

**IM Manager: Small Business Loan Processing** is a 'workflow' driven loans management system for banking companies.

What is workflow? Workflow is concerned with the automation of procedures where documents, information or tasks are passed between participants according to a defined set of rules to achieve, or contribute to, an overall business goal. A Workflow Management System is one that provides procedural automation of a business process by managing the sequence of work activities and invocation of appropriate human and/or IT resources associated with the various activity steps.

Rule-based workflows facilitate more disciplined loan processing with embedded control and tracking of work items in support of the company's business process.

Embedding robust, process oriented components within Web-based applications speeds the time-to-market and lowers the cost of ownership.

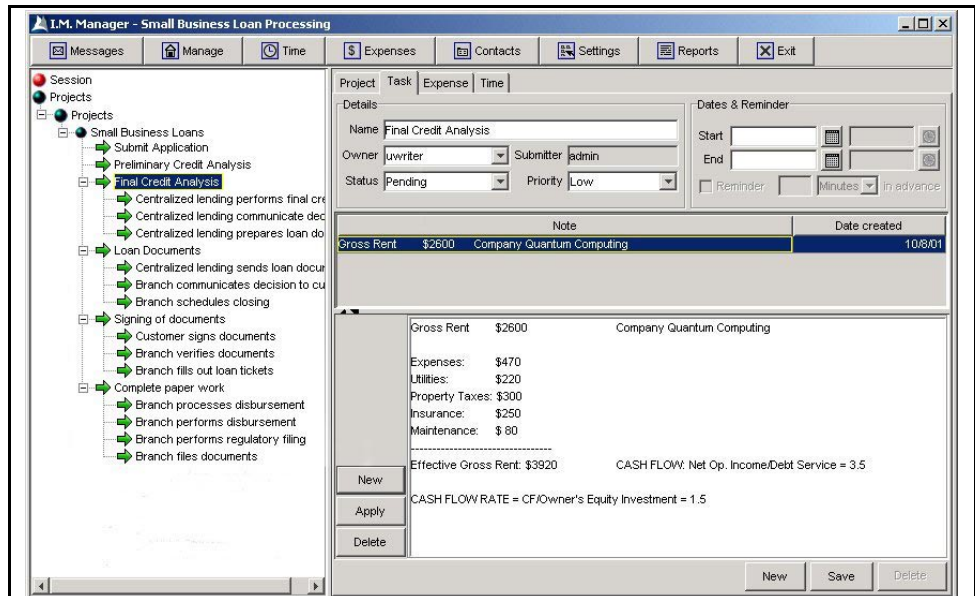
Role-based processes mean that users only see those tasks that require their involvement.

### IM Solution

Many people notice something special when they see IM Manager. It does not look like any other application found on the web today. It is in fact one of the newest generations of Web applications utilizing the latest java-based technologies. Even though it looks like a normal Windows program, it runs through a web browser and all data and analyses run via the Internet. Because it exists on the Web, the most current version is always available, but it is never installed on the computer. Users can access the application from anywhere – in the office, at home, anywhere where there is a connection to the Internet, and the data is always up to date.

### Instant Messaging

Real-time messages can be sent from one user to any other in the system. This is much like email, but faster. Messages can be either very general or associated with a specific project or task.



**Figure 1: I.M. Manager - Small Business Loan Processing**

Here we can see the underwriter has responsibility of the 'Final Credit Analysis' task in the overall project of Small Business Loan Processing. When each user logs in, they see only those loan processes that belong to him or her. The user can add notes and update attributes such as the status and priority of the process. In addition, extra information can be sent between users instantly using the instant messenger. (See Figure 3).

As an example of the need for a market-based or adaptive workflow system, consider the Small Business segment of the retail banking industry. In a recent survey of the retail banking industry, the vast majority of the banks see Small Business as a major strategic focus for their business. In addition to providing loans and other lines of credit to the small businesses, banks also provide a variety of fee-generating services such as lock-box processing and cash management. However, the service delivery processes that are used to serve this market are poorly automated at present: only 10-12% of the banks can take a small business loan application on-line, and only 6% can correct errors in these accounts on-line. Clearly, technology will become a major factor in improving the efficiency of the Small Business service processes in the near future.

Small Business operations, like most complex service systems, is a mix of overlapping processes such as sales support, lock-box processing, statement processing, cash management, etc. Other business segments in the bank share many, if not all of these processes: consumer, mid-market corporate, private banking, etc. Not only are production processes shared by a multitude of service products, but individual agents in the process, such as the customer service representatives in the branch office, must also time share between different product-oriented production processes. However, the manager of the Small Business market segment still needs to control the production of services for his or her customers.

Consider the diagram for opening a small business loan process at a bank (Figure 2). The customer returns the application to a platform employee in the Branch office (Agent 1), and then another employee in the branch performs a preliminary credit analysis of this loan application (Agent 2). Of course, Agents 1 and 2 are also performing such work for other products sold at the branch; in this sense, they are time sharing for the process of handling this single customer's request. Figure 2 illustrates the myriad of decisions involved in processing a simple loan. Some type of control mechanism is needed to coordinate the processing of these loan requests, recognizing that the agents involved in the process are also involved in other service delivery processes within the organization. Precisely this type of control scheme can be supplied by the *IM Manager Small Business Loans Processing Application*. This is just one domain for the workflow system – it's not hard to see the many other day-to-day uses: mortgage applications, personal banking, real estate, insurance and so on.

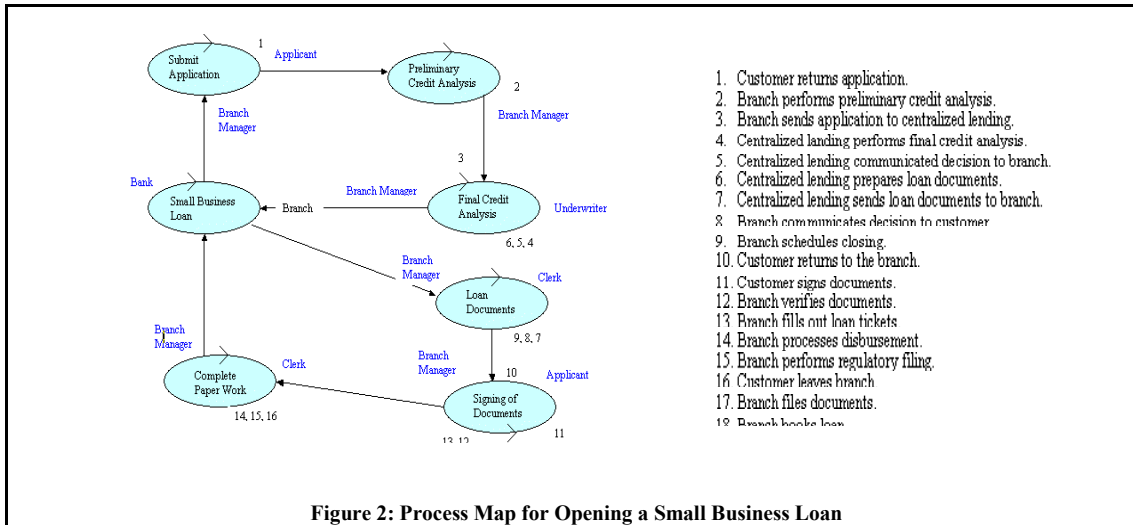


Figure 2: Process Map for Opening a Small Business Loan



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Having been tested and certified by Sun™ ensures high coding standards throughout every application we develop.

**I.M. Manager - Small Business Loan Processing**

Messages for this task

From	Text
uwriter	Faxed copy will be fine, thanks.
Sue	I left the ABC Company Loan documents on your desk - a few signatures required.
Paul	Do you still want those old credit reports you mentioned yesterday?
George	I talked with Barry from ABC Company - he said he can get the rental agreement by Friday Morning. Is that ok?
clerk2	Problem with new form. Can you call me when you get five minutes free? Thanks.
Sue	Yes, form L112a is no longer being used - just use the new revised L112.

Details

Faxed copy will be fine, thanks.

Reply

OK - Expect a copy within 10 mins

Add

My Group

- admin
- Arthur
- clerk1
- clerk2
- George
- John
- manager
- Paul
- Ringo
- Sue
- uwriter

Figure 3: Instant Messaging Between Users Involved in the Small Business Loan Processing

Information is exchanged instantly between users with the instant messaging capabilities. This is much like e-mail, but faster. The application indicates which users in a group are currently available. The example above, shows the messages seen by the Manager. They have 5 new messages in the 'Small Business Loans' project and the details of the messages are in the center panel. Logged in users are shown by the blue icons on the right. Currently the manager and Sue are the users who are logged into the application.

We enable companies to automate business workflow by using cutting-edge software that is intuitive to use. If a person can use a word-processor or a spreadsheet, they can use the *IM Manager -Small Business Loan Processing Application*. Users can generate personal reports and managers can generate higher level reports to see various information such as the status of a process, what processes are outstanding, who is responsible for them, what time has been spent on particular tasks and so on. It is easy to find out from statistical reports where the bottlenecks are and what the cost of implementing each process is. The result is more streamlined operations, improved customer satisfaction and more cost effective work.



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