

Kinetic Data: An Innovator in Service Delivery

Managing Services: Within IT and Beyond

Service management has been maturing now for over a decade. It has served as an educational tool for IT to help technical staff understand the need to meet business goals and objectives. At the same time, the use of service management toolsets is expanding outside the boundaries of IT to serve the needs of any department, managing any type of service. The human resources department may still rely upon IT to deliver a laptop to a new employee, but other requests—such as payroll submissions and employee training—go beyond IT's jurisdiction. Some service delivery technology is flexible enough to operate both inside and outside of IT.

Services take countless forms. Corporations address the needs of employees, customers and partner networks. Government agencies serve constituents (vehicle registration, license renewal), employees (booking inmates, tracking evidence), and the private sector (corporations). The common denominator for these entities is a need to expedite service delivery without relying solely on the IT department. Users, employees, customers and partners all request services in order to transact business with any organization. Similarly, they need a mechanism for requesting and receiving those services. The service catalog can be used to represent available services to various constituencies; Service Request Management (SRM) applications address the automated delivery of those services for any and all service-oriented departments within an enterprise. Service catalogs and SRM tools empower the requestor, and at the same time improve levels of service quality, ultimately improving the credibility of operations.

Many benefits result from the use of both technologies. First and foremost, the user now has visibility into what services are available and can autonomously initiate requests for those services. Using service delivery technologies, users can create a complex service model that represents real organizational needs. Features typically include the ability to segregate services by user population, track associated costs by service, and access a business-driven service model. Kinetic Data has developed an application that allows users to request, track and receive services without undue reliance on IT staff.

Kinetic Data Service Request Management

Kinetic Data is an innovator that has developed business-driven tools to facilitate the process of SRM. The company refers to its SRM technology as “*Request Management Portals for Your Enterprise*,” encompassing what many would call the service catalog, as well as a request system that addresses service needs beyond IT. Kinetic Data is focused on delivering this technology as a business system serving the needs of IT as well as every other service-oriented business group—ranging from human resources to manufacturing to facilities management.

Kinetic Data HIGHLIGHTS

Vendor name: Kinetic Data

Product names: Kinetic Request, Kinetic Task

Product functions: Service Catalog, Service Request Management and Task Automation

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Company overview: Kinetic Data was founded in 1998 and is an established solution provider offering service request, task automation, survey management and calendar solutions. The company is focused on delivering service request and catalog capabilities across the enterprise and has a solid understanding of both IT and non-IT applications of its technologies.

Kinetic Request, the company's flagship product, was developed as an extension to BMC Remedy in 2007. The product enables its users to create fully-automated service portals for presentation, requesting, tracking and delivering services in any business or governmental entity. Kinetic Request 5.0 is a major update and comes bundled with Kinetic Task 1.0—a new advanced task automation engine.

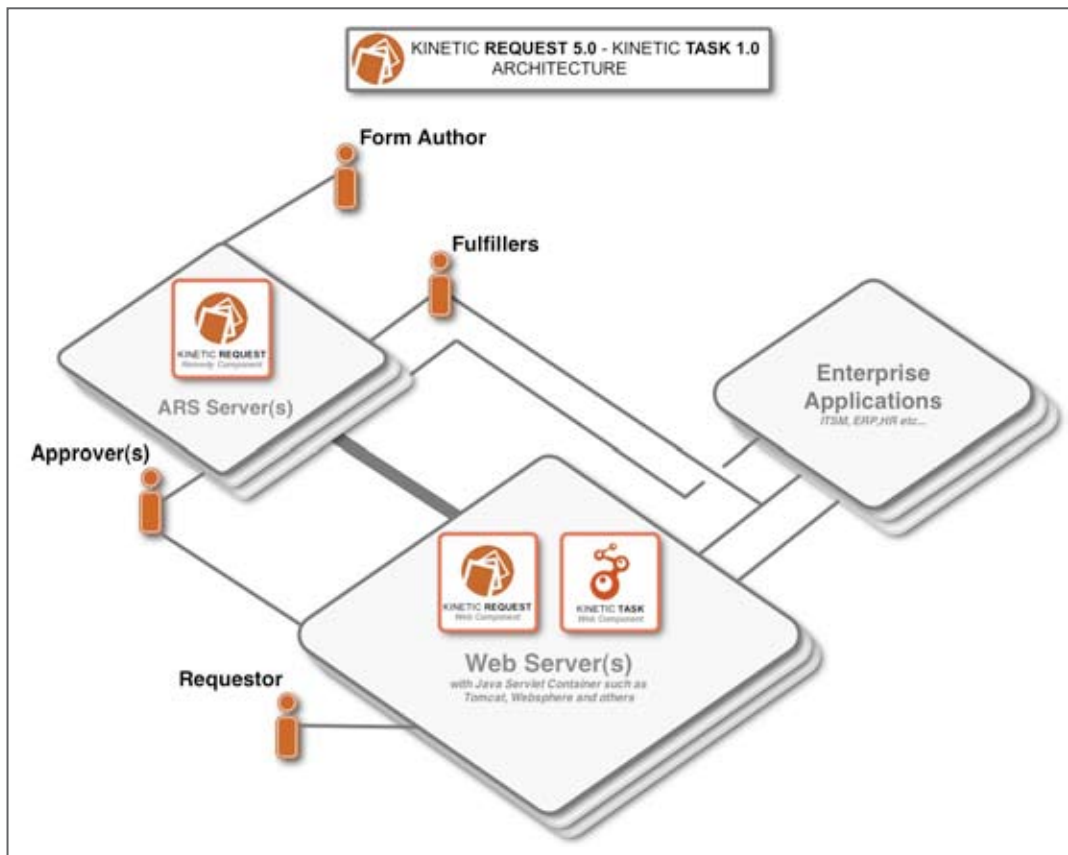


Figure 1: Kinetic Request System Architecture

Kinetic Request is a full-featured, Web-based service catalog and request management system. The company recognized early that service request catalogs are applicable not only inside IT, but outside IT as well. The application has been implemented at over 200 customer sites, including Fortune 500 enterprises, government agencies, mid-size companies and service providers. Its features address the following and much more:

- Creation of a service request model and publishing of service catalogs
- Management of the approval process for service requests, including user status checks
- Development of forms (or user interfaces) to include a variety of content and layouts
- Management of service requests across multiple business functions
- The ability to audit activity and report on service delivery

Highlights of Kinetic Request 5.0

Kinetic Data has continued to invest in the evolution of Kinetic Request and is now in its fifth release. Kinetic Request 5.0 introduces many user-focused enhancements which ease the process of service delivery via a portal. The product integrates seamlessly with BMC Remedy and third-party applications to leverage the multitude of BMC partners. New product features include:

- The addition of an advanced task automation engine enables integration with other third-party application investments. It integrates with all ITSM, ERP and hosted applications including HP Service Manager, PeopleSoft, Salesforce.com and Service-now.
- Updated portal templates help users jumpstart and rapidly deploy the development of any service catalog initiative.
- Design-time enhancements also ease the process of creating and maintaining service catalogs. Users have an improved ability to clone complex work that has already been created, including unlimited dependent tasks.
- Performance enhancements and accelerators allow for scalability of service catalogs and drive self-service adoption.

Kinetic Data has focused the 5.0 release on addressing user requirements. Collectively, all of the development investment has been geared toward improving the user experience, fine-tuning performance and enhancing the flexibility needed to implement a service catalog in a full range of business contexts.

Task Automation and Service Request Management

Service delivery is a multifaceted endeavor that entails many steps. In order to deliver any given service, a simple or complex process must be developed to support fulfillment of that service. Implementation of that process is best done in a repeatable, automated way using a toolset that can both initiate required tasks and seek required approvals. Kinetic Data has introduced Kinetic Task and bundled it with Kinetic Request 5.0 to package service request, service catalog and task automation together, resulting in a suite that includes all of the necessary components for service delivery.

Kinetic Task is a solution offering workflow flexibility and control to its users. Its automation capabilities facilitate the course of process development, task management and automated approvals. Kinetic Task includes the capacity to control complex tasks inherent in service delivery. Control structures available to users include conditional, dependent, looping, joining and user-defined collectively geared to manage any complicated process definition. There is no limit to the volume or interdependencies of tasks. The result is that Kinetic Task enables control over service request fulfillment in a way that offers users the flexibility to design processes that meet the needs of their respective organizations.

EMA Perspective

Both SRM and service catalog markets are well-established. More than five years ago, organizations began to recognize the value of exposing service offerings in a user-friendly way and then automating the delivery of service requests. Enterprises all over the world embarked on the development of a “storefront” for their services—again, no matter what the nature of those services. Some spent a great deal of time in the development of the services structure and others jumped right into the implementation and are now in the third or fourth iteration. The downturn in the economy slowed this activity down and yet the priority for service catalog and SRM technology remained strong.

In 2010, service delivery is perhaps even more important than it had been in the past, surging ahead with investments by enterprises of all types. Companies have spent recent years trimming costs and are anxious to move into a growth mode of operation. All virtual approaches to technology delivery are driving increased adoption. The more complex the user needs are, the more necessary a flexible tool is that will automate and deliver services. Kinetic Data's service request portal is a very tangible solution. It creates visibility into what is being offered and provides a means for tracking service quality, demand and costs. These aspects make it an appealing—and viable—investment for reaching many corporate constituencies.

Kinetic Data is in a position to capitalize on this resurgence in the service catalog and SRM markets. The company has the maturity and experience to understand the market needs and to put solutions in place to facilitate real change within the enterprise. Its product set has evolved over time and is designed to meet a variety of needs. No doubt, Kinetic Data will have to compete with much larger players in the market; yet it has advantages that can help it surpass this competition in agility and focus. With a maturing product set and an understanding of customer needs, Kinetic has what it needs to be up to the task.

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