



# Broadcast Music, Inc. rules the charts with **BPM and SOA**

When a radio station anywhere in the United States plays a song by Grammy-winning band The Black Keys, Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) ensures royalties are paid to the song's BMI writers and publishers.

BMI is a performing rights organization (PRO) that represents the public performance rights in more than 7.5 million musical works created and owned by more than 550,000

songwriters, composers, and publishers—including stars like Ke\$ha, Kanye West, Barry Manilow, and Michael Jackson. The New York-based company has thrived throughout the many years of industry-rocking technology shifts as music delivery platforms have morphed from vinyl to CDs

to MP3s—and the organization continues to remain cutting-edge.

To meet the challenge of a radically-transformed music industry, BMI launched the Orion Project, a massive strategic IT project

that will be completed within the next three years. With help from IBM Premier Business Partner Prolifics, BMI purchased a stack of IBM software, including IBM's BPM and SOA suite of products with IBM Business Process Manager (BPM), IBM Operational Decision Manager, IBM Blueworks Live, IBM WebSphere Enterprise Service Bus and IBM WebSphere DataPower, according to James King, Senior Vice President of Business Operations at BMI.

“What does this business need to stay relevant in the music industry?” King asks. “Our company has strategic goals for how it positions itself in the market and how it delivers services.

BMI outlined four key goals for this project that will ultimately improve both external and internal operations: create an integrated and common user interface, use an open service-oriented architecture (SOA), optimize the business with a business process management and rules solution, and create a single view of data, according to King.

“Previously, our applications were built in-house and we had a lot of applications built for one-off purposes,” he says. “Now we are building

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# at a glance

**Company Name:** Broadcast Music, Inc.

**Headquarters:** New York, New York

**Industry:** Performing rights organization

**Founded:** 1939

**Website:** [www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com)

**Company Details:** BMI is a performing rights organization, representing the public performance rights in more than 7.5 million musical works created and owned by more than 550,000 songwriters, composers, and music publishers. The company negotiates music license agreements and distributes the fees it generates as royalties to its affiliated writers and publishers when their songs are performed in public, according to BMI.

Copyright law requires that music users secure permission from each songwriter or composer in order to legally play their music publicly. As a central resource, BMI can grant blanket copyright clearance for more than 7.5 million songs through a single music license, saving the music user the immense time and expense of contacting each songwriter or composer for permission. The "Performing Right" grants songwriters, composers, and music publishers the exclusive right to play their music publicly and the authority to allow or not allow other users to do the same.

The new positioning campaign was kicked-off in January to reinforce BMI's industry leadership, strategy and heritage. Powered By is one of the key message platforms and slogans from the campaign representing BMI's enduring commitment to innovation, bringing its songwriters, composers, publishers and licensees cutting-edge technologies to manage their music and their music use.

"Powered By reflects BMI's focus on innovation and its ability to power or license establishments and digital platforms with music of all genres," says Richard Conlon, Senior Vice President of Corporate Strategy, Communications and New Media for BMI. "During this evolutionary time in the industry, BMI has a diversified business model and strategic vision that has continued to adapt and address the new challenges while embracing new opportunities to broaden our business portfolio. Our new campaign signals BMI's fast embrace of this industry evolution."

For more information about BMI, visit [www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com).

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new business strategies and launching technical innovations that have hyper-focused business processes; we've transformed our services and how we deliver them to the marketplace."

## Getting faster results with business process management

A team of 11 BMI employees, including data, services, and BPM resources, works collaboratively with Prolifics on the ongoing project, now underway for a year and a half. Prolifics—an international company specializing in solving business technology problems—helped BMI create a long-term roadmap, build out a flexible IT infrastructure, and create a list of processes that could be streamlined through automation, workflow, and rules management.

Prolifics adopted a multifaceted delivery plan that would support technology programs being implemented at BMI. BMI has had a specific plan on becoming more agile in delivering value to both affiliates and licensees. The plan includes in-depth analysis of business processes across work streams, long-term strategy recommendations to optimize performance and establish tracking metrics, implementation and configuration services for 15 different IBM technologies, full project development lifecycle planning, and end-to-end support of agile adoption.

"Prolifics was very instrumental. We worked closely with the Prolifics team to help us understand and configure the technology, understand how we should deploy and also be involved in the training and mentoring of our team," King says. "It's been a very close relationship."

After laying down a robust SOA foundation that would allow for faster time to market and

future growth, BMI leadership kicked off their BPM initiatives designed to streamline their business and better utilize resources. The first of these initiatives was to address the application process for new songwriters. A songwriter, composer or publisher—known as an affiliate—joins BMI by filling out an online application form which requires uniquely identifiable information, according to Brian Graves, Senior Director of Enterprise Services at BMI.

“Today there is a lot of manual work to accurately validate the application,” Graves explains. “Our team has to validate the person’s identity when applying. With the company processing a vast amount of data on a daily basis, the application approval can take several days to complete.”

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To gain an advantage in the marketplace and improve the customer experience, BMI is building the speedy Affiliate Management Portal (AMP), which will reduce processing time from days to minutes. While the client-facing application will not be greatly altered, this program will utilize IBM BPM and ODM software to accelerate the application process behind-the-scenes, creating rules and automated procedures that trigger based on red flags and need.

“Using SOA and using BPM [technologies], we’re going to be able to deploy things more quickly and shorten processing time,” King explains. “So what would now take many days to push through, will be an automated procedure that forces action to occur [in minutes]. The expedited processing times will increase efficiency in our business even more, which leads to reduced cost and increased revenue. This makes us more competitive.”

### Managing change with business rules and security

“This new software will also help BMI manage changes to a songwriter’s catalogue over time, as they add songs, work with new partners or have

Founded in 1978 in New York City, Prolifics established itself as a specialist in building high-performance transactional systems for many of the biggest firms on Wall Street. Now, the company has offices worldwide and has worked with more than 3,000 organizations to create comprehensive business solutions.


The company is a Premier Level IBM Business Partner and systems integrator working specifically on IBM technologies. Prolifics focuses on BPM, integration, security, business analytics, mobility, IBM WebSphere Portal, content management and collaboration and provides expert services in architecture, design, development, deployment, testing and support— all of which were used while working with BMI on the Orion project.

“BMI engaged Prolifics in a multiyear strategic IT initiative to transform its Business and IT organizations,” says Sean Jensen, Account Executive at Prolifics. “Coordinating full project lifecycles across more than five work streams to configure and integrate over 15 IBM technologies, Prolifics has used phased releases, dependency driven project plans and role-based mentorship and education to help BMI pragmatically and logically implement and extend their business.”

Over the next few years, Prolifics will continue to help BMI implement and extend the core Orion building blocks into production solutions. For more information on Prolifics, visit [www.prolifics.com](http://www.prolifics.com).

any change in status,” Graves says. “We adopted an event-driven, rules-based architecture to manage change and update all of the data. For example, if someone changes his or her name, a process will be triggered that will carry through transferring their data to the new name within our system.”

BMI and Prolifics modeled the processes in a way that the frontline people can understand those rules and administer them independently. A key benefit to the new platform overall has been to improve internal productivity and communications, Graves says. And that will continue with future implementations, such as Social BPM, which will empower departments to collaborate with each other in real time.



With sensitive information included in the member application system and high-profile celebrities involved, security is always a priority for BMI, Graves explains.

“We want a very hardened and secure infrastructure and DataPower is able to enforce that, while also enabling any type of data transformation at wire speed,” he says. “It separates security policy and enforcement from the runtime, separating that from an architecture standpoint.”

### **A simpler, mobile user interface**

Besides empowering BMI employees to work more efficiently, the Orion Project also improves user-facing applications with IBM WebSphere Portal, IBM Web Content Manager and IBM Connections, which creates a consistent look and feel across all applications. BMI recently launched BMI Live, which is a new version of the web-based program for affiliates to input updated performance information more easily.

The site allows a songwriter to store different set lists, organize different bands, and apply for compensation quickly. BMI Live was built using an SOA model, so services can be modified as the company changes and grows and transactions are now done in real-time—resulting in faster processing. King also explains it was vital for the application to follow a responsive web design in order to provide the best viewing experience for its users.

BMI Live is not only available on BMI.com, but it's also accessible via a mobile app. BMI Mobile—available through iTunes—provides the same portal to manage information through the affiliates' mobile devices. King explains that BMI wants to create the best, most convenient product for its users.

“I believe that we've always been a tech inno-

vator in our space and I think this will give us a great opportunity to provide new services on the devices people want to use, their mobile devices,” King says. “[We want] a common look and feel for user interfaces, to make it much easier for people to work with us.”

### **IBM products lead to a new way of doing business**

Moving off of Microsoft ASP.NET, BMI has employed not just IBM WebSphere SOA and BPM products, but an entire IBM stack—from IBM Forms, Tivoli Storage Manager and Rational tools for governance and management across the Software Development Lifecycle to IBM InfoSphere data services and Cognos and SPSS analytics. King says it is important to BMI to have all of these tools work well together.

“What's powerful about it is the IBM platform is a true software stack,” he explains. “Meaning that the pieces flow together, and that's a design notion for all of our enterprise apps. We bought best-of-breed through IBM. We didn't pick a piece here for online site development and a piece here for business development and a piece here for data storage—that's why the stack was important to us.”

Leveraging the IBM technology and teaming with technology partner, Prolifics, BMI is well on its way to meeting its strategic goals—providing value-added services to BMI affiliates and licensees, as well as tracking, supporting, and managing their steps along the way for internal transparency.

“The [IBM] BPM platform is a way to make it simpler and easier to adjust our business needs going forward,” King says. “It is about how we maintain our relevance, how we rebuild our platform to be more flexible, reusable and then how we use these new technologies to be successful.” 



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