



Project Fusion



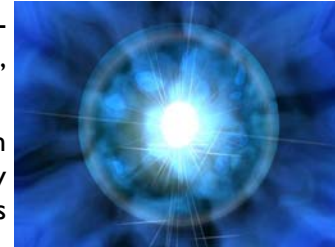
So What is 'Project Fusion'?

Project Fusion is Oracle's vision for next-generation enterprise technologies, applications and services that will, in their own words, "**revolutionise business**".

Now for most, that statement, whilst providing a certain level of excitement and anticipation, will almost certainly instil fear and dread based on the experiences of previous upgrades or migrations.

Many see Project Fusion as an amalgamation of Oracle, Peoplesoft and JD Edwards applications into something that no one will recognise and so will therefore involve significant investment to all involved. Oracle prefer to describe Fusion applications as information-driven applications which will incorporate key strengths of all product lines and focus on business process automation, industry-specific capabilities, superior usability, real-time information access and reporting, and a shared data model to provide customers with a single source of truth.

However there are a few misconceptions which should be taken into account which PCL think will significantly affect the perceptions of customers as they look into the Oracle future.



Protect, Extend and Evolve

One of Oracle's key messages is that of protect, extend and evolve. By this they mean:

- **Protecting existing investments**
- **Extending the functionality of existing applications**
- **Evolving to the new Fusion applications**

So when will this happen?

One of the other main misconceptions surrounding Project Fusion, in that it is just a vision, something that is going to happen in the future. Whilst elements of it are still visionary, much of the technology involved is already being used in the latest versions of the individual products. This is what helps Oracle with their claims that customers on the latest versions will be able to upgrade to the new Fusion Applications. When viewed like this you begin to realise that moving to the new super products, when they appear, might not be so painful as first anticipated.

Thus, far from just being something that is going to happen, it is a path that many of us are already well on the way along. The versions that Oracle state will have a direct upgrade path to the new fusion applications are:

- Oracle E-Business Suite 11i.10
- Peoplesoft Enterprise 8.9
- JD EnterpriseOne 8.11

All of these products contain valuable enhancements to them and will all have a direct upgrade path to Fusion applications when they become available.

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What is Fusion Middleware?

You may have noticed that the term Fusion Middleware has appeared and now seems to be used with increasing regularity, sometimes on products that we are using. But what does it mean?

Simply stated, Fusion Middleware is the family of products that sit in the "middle" between two entities. These entities could be database and client or different applications. The Fusion Middleware portfolio spans a range of tools and services from J2EE and developer tools, to integration services, business intelligence, collaboration, and content management. It offers complete support for development, deployment and management of Service-Oriented Architecture.

Some of the key products that currently make up Fusion Middleware are:

- Oracle Application Server
- Unified Portal
- Business Intelligence
- BPEL
- Oracle Grid Computing
- Oracle Fusion Service Registry
- Oracle Fusion Service Bus

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So how will I be affected?

This is the key question. And it is still hard to answer this question at this point in time. Although most of the messages that come from Oracle are positive ones, even from a customer perspective! Yes there will be some changes, some goodbyes to technology that we have become used to using for sometime, such as Oracle Forms, Oracle Reports and Workflow which are replaced by Java Server Faces, XML Publisher and BPEL (Business Process Execution Language) but the aim of these changes are to provide more functionality and greater flexibility than we currently know. If we are honest, Forms, Reports and Workflow are not perfect it is just we have managed to find workarounds to their shortcomings.

Should I be worried?

Our honest belief here is that we should not be worried about the future direction of Oracle Applications. Yes there are still some unknowns, but with Oracle's commitment to protect our investments and then extend and evolve the applications we know and love into this new super-product which from what we can see, and from what Oracle say, could be very beneficial for all, lets remain positive about the future of our applications.