



ERPConnect Services

Theobald Software breaks down barriers
between SAP and SharePoint worlds

„ERPConnect Services from Theobald Software is more than a concept, it is a real solution to the challenges we are facing. Lean, low maintenance and reliable.“

IT Project Manager

Challenge

A global manufacturer of household and hospitality products had some catching up to do in terms of IT system integration; in the words of a company representative: “The SAP world and the non-SAP world had actually been living in parallel universes all along. We wanted to bring the two worlds closer together.” Single Sign-On was seen as an important part of the solution. The manufacturer decided to go with Microsoft’s SharePoint Server platform for collaboration. The only thing that was missing was a straightforward way to integrate SAP data. To date, SAP data had been exported as text files and imported elsewhere - and vice versa. However, this method was too static and time-consuming.

Solution

“Although five software vendors presented their products to us,” says a project manager, “most of them were ruled out from the start due to the complexity and maintenance requirements. In the end it was Theobald Software that convinced us with ERPConnect Services. Only hours after visiting us,

they provided us with a test installation; after one more meeting we were convinced: THAT is our solution”. ERPConnect Services includes several tools for SharePoint/SAP integration scenarios and enables a seamless connection between SAP applications and SharePoint. No additional middleware is required - the integration is carried out entirely within the SharePoint architecture. The solution also scored points because of short development times and the stability of the developed solutions. The solution was put into productive operation only six weeks after the decision was made, which was mainly due to the fact that the server farm setup and the SharePoint integration could be done in parallel. “Building the Bridge” between SAP ERP ECC 6.0 and SharePoint was accomplished on a project-by-project basis. The implementation began with the invoice verification process, specifically the online check of incoming invoices and the distribution to cost centers. “We developed our invoice

Solution at a glance

Company

Manufacturer of household and hospitality products

Sector

Manufacturing industry

Departments

Company-wide implementation

Challenge

Replacing the static SAP data transfer method from SAP ERP ECC 6.0 to SharePoint.

Solution

ERPConnect Services

Benefits

- Single Sign-On between SharePoint and SAP
- Direct connection from SharePoint to SAP without middleware
- More efficient and dynamic data transfer processes
- Integrated processes

System environment

- SAP ERP ECC 6.0
- Microsoft SharePoint
- Nintex Workflow
- Microsoft InfoPath

verification on SharePoint 2010 with Microsoft InfoPath and Nintex Workflow”, says the project manager of the household and hospitality manufacturer. “ERPConnect Services was utilized in two ways: Firstly, in a website workflow that runs every 5 minutes, data is retrieved from an SAP list via a Theobald web service and then stored in a SharePoint form library. Access to SAP is provided via the web service action in the Nintex workflow. Secondly, in the InfoPath forms, lookup data

Time to Value

6 weeks to productive
use of ERPConnect
Services for invoice
verification

from SAP is provided at runtime via Theobald web services and then data is posted back to SAP in the same way.” For the manufacturer, the use of the interfaces above translate directly into more efficient processes; as the project manager says: “In the past, employees filled out, for example, a shipping order form. This was then sent for data import into SAP, often with a response to the responsible employee noting that the form was filled out incorrectly at point x or y. Today, the validation of entries takes place immediately, that is, the employee immediately sees whether he/she has filled in a field incorrectly and can immediately make the correction.” In addition, information from the SAP system is stored behind the form and can be used to directly assign the cost center responsibility for further processing. Accounting also becomes more accurate: When filling out a request for travel requests, employees used to have to manually enter the current exchange rate; but, since this information is stored in SAP today, only the amount in the relevant currency has to be entered and the conversion is done automatically. This saves employees time and stress. The examples of the

invoice verification, or travel request, show just how much time is saved thanks to the integration of SharePoint and SAP: Every employee saves a good 20 seconds when filling out a leave request. Extrapolated to the company’s several thousand employees, this process alone saves a six-digit amount.

The manufacturer is not only satisfied with the solution but also in terms of service and support, as the head of the IT project explains: “Theobald Software has a unique developer’s character required to help us in the required areas. Even for complicated problems, we were provided with excellent support within hours.”

Future

“Processes for additional departments will be implemented in the future, including for the personnel, accounting and logistics departments. The long-term goal is the company-wide use of ERPConnect Services as an SAP interface technology. In addition, Theobald Software’s custom actions, specially developed for Nintex Workflow integration with SAP applications, will be deployed in the future for processes requiring frequent data

access - such as invoice verification. The custom actions provide the capability of interacting directly with the SAP system from any Nintex Workflow. As a standard feature, Nintex Workflow already offers an extensive catalog of so-called workflow actions that can be used to design business processes. For special requirements, this catalog can be extended by individually programmed custom actions. In combination with ERPConnect Services, Theobald Software has developed, among other things, the custom actions Call SAP Function and Read SAP Table, which can be used independently of each other for integrating and processing SAP data in SharePoint.

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„Theobald Software combines a sophisticated, high-performance solution with technological expertise in SharePoint, SAP, and Nintex as well as a high level of service - precisely the mix we require to ensure the successful implementation of our project.“

IT Project Manager

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