

Oiling the global content assembly line

DM Editor Dave Tyler speaks to Eben Miller, Senior Director, Product Marketing, Interwoven



David Tyler: Interwoven's recent message seems to be about Customer Experience Management, as opposed to Content Management. Can you explain the thinking behind this concept?

Eben Miller: We have found in discussions with customers over the last 12 to 24 months, that many of them are no longer focusing on bottom-line cost cutting, but rather on improving customer satisfaction through delivering consistency across channels, efficiently managing their brand around the world, accelerating time-to-market for products and promotional content, and ultimately improving the internal processing associated with doing all of that.

Many companies today don't really have the technologies to be able to do that on a global basis. At Interwoven we believe we are uniquely positioned to help these companies to solve that problem. A lot of our recent announcements have been about us developing a large partner eco-system that will help us to solve problems like these in a much more holistic way for global enterprises.

Each company takes its customer through an 'experience lifecycle': from attraction, to engagement, through research, purchase, support, up-sell/cross-sell, etc. In the same way,

companies communicate with their customers across multiple mediums or channels, needing to be aware of different languages, cultures, religions, linguistic nuances, and so on.

And of course the message that a customer receives during the 'attract' phase via a direct mail piece, say, is different from the message they might receive during the 'support' phase. The medium might well be different, whether it is print, catalogue, web, phone or whatever. So when we talk about Customer Experience Management we mean the process of bringing consistent and relevant content to customers, whether business content, transactional content, or persuasive content: across channels, throughout the customer lifecycle, and on a worldwide basis.

DT: What you're talking about sounds complementary to, rather than competing with, existing technologies such as CRM or even report management solutions.

EM: The processes of creating, managing, localising and publishing to multiple channels simultaneously are extremely complex: with multiple authors, different content types, different channels, silo business units,

international operations.

There will of course be some non-existent processes, or inefficient processes. There will be multiple authoring tools, databases of different content (promotional content, technical documentation, digital assets etc.) and all these might be located in different places. It all needs to be able to be published consistently across all the different customer interaction points. In a lot of ways this is kind of like the last un-automated frontier of business. Think about ERP or financials, supply chain or desktop publishing, these things have all been automated for the most part.

So, the Interwoven Customer Experience Solution that we deploy helps customers to improve that global customer experience. As you'd expect, solving a problem this complex requires more than just Interwoven. We recognise that there are supporting technologies and methodologies that are critical here, such as CRM, ICR, or analytics, for example. All of these are important components of the customer experience solution.

Interwoven is perfectly positioned, we believe, to act as a foundation or a core player in this 'global content assembly line'. We facilitate the creation, the localisation, the management, the

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provisioning, the delivery of all this strategic content, across the broad spectrum of customer touch-points - and around the world.

We are taking a very holistic approach: we understand that the problem is a big one, in many cases global. We understand that we play a foundational role in solving a relatively unsolved problem. So we bring our partners together, deliver our domain expertise and we continue to innovate, and help our customers to solve their problems. This puts us in a very powerful position, to serve companies across the globe. We've received a lot of positive feedback from customers and from the analyst community since we launched this concept. There's a lot of excitement, a lot of nodding of heads!

DT: Can you give us any illustrations of some innovative use of your solutions in these areas?

EM: We have customers who are publishing into cash registers, ATMs and more. The idea is that whatever stage a customer is at in their lifecycle, we're helping to deliver that perfect message at the perfect moment. You create the content once, and you use it over and over again, you're efficiently managing your brand assets and your entire brand experience.

The good news is that we have a lot of early adopters, people who are already pushing the envelope by taking our technologies and integrating them with various channels. This is possible because

of the sophistication of our products, particularly one called OpenDeploy. It can take any content and move it from anywhere, to anywhere.

Many of our customers are putting OpenDeploy receivers inside their ATMs, their cash registers, so that they can publish content into those environments in a fully controlled way. We also have customers who can publish personalised catalogues using InDesign templates, for instance, and business rules: instead of publishing a generic 100-page catalogue for everyone, each customer might receive a 12-page catalogue that is based on their purchase history and preferences. That not only saves you a ton of money, it also delivers a far more relevant and targeted message - delivering a better customer experience.

Alternatively, a piece of content from a web promotion can be pushed into, say, your call centre technology such as Siebel. When a call centre rep picks up the phone they have access to the exact same promotion as you'd get on the web. And you can now get the exact same promotion again when you visit the ATM or whatever. So there are some very cool things going on already, but we're just seeing the beginnings.

I think the next 18-24 months will see a lot of activity in multi-channel publishing, and Interwoven is uniquely positioned to be a primary player there, because we've been focused on that area for a long time already, and we will continue to innovate. **DM**

More info: www.interwoven.com