

**NUCLEUS
RESEARCH**

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ROI ANALYSIS YOU CAN TRUST™

Vendor ROI Score: Microsoft BizTalk Server

THE BOTTOM LINE

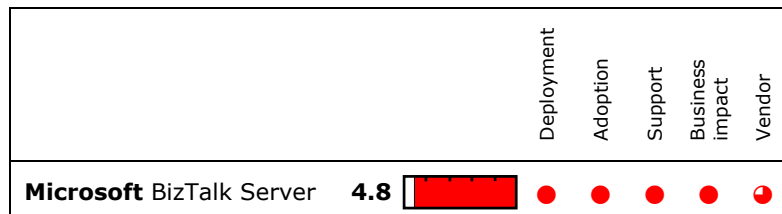
Companies can achieve a positive ROI with Microsoft BizTalk Server by reducing the time and cost associated with building and managing integration projects.

Microsoft BizTalk Server is a platform for enterprise application integration and business process management. The product provides visual tools for designing and developing integrations between data sources, and creating and maintaining the business processes that are impacted by the application. A key advantage of BizTalk Server is its ability to separate these two functions, enabling business users to focus on rules and process definition, while developers can focus on the technical details of connecting the data sources that drive the application.

In March 2004, Microsoft released BizTalk Server 2004, which contains the following key capabilities:

- A new messaging and orchestration engine contains support for the Business Process Execution Language (BPEL) standard, an XML-based language for use in Web services applications.
- Integration with Visual Studio.NET 2003 enables developers to build integration applications within the Visual Studio.NET development environment.
- Business Rules Engine provides business analysts with greater flexibility to create and modify business rules that can be accessed by multiple applications via BizTalk Server.
- Business Activity Monitoring enables business workers to view and monitor business processes using Microsoft tools such as Excel, SharePoint Portal, or InfoPath.

Overall Score: 4.8



Guide to the ratings:

Overall score is a composite score indicating the solution's ability to deliver ROI based on the following factors: **Deployment** is how easily and quickly the solution can be deployed.

Adoption is based on usability and the potential scalability of adoption. **Support** is based on the ability of the solution to function with limited internal support costs. **Business impact** measures the potential of the solution to deliver returns through clear and repeatable benefits.

Vendor is the vendor's track record and ability to help a customer maximize ROI.

Scale indicates from high 5= ●, 4= ●, 3= ●, 2= ○, 1= ○ to low rating.

RELATED RESEARCH

- E102 Vendor ROI Score: IBM WebSphere 5
- E101 Vendor ROI Score: webMethods Enterprise Services Platform
- E100 Vendor ROI Score: Sonic Business Integration Suite
- E98 Vendor ROI Score: TIBCO BusinessWorks
- E97 Market ROI Scorecard: Integration
- E49 Vendor ROI Score: BEA WebLogic 8.1
- E24 Using the Nucleus Research Vendor ROI Score

Deployment

Score: 5

Deploying the Microsoft BizTalk Server infrastructure and delivering the first integration application took an average of four and a half months among the customers Nucleus has interviewed. Developers with Visual Basic development experience can quickly leverage these skills as the BizTalk Server development tools are integrated into Microsoft Visual Studio.NET. Using a central interface for all development tasks lowers training requirements and speeds productivity for development teams.

Adoption

Score: 5

The ease of use of BizTalk Server's graphical, drag-and-drop modeling and mapping tools enable the IT staff to get the integration architecture up and running quickly. New capabilities for business analysts, including a business rules engine, enable them to more easily control and modify business processes. Business analysts can also use Microsoft Visio to model business processes and export them to BizTalk Server where the developer can incorporate it into an application. Using familiar tools increases productivity for both the developer and the business analyst, which helps speed the overall integration process.

Support

Score: 5

As BizTalk Server is built on the Microsoft .NET Framework, companies with developers who are familiar with Microsoft technologies are able to leverage this knowledge to rapidly deploy and customize solutions. This also plays a part in easing the support requirements for maintaining integration applications, as developers can more easily modify applications as business needs change. Customers switching from EAI products that contained proprietary programming languages to BizTalk Server noted this as a key contributor to lowering overall integration development costs. Nucleus found that the average number of IT employees required to support BizTalk Server on an ongoing basis was 1.6.

Business Impact

Score: 5

Nucleus has found that Microsoft BizTalk Server deployments deliver an average ROI of 240 percent with a payback period of eleven months. The key factors that drive quick business benefits are the reduced development time and cost of completing integration projects. Companies with Microsoft development expertise can leverage their existing technology infrastructure and IT staff skills to get applications into the hands of business users faster to improve operations. Many companies noted that they have been able to substantially reduce integration costs by switching from other EAI solutions that not only had higher initial license costs, but also high ongoing IT support costs due to the development expertise necessary to maintain deployed applications.

Vendor

Score: 4

Although it still has work to do, Microsoft has made a lot of progress in positioning itself as an enterprise server solution provider. Microsoft BizTalk Server has emerged as a compelling solution for businesses that have existing investments in Microsoft technology, and is also extending its appeal to non-Microsoft centric organizations because of its capabilities to deliver repeatable returns on integration projects. One of the main drivers of this is cost. Companies that have invested in EAI solutions and taken a close look at the ongoing cost of supporting those systems are actively seeking alternatives. By adding support for over 350 adapters to connect to a variety of enterprise applications, messaging products, and legacy systems, Microsoft is working on dispelling the perception that BizTalk Server can only deliver value to Microsoft-centric organizations.

RANKING OUTLOOK

By focusing on providing increased access to business users, and improved collaboration between business and IT during the integration process, Microsoft BizTalk Server delivers a key business benefit beyond just its lower price tag. Increasingly, Nucleus is hearing from customers who are using BizTalk Server as a central hub to manage both internal and external (business to business) integration projects. This may move the evaluation of BizTalk Server from that of a lower cost alternative to a broader position of value as a strategic enterprise integration platform.

METHODOLOGY

The Nucleus ROI Scores are based on Nucleus analysts' independent assessment of the vendor's ability to deliver positive ROI to potential customers and on data gathered from an individual vendor's customers as well as other users in the market sector. For more details on Nucleus ROI Scores, see research note E24, *Using the Nucleus Research Vendor ROI Score*.

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