

**6th Microsoft Global Energy Forum
Houston, February 2009**



Microsoft Surface demonstrator from [Infusion Development](#).

Around 500 attended the Microsoft Global Energy Forum (GEF) to hear from oil companies like BP, Chevron, Marathon, ConocoPhillips, Shell and around 30 or so exhibitors. Use of Microsoft's Office suite is pretty much taken as a 'given' among its oil and gas clients – to the extent that the few references to these end user tools were the usual caveats about individuals 'managing' too much data in Excel. The centerpiece of the GEF was Microsoft Share Point and the 'business intelligence' stack which combine to provide monitoring and reporting solutions in a variety of business contexts from production to refining. SharePoint seems to offer both business and IT a good balance between development and productized solutions that integrate with existing systems. A constellation of application vendors exists to provide point integration with SCADA and ERP systems and a good line up of consultants and systems integrators are available to do the donkey work. But SharePoint and business intelligence is not magic, these projects require data 'issues' to be addressed – and, as Anadarko reports, can bring about a culture change especially in regard of 'fixing' data issues at source. Business intelligence also highlights how much business was previously done in Excel and other 'non systems of record.'

Shell reported enthusiastically on early results from its trials of social networking. In a somewhat iconoclastic presentation, Shell found that it is about technology after all. Tools including project websites, document repositories, portals, wikis, blogs and forums really are making a difference. A refreshing change from the old 'knowledge management' days when you weren't allowed to say that technology was a good thing! A rather overblown 'survey' by Microsoft and SAIC seemed to back up Shell's findings.

Highlights

[Social networking trials in Shell](#)

[ConocoPhillips knowledge sharing](#)

[Marathon's digital oilfield](#)

[Business Intelligence in Chevron](#)

[ConocoPhillips Operations Information System](#)

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