

# Cool Vendors in Business Process Services, 2013

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The business process service market is open to innovation, and Gartner sees Blue Prism, Interactive Media and MyBiz as innovative emerging players that are helping to frame the future landscape. These providers can decrease overall costs for data handling business processes.

## Key Findings

- Blue Prism uses a data entry robot that can be trained to process rule-based activity in an organization's information processes, improving accuracy and efficiency.
- Interactive Media's solutions and services enable the delivery of automated voice or multichannel services, such as interactive, natural-language virtual assistants, to improve process efficiency and customer experience.
- MyBiz has built its service value proposition at the intersection of procurement business consulting, procurement business process outsourcing (BPO) and analytics, providing access to spend optimization specialists at a lower cost.

## Recommendations

- Directors of BPO or of shared-service centers should consider Blue Prism if they want to improve rule-based data-entry-intensive processes or reduce their workforce.
- Sales, marketing and customer service executives looking to further automate their customer management business process should consider the use of Interactive Media's automated voice or multichannel services.
- Procurement leaders at client organizations who need to establish more sophisticated insight and use from their spend data to improve buying efficiencies and effectiveness should consider MyBiz.

## Analysis

*This research does not constitute an exhaustive list of vendors in any given technology area, but rather is designed to highlight interesting, new and innovative vendors, products and services. Gartner disclaims all warranties, express or implied, with respect to this research, including any warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose.*

### What You Need to Know

Business process services are rapidly evolving with increasing deployment and development of technologies, such as automation and advanced analytics, enabling providers to offer new ways of delivering business process services to clients. Reducing delivery costs, improving the accuracy of first-time processing and mitigating increasing labor costs in locations such as India are drivers that have spurred these business process service providers to create new products.

In this Cool Vendors report, Gartner highlights three innovative examples framing the future landscape of business process services: Blue Prism, Interactive Media and MyBiz. These providers exemplify a variety of trends impacting the current and future posture of established business process service providers.

### Blue Prism

London, U.K. ([www.blueprism.com](http://www.blueprism.com))

*Analysis by Cathy Tornbohm*

**Why Cool:** Blue Prism authors and sells automation software that can be thought of as a "virtual workforce." It can help organizations remove both manual- and rule-based data entry tasks by using "software robots." This not only reduces process costs but also improves task accuracy and efficiency.

This can be particularly useful to BPO providers that execute large volumes of business process transactions, which require accurate and efficient rule-based data-entry-oriented processes. Taking the original concepts of macros and screen scraping (in which data is pulled from one application and pushed through a preprogrammed set of steps automatically, common in tools such as Excel and Web-based tools), Blue Prism has developed "robots" that can be trained to retrieve and enter rule-based data entry into any type of system.

The learning process takes about three weeks to train a robot to follow the object-oriented application interactions, and then the rules and process logic can be added, all without coding.

This is "cool," because a business user can create the process design without the need for a customer project to achieve this interaction and change. Tech entrepreneur Jason Kingdon, who previously built Searchspace, a class-defining artificial intelligence (AI) anti-money-laundering software company, chairs Blue Prism.

Blue Prism is cool for a number of reasons:

- BPO providers are highly cost-focused. Blue Prism's commercial model is based on replacing a worker with an automated 24/7 solution, with pricing roughly one-third the cost of an employee. This is highly desirable in a market with tight margins and aiming for high efficiency.
- It has delivered double-digit reductions in error rates for customer onboarding processes for several large utilities and telecommunications companies, including RWE npower, Telefónica and U.K. NHS hospital trusts, and for several BPO providers.
- Users without IT expertise can train the robots to work with any rule-based data entry system — whether the data is using custom-made systems, off-the-shelf software or the Internet — or with customer data held in Excel, Access or Word formats.
- The robots are trained very quickly to automate rule-based data entry by orchestrating existing enterprise applications without the need for an IT integration project.
- Blue Prism's solutions use rule-based data entry capabilities that reduce the need for manual entry and "swivel chair" processes (that is, rekeying) and can reduce the cost of data entry processes by 70%.
- The solutions are designed to work at scale and are deployed using existing data center technologies and infrastructures to form part of an organization's technology asset base.

**Challenges:** At present, Blue Prism's product works only with structured/repeatable rule-based processes with a defined start and endpoint, such as data re-entry tasks.

It is not a general-purpose automated business process discovery tool for all data process patterns. The robot can deliver only what it is trained to do and cannot flag errors outside of its validation rules, so the training (with the construction of rules and application controls) needs to be precise.

Much of Blue Prism's success has been in the U.K. with major utilities; it will need to scale operations geographically and to better target BPO providers as it grows. It will also need to aggressively promote the benefits of its approach to end-user organizations that are looking for business process improvement in the types of processes that have high levels of data entry that cannot easily be otherwise automated.

**Who Should Care:** End-user organizations and vendors that need to improve the quality and efficiency of rule-based back-office processes should be interested in Blue Prism:

- Directors of business process shared-service centers who want to standardize and improve data-entry-intensive processes and reduce staffing and costs.
- BPO providers that want to improve rule-based data-entry-intensive processes, as well as those that support document-centric processes and want to provide clients with better control over the use of documents and information.
- System integrators and consultants with business process improvement projects, in which clients are looking for process standardization and short- to medium-term automation.

## Interactive Media

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Rome, Italy ([www.imnet.com](http://www.imnet.com))

*Analysis by TJ Singh*

**Why Cool:** Interactive Media offers virtual assistant automated interaction to bring a degree of personality to emotionless interactions between customers and their service providers — both BPOs and captive centers. Recent engagements have enabled high-quality service deployments to integrate with existing contact center processes and assisted services (such as smart city initiatives, in which terminals respond to natural-language queries from the public). These services have helped improve customer service efficiency, cut unnecessary costs (such as medical certificate processing) for both service providers and users, and increased revenue for clients such as taxi drivers when using an automated service.

It has a strong focus and offerings around voice and multichannel services (that is, voice, video, email, Web chat, Short Message Service or Multimedia Messaging Service [MMS]), and self-service (including multilingual customer management BPO services). These offerings are delivered via a virtual assistant to create a highly automated approach to delivering marketing, sales and customer care services.

The company provides solutions and services, such as an interactive virtual assistant, email management agent, automated dialogue agent, and speech management tools and technology at a reasonable cost.

Interactive Media solutions and services help companies provide a relatively high quality of marketing and customer care automated services that legacy interactive systems cannot deliver. It can avoid inappropriate and, in some cases, inadequate responses due to the level of "stiffness" from some human-machine interfaces. Interaction based on natural-language understanding and IM software tools enable a higher quality of service deployment.

Interactive Media's solutions and services enable the delivery of automated voice or multichannel services in a consistent manner. Interactions can scale in a cost-effective and sustainable way while maintaining a high level of customer experience.

One such solution is IM.MIND (also referred to as Multimodal Interaction Natural Dialogue). Its development methodology includes tools for performance analysis that help in application tuning (refining voice input understanding, dialogue strategies and human-machine conversation) to help deliver a more consistent service.

Application tuning uses mathematical methods (such as decision theory and receiver operating characteristic [ROC] curves) to assess the classification quality (including the recognition of true/false positives and true/false negatives), and it is a significant part of the realization process. Typically, the IM professional services team devotes 40% of its effort to design, 20% to development, and 40% to testing and tuning. Higher-positive responses will result in a more engaged and satisfied consumer.

While there are many other vendors offering automated voice and multichannel solutions (including interactions via a virtual assistant interface), Interactive Media's approach toward a service-based model, rather than just outright technology, makes it easier for the buyers to understand what they are buying and implement the service.

The multichannel interaction allows for comprehensive service delivery, regardless of how customers engage with the business. That helps solve a key challenge for clients as they deal with a customer base using interactive services across multiple devices.

Another reason why the solution is cool is that its multilingual capability helps deliver services, with the same degree of consistency, for many languages — not just English.

**Challenges:** The company has focused its investment in developing technology solutions and services, leaving fewer resources for the development of an integrated solution, as well as less spending on marketing and sales. Therefore, Interactive Media suffers from a relatively lower-brand visibility compared with rival innovators in this technology and service area.

A key challenge for the company, as is the case with any niche customer management solution or service provider, includes finding the continuous investment required for the development and acquisition of technology, as well as for growth in new nontraditional markets, such as North America and Asia/Pacific.

The core team or decision makers are engineers by training, so the limited sales and marketing experience presents a challenge for growth. However, the company executives realize and accept the challenges, and are taking steps to address it through new hires and an adopted partnership model.

Interactive Media's revenue mix is 60% from technology licensing and 40% from services. Interactive Media should consider moving its revenue mix more toward an annuity-based service model that will enhance its cash-flow position, allow for future investments, and help buyers — who do not have the capacity/capability to deploy such a service — acquire the end-to-end service rather than acquire just another solution. This can only be achieved if the company becomes a full-fledged business process service provider or a partner to customer management BPO service providers.

**Who Should Care:** Sales, marketing and customer services executives of small, midsize and large organizations looking to improve consistency, multichannel adoption and customer experience should consider the benefits of natural-language-based automated voice and multichannel services in their internal and external customer management processes and functions. These processes and functions are typically aligned to marketing, sales and customer care.

Business process service executives and service delivery leaders who are looking to acquire solutions and service capabilities to help enhance their existing service offerings should consider partnering with Interactive Media for either part of or the entire comprehensive suite of solutions or services.

## MyBiz

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Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia ([www.mybiz.net](http://www.mybiz.net))

*Analysis by Cathy Tornbohm*

**Why Cool:** Since 2004, MyBiz has been supplying spend management services in Asia/Pacific to organizations wishing to increase profit and efficiency through cost savings and corporate governance. With an enviable blue-chip clientele, MyBiz has developed its own proprietary and tightly integrated solutions, offering a comprehensive suite for spend management, strategic sourcing and procurement management.

Capitalizing on a lower cost base for its highly skilled spend analytics specialists with extensive and relevant procurement experience in the region, it is deploying these tools as part of a managed BPO service offering.

Gartner expects that dedicated procurement and analytics technologies will drive new business models, with opportunities and threats for established providers. This spend management service is one of only a handful of tools developed by a provider from the Asia/Pacific region.

MyBiz is a privately held company, headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 2010, Microsoft recognized MyBiz as a Top Three Partner of the Year for Independent Software Vendor/Software Solutions globally.

MyBiz underlined its capabilities by signing up industry leaders in growth-sector industries, including oil and gas, banking and financial services, telecommunications, construction, property development, plantation, and healthcare. Its latest client win for managed spend analytics services is the second-largest listed healthcare service provider in the world, based on market capitalization.

**Challenges:** One of MyBiz's key challenges is to raise its international profile. Although utilization of cloud technologies means that location is not a barrier, the majority of clients may still feel that that dedicated on-site support is necessary. In addition, the provision of BPO for procurement and spend analytics is relatively new for Asia, meaning that clients have to be made aware of MyBiz's value proposition combining platform, and BPO and business consulting services.

Competitors are also investing heavily in analytical capabilities, which could hinder MyBiz's future prospects.

MyBiz must also invest in marketing and messaging to increase and shape its brand awareness to attract not only the right clients but also the right talent for client relationship management as well as the globalization of its sales presence.

**Who Should Care:** Business leaders at client organizations responsible for increased profitability, efficiency and governance should review MyBiz. CEOs, COOs and CFOs could benefit from this service, as it targets key cost saving areas, and it can help implement programs to realize savings for increased profit and greater compliance to processes as they are set up.

Heads of procurement that need to establish sophisticated operations for, and insight into, their procurement data (which they are struggling to do using internal resources) should also consider engaging the service.

## Recommended Reading

*Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.*

"Competitive Landscape: Business Consulting, Large and Midsize Providers, Worldwide"

"Best Practices for Selecting Knowledge-Based Services From Business Consulting, Knowledge Process Outsourcing and Business Process Outsourcing Providers"

"Market Insight: The Components of Consulting Business Model Innovation"

"Predicts 2013: The Future of Business Consulting and Business Process Outsourcing Revealed"

"Gartner Analytics Trends: The Nexus of Forces (Social, Mobile, Cloud, Information) Drives Demand for Digital Transformation Consulting"

## Evidence

This analysis is based on Gartner's insights into the markets, published research, and regular interactions with both buyers and suppliers.

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