP information base format. Gartner does not believe ISVs will move quickly to adopt OMI.
- *NSM vendor support.* Few NSM vendors have comprehensively implemented WBEM's customer information management (CIM) model, despite voicing support for it. We believe the same will be true for OMI.

- *Competition.* Other key AIM vendors will likely see this as an attempt by webMethods to gain a competitive advantage and will have little reason to use the interface in their own middleware.
- *Lack of openness.* OMI is private and available to only a few companies. According to webMethods, it will provide a public document to enable greater participation. This is a mandatory step and needs to be followed up with a freely available reference implementation and, eventually, a transfer of ownership to an accepted industry standards body.
- *Missing integration with current standards.* The DMTF, which owns the CIM specification for IT infrastructure management, was not involved in OMI's development. There is no "bridge" between the two.
- *Java conflicts.* Java 2 Enterprise Edition application server platform vendors and enterprises have been in the process of implementing Java Management Extensions (JMX), a universal, open technology for management, as their management interface for Java application and business processes. Although the proposed OMI server is also based on JMX, there is some confusion about whether it is designed to replace, or merely complement, native JMX functionality.

#### Acronym Key

<b>CIM</b>	Customer information management
<b>DMTF</b>	Desktop Management Task Force
<b>ISV</b>	Independent software vendors
<b>JME</b>	Java Management Extensions
<b>NSM</b>	Network and systems management
<b>OMI</b>	Open Management Interface
<b>WBEM</b>	Web-Based Enterprise Management

The OMI initiative will fail to gain industry adoption by the end of 2003 because of a lack of integration platform and management vendor support (0.8 probability).

**Bottom Line:** OMI's aim to establish a new specification to help manage IT infrastructure and business processes is an important move by webMethods and HP and one that should be praised. However, OMI is not likely to be widely adopted because of too many competing interests and clashing agendas.