Interface between SAP and Enterprise Portal

The Deutsche WertpapierService Bank AG integrates data from in-house SAP applications into the Intrexx Xtreme portal development environment from United Planet. A challenge for many large enterprises – not for the largest securities holder in Germany.

Freiburg, 30 January 2007. It all started with somebody who needed to deal with paper forms that laid around the central project bureau, just because their addressee was currently on vacation. Tasks whose status could not be ascertained even after long research, and always more files were the consequences. Files that filled shelves and rooms, for which even more space had to be found in rooms and hallways, ironically. Unfortunatly far away from the desired efficiency.

With the merger of the Bank for Securities Service and Systems AG and the WPS Securities Service Bank AG in 2003 into the Deutsche WertpapierService Bank AG or dwpbank for short, the largest securities processor in Germany was created. This fusion had a signalling effect as the first cooperation spanning the savings bank and the financial cooperative sectors. Furthermore, for the independent service provider around the securities back end, private and commercial banks of every size count among it's over 250 customers.

In the case of information technology as well, the young transaction giant is forging new paths: internal IT service and external customer service is handled very effectively by the enterprise with a highly integrated self-developed trouble ticketing software based on open source. For its portal projects, the company has decided to use for the communications department the Java-based development platform Intrexx Xtreme, from the German software vendor United Planet. The goal was to improve communication between branches of the bank and to create a central platform on which the employees can find all kinds of role-based information.

Prior to this decision, a detailed evaluation of the systems on the market was made. Michael Rech, director of the ITTAS department, finally decided in favor of Intrexx Xtreme because the software provides for very

quick project results, and thereby also can be economically fit within the budget. „Necessary qualities like security, modern technologies, and functions were just as refined on Intrexx as with IBM or SAP, for example. Crucial for me was the fact that it requires less than 10% of the time, at maximum, to create an application than with others," said Rech.

At the beginning, a small team of employees of the IT department visited the Academy run by United Planet, and learned with the predominantly visually oriented Intrexx software how to develop and compile web-based applications. For Inga Veit, product manager for portals in Düsseldorf, this turned out to be an appealing experience due to its novelty. Because of the development interface, the so-called Portal Manager, employee desires can be quickly and easily put into practice. „With a few clicks," which by now are done with pleasure by co-workers in the bank, „complete applications were remarkably quickly developed that allowed the bank's growing auditing team to publish information."

The pilot application, and concurrently the flagship of the new intranet portal, is „PaX". PaX is pure project management – from project application, to status reports and change requests, up to project completion report. An application of such complexity that Armin Linser himself, Director of Consulting for United Planet, was astounded. As the application has a very high significance to the bank and new revisions must be implemented in short order, additional future development was assigned in large part to the developers in Freiburg.

In the intranet portal today, newsletters, appointments, and publications will be published, just as press screenings, staff association information, and internal job offers. Many of these applications have been clicked together with the help of the Portal Manager, and sometimes they were created using the richly available application pool of the Community Server from United Planet – as in the case of the „Promotion Catalog", an application that presents all available customer and promotional gifts to Sales and makes them available to order. It is based on the completed template „eProcurement". Additionally, various Lotus Notes applications were made ready for web usage and integrated into the intranet portal.

Intrexx is software and, like all software, has its limits. If one wants to integrate calculation into forms or applications, the use of JavaScript is

required. In some cases, the programming languages Velocity, XML, and Java must be used. In complex cases, the Intrexx developers for the dwpbank decide on a case-by-case basis whether they wish to program by themselves or request help from the consulting department of United Planet.

But the new portal interface is not only loved by developers. From the employees as well, there is much positive feedback: „net@work“, the name of the intranet portal, is quick, and the design appealing and easy to use. Interactive applications like the marketplace, with its ability to sell cars, apartments, and concert tickets, are very popular. „Those are indeed also important applications, in order to build up acceptance of the intranet at the beginning,“ smiles Inga Veit: „I enjoy rummaging around in it myself. And I get to know new colleagues better as well.“

The integration of various large systems of the independent service provider presents a challenge. A typical problem of large enterprises, which the IT department of the dwpbank enjoys facing up to: there, the SAP system sends the recorded expenditures and costs („actual“ data) of the projects to the PaX application. In the other direction, plan information on costs and expenditures for projects flows from PaX to the SAP system. The interface between portal and SAP was realized based on the Lotus Enterprise Integrator (LEI). This makes data from SAP available by making a Remote Function Call (RFC) to an SQL server and then returns any changes via procedures to SAP. With this, the portal represents a central access point to all information, and makes it possible to enrich third party data from SAP with new information. The data can be used and further processed for multifaceted analyses, executing processes, or updates.

In addition to functioning as an Intranet, Intrexx Xtreme is finding increasing use as an Extranet: the dwpbank makes securities information, among other data, available to its customers in a portal created with Intrexx Xtreme.

About the dwpbank:

The Deutsche WertpapierService Bank AG (dwpbank) is, with over 7.6 million accounts under its control, the clear market leader in securities service. The first actively sector-overlapping transaction bank, which was created from a merger in mid-2003, employs over 1,350 people in 7 locations. The specialist for all process and system services regarding securities transactions counts the cooperative Finanzverbund, many parts of the Sparkasse financial group, and numerous institutes in the private and corporate banking sector, such as the Dresdner Bank or the Postbank, among its clients.

About United Planet

The German software vendor United Planet belongs, with Intrexx Xtreme, to the market leaders in the segment of private mid-size enterprises, public administrations, and organizations. With this sector-neutral standard software, intranets, enterprise portals, and web applications can be created and run with the most modern functions extremely quickly and easily. Constructing a portal with Intrexx Xtreme can be calculated exactly and can be put together using precompleted building blocks. Thousands of enterprises already run their business processes using an Intrexx portal, and profit thereby from immense cost savings.

The Java-based software is delivered completely on one DVD and runs on Windows, Linux, and Sun Solaris systems. Intrexx Portals make it possible to integrate third party data from ERP solutions of almost any vendor (SAP, Microsoft, Sage, etc.); here a Business Adapter controls the data modelling and user management of the corresponding developer.

Intrexx and United Planet have won more than 15 awards and innovation prizes nationally and internationally. For additional information visit www.unitedplanet.de or www.intrexx.com.

Possibilities of Foreign Data Integration with United Planet:

1. **Im- and export of data with the BizWalker module**
With the standard „BizWalker“ module, data in the portal can be exported, or data from sources foreign to Intrexx can be imported. To do this, a connection to an additional database will be created. The function can either be started manually, or automatically executed at defined points in time. The average amount of time required to set up a Job for importing a foreign data source is about 10 minutes and you will be aided by an assistant.

2. **Direct read access with the Foreign Data Integrator module**
Integration using the equally package standard Intrexx module is by far the fastest way to integrate data in real time in a portal. This is the simplest way, and for most usage scenarios, it will also suffice; however, the authorization procedure of the third-party system cannot be taken into account, as access occurs at the database level and not at the application level.

3. **Intrexx Xtreme Business Adapter**
In order to provide access, for example, to the data of an ERP system while taking into account the client and authorization system of the corresponding developer, the „Intrexx Xtreme API Business Adapter“ has been developed. Currently available is the „Business Adapter for SAP Business Suite“, as well as the „Business Adapter for SAP Business One“. Access to the SAP system occurs either in read-only mode or inclusive of all functions (read, write, delete). The adapter builds upon technologies recommended by SAP for system integration, and switches the access request using an Intrexx Business Logic specially implemented for this purpose into the corresponding SAP system. This ensures that the strict business logics of the SAP system will be maintained.

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