



IMPACT REPORT

Built.io adds a citizen integrator's iPaaS to a unique product portfolio

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BY CARL LEHMANN (/ANALYST-TEAM/ANALYST/CARL+LEHMANN)

Built.io's flagship offering, Flow, is an integration tool designed for technical users to create complex, multi-step integrations. The vendor recently launched a basic version of Flow designed for business users who seek a simpler 'if-this-then-that' (IFTTT) type of integration design paradigm. Built.io claims that it offers more intuitive design of integrations between applications like Cisco Spark, Slack, Gmail, Marketo and Salesforce. The earlier version of Flow is now called Flow Enterprise, while the new version is branded as Flow Express. Flow Express will be positioned as a drag-and-drop data integration offering for line-of-business (LOB) users within an enterprise to create workflow automation models. They represent two of four offerings in the vendor's digital transformation suite.

The 451 Take

Built.io is a relatively new integration platform-as-a-service (iPaaS) vendor in an expanding market. Its strategy to democratize integration and extend it to less tech-savvy project managers, business analysts and so-called citizen integrators isn't new. In fact, it's now quite a popular approach among other iPaaS vendors. What's interesting about Built.io, however, is that its iPaaS offerings are complemented by a content management system (CMS) called Contentstack. Integration of all types often requires linkages to content repositories, some such repositories are less sophisticated and capable than others, and many are rather expensive and complex platforms. Built.io may be able to appeal to users charged with both content management and integration responsibilities. However, in many larger organizations this is usually two separate groups. Nevertheless, in other organizations the combined capabilities of integration and content management may kill two birds with one potentially far less expensive stone.

Context

In an earlier report (/report-short?entityId=89700) on San Francisco-based Built.io, we noted that the emerging integration vendor recognized that mobile, SaaS and IoT pose integration headaches for enterprises that it wanted to solve. Founded in 2007 as consultancy Raw Engineering, and having launched its integration product, Flow, publicly in the second half of 2015, Built.io aspires to be a preferred integration toolkit of IT teams and LOBs. Its desire is to offer richer functionality than rivals IFTTT and Zapier, and shallower learning curves compared with vendors like MuleSoft or TIBCO. Flow is intended for tech-

savvy integration developers. Strategically, Built.io wants to democratize enterprise data integration and is beginning to do so with its Flow Express offering. Built.io's CTO, Nishant Patel, helped shape enterprise integration at TIBCO as architect of BusinessWorks, and the vendor's DevOps team has operated large-scale, mission-critical cloud deployments for Fortune 1000 companies for several years. Built.io has 200 employees, 170 of which are engineers in Mumbai. It reports to be self-funded and profitable with healthy financials.

Strategy and products

Built.io is relatively recent entry in a growing iPaaS market (</report-short?entityId=89409>). It seeks to simplify how data and application integration technology are designed and used in midsized and larger firms. Many development platforms now include design tools equipped with drag-and-drop logic and integration components that can configure or compose data flow and workflows rather than having to code them. These so-called 'low-code' platforms can accelerate development and deployment cycle times and can be rapidly changed or modified. Typically they are more intuitive to use and thus can appeal to less tech-savvy project managers, business analysts and others in a growing population of so-called citizen integrators. Built.io's new offering, Flow Express, now seeks to capture its fair share of this new market. But Built.io's offerings go further. It refers to its product portfolio as a digital transformation platform that includes four technologies.

As noted, Built.io Flow Enterprise is designed for IT administrators and developers. Its tooling includes a drag-and-drop integration design user interface (UI), code editor for Node.js custom code, debugging utilities, an API Builder and a library of thousands of pre-built integrations. Built.io continues to add to its pre-built integration library. Its integration capabilities can codify business logic to enable linear workflows, multi-step flows, parallel and branching flows, and grouping and recursive flows.

Built.io Flow Express is designed for business users and citizen integrators. It includes a point-and-click UI that guides users via a step-by-step integration builder tool with turnkey templates (i.e., wizard-like) and the same library of thousands of pre-built integrations as the Enterprise version. Its integration capabilities focus on simple linear workflows and multi-step flows. Built.io Backend was originally positioned as a mobile backend-as-a-service (mBaaS). It enabled rapid mobile device integration with common enterprise systems of record (e.g., databases, ERP systems). More recently, the vendor realized that roughly 50% of its customer use cases were for other integrations, including IoT projects and web applications. As a result, Built.io added features to embrace these use cases (e.g., native support for real-time integrations). While it still refers to the product as an mBaaS, it will gradually move away from that moniker and reposition its capabilities as a multi-purpose backend-as-a-service (BaaS). Indeed, the traditional mBaaS community at large is doing the same.

Built.io is unique among iPaaS vendors in that it offers its own CMS. The vendor observed that many integrations link to content repositories that serve a variety of systems, applications and devices. Most iPaaS offerings do very little to manage content, and only a few (Informatica and Dell Boomi, for example) enable data quality management (DQM). Built.io's Contentstack can rapidly deliver the needed content called for by the use case. It enables developers to build cross-platform applications and deliver content through APIs, optimized for each destination/device. Contentstack represents upsell and cross-sell opportunity for the vendor.

Customers

Built.io did not report a precise number of paying customers but noted that it had close to three dozen enterprise customers and several thousand individual users. Those of note include Agralogs (agriculture) that uses Built.io to run over 8,600 real-time integrations to acquire soil, water, and weather data for analysis. The Sacramento Kings (basketball team) use Built.io to build a mobile application for use by its fans and to promote the experiences and services offered within its new high-tech arena.

Competition

Rivals to Built.io include Azuqua (/report-short?entityId=88109), Zapier, IFTTT and Informatica's REV data preparation offering (/report-short?entityId=81281). Azuqua caters to non-technical business users that need to execute data exchange and integration within and across applications and SaaS offerings. It does not, however, offer a CMS and mBaaS. There are several other iPaaS vendors that have more comprehensive offerings. Among them are Dell Boomi and Informatica. Dell Boomi (/report-short?entityId=88603) is among the leaders in the iPaaS market. It doesn't offer an mBaaS per se, but its iPaaS can rival Built.io's Flow and BaaS capabilities. Boomi offers master data management (MDM) capabilities that may perform similarly to Built.io's Contentstack. Informatica has been close on the heels of Boomi with its Informatica Cloud iPaaS, and has the advantage over Boomi in data preparation, MDM and DQM. Informatica, too, has extended its iPaaS with features that appeal to less technical citizen integrators that use its wares for various analytics projects.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

The combination of Built.io Flow Express and Enterprise address a wide audience of integration users, spanning business users, citizen integrators, technical users, IT administrators and developers. Its Contentstack is unique among iPaaS vendors at large.

Weaknesses

CMS platforms and iPaaS technology solve for two different problem sets with little use case overlap. This might make it difficult for Built.io to evolve each platform sufficiently to stay abreast of the user needs in each of these communities.

Opportunities

The concept of digital transformation to improve customer experiences and fend off threats from rivals is propelling the need to drive information and analysis down to a broader set of knowledge workers who are likely unskilled in the use of integration technology to acquire the data and content they need for analysis. This plays well into Built.io's Flow Express and potentially its Contentstack product strategies.

Threats

Having integration offerings and a CMS platform may appeal to many smaller groups that need to do both. In larger enterprises, these are usually two separate groups, each with different buying and decision criteria that could lengthen Built.io's sales cycle unless properly managed as an upsell and/or cross-sell opportunity.

Carl Lehmann (/analyst-team/analyst/Carl+Lehmann)

Research Manager, Enterprise Architecture, Integration & Business Process Management

M&A ACTIVITY BY SECTOR

Cloud (0) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=906)

Information management (2129) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=819)

Application software (8746) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_selected_sectors=72)

M&A ACTIVITY BY ACQUIRER

Cisco Systems Inc. (126) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Cisco+Systems Inc.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Cisco+Systems+Inc.))

Dell Inc. (35) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Dell+Inc.)

Informatica Corporation (17) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Informatica+Corporation)

Marketo (1) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=Marketo)

MuleSoft (1) (https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=MuleSoft)

salesforce.com Inc. [dba Salesforce] (49) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=salesforce.com+Inc. \[dba Salesforce\]](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=salesforce.com+Inc.+dba+Salesforce))

TIBCO Software Inc. (22) ([https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=TIBCO+Software Inc.](https://makb.the451group.com/results?basic_acquirers=TIBCO+Software+Inc.))

Figures shown indicate number of transactions

COMPANY MENTIONS (PRIMARY)

[Built.io \(/search?company=Built.io\)](/search?company=Built.io)

COMPANY MENTIONS (OTHER)

Agralogics , Azuqua , Boomi , Cisco , Dell Technologies , IFTTT , Informatica , Marketo , MuleSoft , Sacramento Kings , Salesforce , Slack Technologies , TIBCO , Zapier (</search?company=Zapier>)

CHANNELS

Business Applications , Cloud Transformation , Data Platforms & Analytics , Service Providers (</dashboard?view=channel&channel=9>)

SECTORS

All / Cloud (</search?sector=906>)

All / Application software (</search?sector=72>)

All / Information management (</search?sector=819>)

