



UNIVERSITY HEILBRONN
University of Applied Sciences

Study Course Electronic Business (EB)

THESIS

Duet as an integral part of SAP's Information Worker strategy – product classification and competitive analysis

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Management Summary

With Duet SAP and Microsoft developed a solution for Information Workers to access SAP business processes within the Microsoft Office environment. Duet is being supported through SAP and Microsoft and has a clear roadmap, containing new business scenarios, additional languages and support for the new Microsoft Office 2007. Duet is one of the first composite applications that SAP provides within its own service oriented architecture (SOA), called Enterprise-SOA. Therefore Duet has all the advantages SOA can deliver like flexibility, re-use, lower TCO, higher user productivity as well as shorter innovation cycles. Shortly after SAP and Microsoft announced their partnership other global players, especially IBM gave their competitive answer with project Harmony. IBM's intentions are to leverage the functionality of their Lotus Notes environment since they are competing with Microsoft in the collaboration market. In 2005 Microsoft's market share was approximately 10% higher than IBM's with also achieving a greater growth rate than IBM's between 2004 and 2005. Microsoft itself also provides a solution called Dynamics SNAP to support their ERP system, Dynamics AX, which is integrated into the Microsoft Office 2003 environment. With Microsoft Office 2007, Microsoft fulfills its promise for tighter integration between their products as well as providing support for the integration of business processes from the ERP vendors of choice. With these so called, Office Business Applications, it can be possible, according to Microsoft, to create solutions with similar functionality as the first version of Duet. The main competitor in the ERP market, Oracle, provides a software development kit for business applications within Microsoft Office 2003, but does not possess a full qualified product. With Duet, SAP and Microsoft, were the first to enter the market and the only to provide a fully supported product whereas the competitors only provide solutions with a shared source license. Since two leaders, on the one hand SAP within the ERP market and on the other Microsoft within the Office Suite as well as integrated collaboration market, Duet is able to take a strong position. Through providing two partner networks, Duet is supported and distributed from SAP and Microsoft as well as from their partners. Therefore Duet is the right strategic decision for SAP to access the large opportunity that is given through providing the product within Microsoft Office for the Information Workers. With providing support for the new Office 2007, Duet is also well suited for the near future.

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