



Mission Statement: Meeting the array of needs for the established IT professional while seeking to develop the IT profession and provide a service to our community and society.

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NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Published nine times per year (September – June) by the Minnesota Information Professional Society. We welcome materials for publication (articles, news or letters). Submit materials on disk or via email to:

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Minneapolis, MN 55408
Tel. (612) 716-5605
E-mail: newsletter@mnips.org

NOTE MEETING INFORMATION

MEETING PLACE:
Holiday Inn – Bloomington
35W at 94th St.
Phone (952) 884-8211

Meeting Times:

5:00 PM Social Hour
6:00 PM Buffet Dinner
6:45 PM Meeting & Program
8:00 PM Adjourn

For a Dinner and Program Reservation, send email to:
reservations@mnips.org

Due to the late notice, send email ASAP – thanks!

\$28 Members
\$33 Non-members

Meeting NOTICE

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Minnesota Information Professional Society

Note: The MnIPS Networking Event has been indefinitely suspended.

Dinner Topic:
“Smart Client vs. AJAX”

Speakers:
Cliff Campbell
Mike Benkovich

SPEAKER TOPIC

The topic for the Tuesday, April 17th MnIPS meeting has changed. Cliff Campbell and Mike Benkovich will discuss the virtues of Smart Client Versus AJAX: Modern Technology Choices to Empower Your Internal and External Web Applications. Please join us and get both sides of the story. The program committee trusts that this will be a lively and spirited discussion.

President’s Letter

Greetings! After this past monthly meeting, conversations with those in attendance that night and our board meeting,

there became one obvious topic for this letter.

In order to thrive, an organization must find ways to make and build connections, with members and affiliates or interested organizations. This is a source of new information, new ideas and new members. In the end, without active participants and volunteers who will likely be members, an organization cannot exist.

The board is looking into ways to build those connections. We voted to provide a free membership to any full-time student. We are pulling together a promotional flyer that includes upcoming events to share with schools, organizations or any setting that would encourage participation. Unfortunately we were too late to get a booth at the career fair, but would like to look into this for the future. I appreciate Santhi’s efforts to expand our horizons.

Regarding building bonds with other organizations, I look forward to our annual joint meeting with AITP, coming up on May 15. Please consider attending one of their monthly meetings on the 1st Wednesday morning of the month (see www.nwaitp.org).

I also appreciate Dave Hendrickson’s offer to afford MnIPS

members the IEEE member rate at their Six-Sigma workshop on Saturday April 28 (more information about that in this newsletter).

Additionally, our last presenter, David Bahn, shared information with those in attendance about a new association called TAOSE (Trusted Adoption of Open Source for the Enterprise) which several local colleges support. The association is offering a series of sessions that MnIPS members can attend at Center Affiliate rate (also referenced elsewhere in this newsletter).

As for MnIPS members' participation, please consider your ability to get more involved in the organization as a committee chairperson or officer. You are a large population of experienced and thoughtful professionals with much to contribute.

Finally, here is my last opportunity for a shameless ad for the 12th annual MnIPS Education Seminar – you too can learn more about some current infrastructure technologies and how to apply them to your work setting. We have a great line-up of

presenters for this event, in the new McNeely Hall at University of St. Thomas. Visit http://www.mnips.org/events/200607/200704_InfraCleanupAnnounce.html for more information. Note that MnIPS members pay a reduced rate! We also need sponsors and volunteers.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our next monthly meeting.

– Chris Retkwa,
MnIPS President
president@mnips.org

MnIPS 2007 Education Seminar

Clean up your Act: Infrastructure for the 21st Century

**Wednesday April 25, 2007 at University of St. Thomas in St. Paul
8:00 am – 4:30 pm**

This seminar is designed for Managers and Senior Developers who are responsible for planning or maintaining their corporation's infrastructure. Attendees will be presented a comprehensive, interactive look at the latest and greatest in infrastructure strategies.

Topics include:

Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP)	Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)
Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)	Website enhancements
Data Center management	Project Management
Case studies	

Presenters: (tentative)

Select Comfort	Thomson West	Robert Half Technology
Midwave	Cross	JPerzel & Associates
Syntax Inc	Jean Ritila	

Pricing:

	<u>Before 4/13</u>	<u>On or After 4/13</u>
First attendee in registration	\$118	\$148
MnIPS member or additional in same registration	\$98	\$118

For additional information, contact Chris Retkwa at seminar@mnips.org or (651) 310-3265, or visit: http://www.mnips.org/events/2006-07/200704_InfraCleanupAnnounce.html

TAOSE Open Source Forum Series

TAOSE stands for "Trusted Adoption of Open Source in the Enterprise."

Bringing Business, Government, Higher Education and the Open Source Community together to leverage the benefits of Open Source Software

TAOSE Open Source Initiative is a joint effort of the [Center for Information Technology and Security](#) (the Center) and [The Open Source Technology Alliance](#) (TOSTA), in association with the Center's Academic Partners: Inver Hills Community College, Metropolitan State University, and Minneapolis Community Technical College.

This collaborative group seeks to raise awareness of open source technology as a viable solution in the enterprise and provide a trusted, centrally organized entity for open source information and resources to enable open source implementation.

Overview:

The TAOSE Forum Series is a four-part schedule of presentations and discussions to facilitate the adoption of open source technology in the enterprise. The Series features industry experts addressing key issues on how organizations can make OS productive immediately. Each half-day seminar will feature a general state-of-the-market introduction, a business case study on how to achieve ROI, a presentation of available OS solutions and an in-depth open discussion on key issues - plus networking opportunities.

The forum series are held on Friday afternoons from noon to 4:00 p.m., with the remaining 3 in the series on April 27, May 18 and June 22.

All MnIPS members may attend at Center Affiliate rates.

For additional information, go to www.strategicIT.org/taose.html.

Open Source for Grownups in Enterprises

(Summary of the Mar. 2007 dinner topic presented and written by Dr. David Bahn, Associate Professor of Management Information Systems at Metropolitan State University's College of Management.)

ABSTRACT: Open source (OS) software has been in use for more than a decade. Nonetheless, notwithstanding the emergence of the LAMP (Linux-Apach-MySQL-PHP) stack, the adoption of OS as part of enterprise systems has been more recent and is not yet widespread. This presentation described an agenda for adoption of OS soft-

ware in enterprise systems according to a mature, "grown-up" approach rather than an enthusiast's ("teen-age") approach.

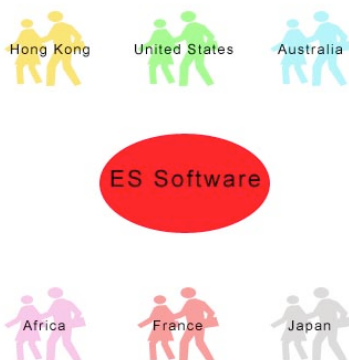
Enterprise Systems: a murky landscape of definition

Enterprise systems (ES) have been defined as comprehensive software solutions that help to integrate organizational processes through shared information and data flows (Shanks and Seddon, 2000; Davenport 1998). Lee and Lee (2000) offer a comparable definition stating that "an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application is an enterprise-wide package that tightly integrates all necessary business functions into a single system with a shared database". This is similar to prototypical definitions of enterprise resource

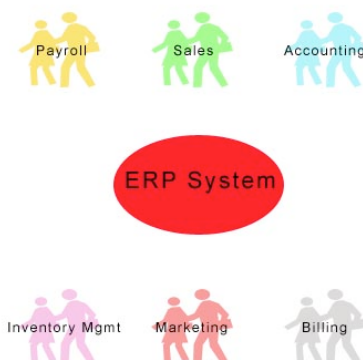
planning (ERP) systems that define ERP as "systems that are configurable ... information systems packages that integrate information and information-based processes within and across functional areas in an organization" (Kumar and Hillegersberg, 2000).

Although the terms enterprise system (ES) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) are often used interchangeably in the literature (and typically connote the multi-functional applications of ERP), there are indeed differences between them. An enterprise system could be as basic as a single-function software package with a back-end database where information is shared globally across many locations using a common technology platform, typically utilizing middleware. For

instance, the helpdesk system used at an international is indeed an enterprise system – it allows employees from Asia to access information of the North American.



Conversely, enterprise resource planning (ERP) software could be strictly comprehended as a software package resident on one computer or on a LAN that integrates the various functions of an organization – marketing, purchasing, finance, etc.



Enterprise Systems (ES) Re-defined

Defining an enterprise system (ES) distinctly from an ERP, we would describe ES as: *An organization's software application(s) with back-end databases where information is shared across the organization (potentially many locations) by utilizing a common technology platform or common technology*

standards (& typically incorporating middleware).

Indeed, an enterprise system is part of the more general landscape of enterprise architecture and the more recently coined “service-oriented architecture.”

Challenges of Enterprise Systems

In viewing an enterprise system as a part of overall enterprise information technology architecture, the same characteristics and goals of enterprise architecture can be applied to it. An enterprise system must meet the goals of availability, accessibility, reliability, scalability, flexibility and performance (Haag et al, 2005). It must also meet the technical challenges of release management, integration, testing, technical support, configuration and capacity management. Even when considering only the key challenges of developing repository managers for enterprise systems, Paunov and Schmidt (2006) include “the need to support cross-platform portability, ensure responsiveness and scalability, and enable dynamic updates within time constraints”.

Open Source Software Defined

Open source software has been defined with the following characteristics and benefits (Driver, 2006; Open Source Initiative, 2006):

- No royalty or other fee imposed upon redistribution
- Availability of the software (source) code
- Right to create modifications and derivative works
- May require modified versions to be distributed as the original version plus patches
- All rights granted must flow through to/with redistributed versions

- The license applies to the program as a whole and each of its components
- The license must not restrict other software, thus permitting the distribution of open source and closed source software together

Benefits of Open Source Software

There are several ostensible benefits of adopting OS software. Most obviously, the direct access to source code enables any user to be able to directly modify and customize the software to meet immediate and domain-specific requirements. Most typically, successful OS software evolves within a community of “using developers” who actively develop and customize the software on an ongoing basis, according to commonly perceived needs. Open Source software also tends to run reliably on a range of hardware. Even if all OS software is not quite free, its costs typically reflect the more nominal costs of distribution rather than development.

The enthusiast’s approach towards adopting OS is that organizations should adopt as much OS software as possible he or she believes in principle that all software source code should be open and software vendors are inherently untrustworthy & greedy. This “teen-age” approach states that the organization can and should code/customize everything in-house.

The mature or “grown-up” approach sees adoption of OS on a limited and gradual basis, according to the business case that can be made for such adoption. If a situation allows for no case for adopting OS, then OS should not be adopted. In considering the role of OS software within a large-scale enterprise system, there is a more limited but

critical set of benefits for adopting organizations. The direct access to the source code yields freedom from dependency on proprietary software vendors. This can enable the achievement over time of a potentially greater alignment between the OS software (and its accompanying enterprise system software components) with the evolving long-term goals and business requirements of the adopting organization. The community-based development approach for Open Source yields software of greater reliability and more robust performance (Wheeler, 2005). This development approach has also been described as yielding software with fewer non-essential features, thereby both easing deployment and configuration efforts as well as boosting long-term reliability and performance (Raymond, 2000), particularly for large-scale enterprise application environments.

It is also important to note that when OS software is introduced into enterprise architectures, it is nearly always used as just one component or as a set of software components within a larger superset of mixed proprietary and open source software components that make up a total enterprise system. For example, a proprietary ticketing system may be deployed to run on the proverbial LAMP (Linux-Apache-MySQL-PHP) stack. Alternatively, an open source CRM software application that is deployed on a large scale for many users may also be running on Linux and other OS components, but could very well have the functions of testing, version control and network management performed by proprietary software tools.

Challenges of OS adoption in the enterprise

There are three dimensions of challenges for adopting OS in the context of Enterprise systems:

- Business challenges:
 - OS and IP in the context of the organization's business strategy and goals
 - How information technology can better align to these goals
- Technical challenges:
 - How does the organization identify competent technical resources to support OS components?
 - How do support models work for typical OS "stack" components (e.g. Linux, MySQL, etc.) and how do they work for OS application (e.g. SugarCRM, Open for Business) components?
 - How should the organization measure the total life cycle cost of an enterprise system?
 - When should decreased licensing cost be a primary driver of OS adoption, and when should freedom from dependence on a proprietary software vendor be the primary driver?
- Legal challenges:
 - The ever-present intellectual property concerns about OS stemming from the murkiness of the license issues
 - Corporate governance for adopting OS and tracking it accurately and appropriately in order to ensure compliance and minimize risk

TAOSE: Meeting the challenges of enterprise OS adoption

The TOASE project is sponsored by the Center for Strategic Information

Technology and Security (CSITS), a Center of Excellence in the Minnesota State College and University (MNSCU) system. TOASE stands for Trusted Adoption of Open Source in the Enterprise.

TAOSE is a non-profit association to advance enterprise adoption of open source software. TOASE will facilitate solutions to key challenges of open source adoption: accessing trusted open source products, education and training, and networking for open source users and developer communities across all sectors. TOASE sponsors educational events on OS for training and professional development. TOASE will bring together experts in education and industry to provide members with the most current knowledge of tools and exemplary practices. It will also seed special interest communities for ongoing collaboration and research on OS. It will guide organizations and individuals with adoption strategies, encompassing the business, legal, and technical dimensions of OS in the enterprise. Eventually, the founders of TOASE hope that it will develop independent reviews and conduct research analysis to assist members with decision-making about OS adoption.

The vision for TOASE is foster economic activity and business growth by supporting all aspects of the adoption of open source technology in large and small enterprises. In the local perspective, TOASE seeks to build a local value chain of OS in the Minnesota and regional information technology sector. There are several elements to this macroeconomic vision of OS:

- The commercialization of OS leads to a general business vision of more in-sourcing of IT jobs as businesses and organizations take responsibility for

their IT matching their business model

- Key vendors perceive that OS will help develop their market space for trusted IT solutions
- Many more organizations in Minnesota across all sectors taking ownership of their own information technology platform
- Segmentation and differentiation of in the software support / VAR marketplace – more choices and fewer barriers to entry for smaller players
- A Much greater awareness of range of options in technology and software purchase
- The value of open source being widely perceived/understood not merely as lower price but primarily as less vendor lock-in and greater control of one's own IT.

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