

## WebSphere Portal Unleashes Web 2.0 for Exceptional User Experiences

**Speakers:** **Bob Bunzey, Program Director, WebSphere Portal Offering Manager**  
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**BRIAN C:** Welcome and thank you for taking the time to listen to this podcast on What's New in WebSphere Portal Version 6.1.

WebSphere Portal V6.1 is an enterprise portal solution that builds upon a solid foundation of previous releases and offers much more "openness", both from a Portal Open Standards perspective and by providing tools and capabilities for incorporating Web 2.0 Internet resources. I'm Brian Chaput from IBM; joining me today is Bob Bunzey, IBM's Offering Manager for WebSphere Portal.

Bob, thanks for your time today. I understand that there are several products in the WebSphere Portal portfolio. Before we discuss What's New in WebSphere Portal Version 6.1 in more detail, can you first provide the listeners a brief overview of what is in the portal portfolio and how the products relate to each other?

**BOB:** Sure, Brian, I'm happy to as it'll provide a good foundation for the listeners as we dive deeper into the WebSphere Portal Version 6.1. We have designed our portfolio to provide both value in scope and scale for our customers. At the core, we have our Portal Server offering, which has the foundational code for all of our other offerings. This provides customers an assurance that our investments in core portal functionality will not be diluted by multiple core offerings.

We then have created packages that provide additional features to fit specific needs. We have a Portal Express product that is designed for smaller businesses interested in having portal, instant messaging, online awareness, document and content management - right out of the box. We also have our Portal Enable and Portal Extend products for customers who want additional out of the box capabilities, such as collaboration, content management, forms, advanced search, instant messaging, online awareness, electronic forms, and workspaces. Portal Server, Enable, and Extend have been enhanced over a number of years to become the undisputed market leader – in market share and analyst recognition. Embellishing this, in 2007 and into 2008, we added a set of WebSphere Portal Accelerators.

**BRIAN C:** So, can you tell me a little more about the Accelerators?

**BOB:** Sure Brian. Quite simply, Accelerators are integrated packages that easily snap-on to the WebSphere Portal Server, helping to speed time-to-value. They are solution-specific offerings that align with the business scenarios customers are most commonly deploying, such as performance dashboards and employee self-service, among others.

**BRIAN C:** So, just how many of these solution-specific offerings - or accelerators – are there?

**BOB:** Currently there are 7 accelerators for WebSphere Portal Server – addressing numerous business requirements, such as real-time dashboards that provide operational insight and collaboration that promotes better teaming and a means for people to take action right from the portal interface. Over time, we expect to introduce additional accelerators.

**BRIAN:** As you mentioned earlier, the accelerators are in effect, solutions that snap-on to WebSphere Portal Server – so I assume that means a customer can leverage WebSphere Portal Server as a single platform to serve multiple requirements by snapping-on accelerators as needed?

**BOB:** That's exactly right. With this approach customers can easily create high-value composite Portal applications, tailored and delivered on-demand to each and every user.

**BRIAN:** Which brings us to What's New in Portal 6.1. What are the key themes or parts of the new release?

**BOB:** Overall, there have been significant investments in the core portal foundation, delivering market-leading innovations that allow customers to quickly deploy highly interactive, desktop-like composite applications. You can think of the enhancements in three general groupings:

1. Enhanced support for Web 2.0 helps users interact with the information and people they need
2. Streamlined installation, configuration, and deployment features support faster time to value.
3. Improved server reliability, manageability, and performance

**BRIAN:** Web 2.0 is grabbing a lot of attention lately. Please tell me more about the enhanced support for Web 2.0.

**BOB:** Well, there are several aspects to Web 2.0. One is the use of new web technologies to provide more responsive and functional user interfaces. The second relates to the use of social networking software. We have exploited the use of new web technologies in core portal. To provide

social networking tools, we have automation to integrate Accelerators which include social networking tools.

Here is a run-down of the key Web 2.0 enhancements we've done with core portal:

- Live Text tagging presents 'one-click' access to relevant supporting information that "pops up" on the page while executing a business process
- Portal REST services, providing simple use of common web commands, further opens the portal platform to composite "mashup" applications with services feeds from other Web applications
- New Client Side Aggregation reduces server-side processing, and dramatically improves end-user performance
- Client Side Feed Consumption provides highly efficient integration of information through feeds (Atom and RSS)

All of this adds up to an end user now having a highly responsive screen, with reduced flicker, and with more compelling content..

**BRIAN:** You mentioned "Mashups", and as I understand it, Mashups are used for building new situational applications, almost on the fly, is that right?

**BOB:** Yes, and this is similar to what we've done in portal for some time now – allowing users with the right authentication to drag and drop portlets onto their desktops and the tie them together allowing for passing of information between them. With this release, we've "opened" up portal to make it much easier to incorporate web assets and web feeds – which provides a new and different usage pattern – consistent with Web 2.0 openness.

**BRIAN:** So companies can benefit from the best of two worlds. You also mentioned streamlined installation and deployment features Can you explain further what has been done?

**BOB:** Absolutely. One of the design points was to make it easier to create and deploy new sites – without much – or no – involvement of the IT or development staff. This release of WebSphere Portal delivers on that design objective by making it easier to install, configure, and deploy. Key new functions include:

- New portal 'Site Wizard' enables self-service creation of independent virtual portals
- A new 'Theme Customizer' portlet delivers wizard-driven branding and in-place customization

- Updated out-of-the-box Internet and intranet site jumpstart templates offer fast delivery and customization of virtual portal sites
- Enhanced, configurable Workflow Task List portlets for faster, customized delivery of business process integrated portal applications

The net result is faster time to value and more business agility. Many of our 6,000 plus open beta customers have loved these new features.

**BRIAN:** 6,000 Beta customers? That is a lot. Tell me a little more about the beta.

**BOB:** Well, we started the beta last Sept and have run it right through to general availability. During that time, we have had four major drops with improvements. The feedback has been great, allowing for many enhancements and providing time to wring out the code. Our product is much stronger due to the fabulous number of downloads and subsequent client participation.

**BRIAN:** And that prompts me to ask about the last major theme – the one you mentioned that deals with improved server reliability, manageability, and performance.

**BOB:** Yes, we believe that improvements in server reliability, manageability, and performance enhance scale, security, and time to value. Some of the more prominent improvements are:

- Simplified portlet deployment, management, and new resource monitoring features
- Simplified security configuration, new Windows Desktop (SPNEGO) SSO support
- New 'One click' Site Management application simplifies control of staging to production
- Expanded Site Layout support
- "Remember Me" cookie support
- New "Step Up" authentication which provides multiple levels of security

These new enhancements help provide a rock solid, easier to deploy sites, that scale and allow for new security flexibility.

**BRIAN:** Bob, this is a great overview of the major enhancements to WebSphere Portal. Are there any other facets of this new release that you'd like to mention?

**BOB:** Yes Brian, now that you mention it. We're proud to say that we've been able to incorporate the last portal related open standards into the product, even though they were just agreed to in March 2008. We will have support for WSRP 2.0 and JSR 286, which demonstrates our commitment to openness and makes it easier to deploy new applications. Along those lines, we also will be releasing a new version of WebSphere Portlet Factory and WebSphere Portlet Factory Designer, which we throw in the box with portal with a limited use license.

**BRIAN:** I bet the listeners would like to hear a bit more about the Portlet Factory enhancements...can you give us a quick "fly by"?

**BOB:** And I'm excited to talk about this. The new WebSphere Portlet Factory release delivers an easier out-of-the-box experience combined with new Web 2.0 features and support for visual application development of desktop-like Web applications.

WebSphere Portlet Factory also includes automation tooling for integration with REST providers like Lotus Connections and Lotus Quickr – which supports essential 'snap-on' products in Extend and with our Accelerators.

Also, the complexity of Web 2.0 technologies is masked by providing out-of-the-box AJAX components that enable wizard-driven creation of highly interactive, rich, browser-based applications.

In addition, this new release of Portlet Factory adds support for integrating content from Lotus Web Content Manager, enabling customers to easily create custom portlets leveraging WCM content.

Further, if you want to deploy to other applications such as Lotus Expeditor and Lotus Notes 8, portlet Factory enables customers to build applications once and deploy to multiple environments.

**BRIAN C:** Bob, WebSphere Portal version 6.1, complemented by WebSphere Portlet Factory sounds like a powerful combination. The strategy and timing of WebSphere Portal, the Accelerators, and Portlet Factory seems in lock-step.

This is a great overview of the portal portfolio and specifically of the new features in WebSphere Portal 6.1. For our listeners, if you would like more information about the IBM WebSphere Portal family of products, or any of the accelerators, please visit IBM on the Web at: **[ibm.com/websphere/portal](http://ibm.com/websphere/portal)**

Thank you for listening!