



Integration of SAP and a force.com based Retailer Portal for the Spare Parts Management

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**Dr. Valentin Nicolescu,
Head of Coordination
SAP-Development**

Challenge:

- Development of an online portal for the management of spare parts
- Import of portal data from SAP ERP, SAP BW and third party systems

Solution:

SKYVVA Integration Suite as an interface between a force.com based portal and SAP

Result:

Direct integration of SAP and a force.com based Portal without Middleware.

Webasto: Integration of SAP and force.com retailer portal in record time

Webasto, a company based in Stockdorf near Munich, is the world market leader for convertible, roof and heating systems in the passenger vehicle sector and represented worldwide in more than 50 locations as a corporate group. With more than 8500 employees, the company generated a turnover of two billion Euro in 2010. Webasto is internationally known for the development, production and distribution of entire roof and convertible-roof systems but also for heating, cooling and ventilation systems for passenger cars and commercial vehicles. Using the SKYVVA integration suite, the company was able to quickly integrate a new spare parts information system with SAP in their retailer portal.

force.com applications as a central information platform for employees and dealers

With SPIN, a central online portal for spare parts management, Webasto offers an opportunity for all employees and commercial partners to extensively and promptly learn about the nature and extent of spare parts for the diverse product range of the Global Comfort Solutions (GCS) business line. Among others, it includes auxiliary heating as well as cooling and air-conditioning systems for passenger cars and commercial vehicles. “It was clear from the start, that we needed a web-based system, since we are also aiming to integrate and serve all employees, retailers and national units, who are not connected to our central IT-infrastructure”, says Dr. Valentin Nicolescu, Head of Coordination SAP-Development and Project Manager SPIN, explaining the initial situation. “The goal of the project is to develop a clear information platform for the access of our national units, agencies and retailers”, Stephan Taufenbach, Product Manager for spare parts and Project Manager of the project: Introduction of a spare parts management at Webasto GCS, added. An internal and external provision of all relevant spare part information of an application, the availability of a compact information basis for spare part analysis, planning and management, the provision of customer oriented spare part documentation, as well as the integration of the information and management system in the Webasto IT-landscape, shall thereby be achieved.

The decision was made to implement the portal on the basis of the cloud platform force.com from salesforce.com, so that the operation of an additional system becomes obsolete and that the application's functionality requirements could be implemented in a foreseeable period of time.

With this decision being made, the team faced the challenge to “feed” the portal with data from the central SAP-system. Dr. Nicolescu explains: “The data for the spare part management portal are stemming from SAP ERP, SAP BW and an additional database. The next step lies in the development of a concept for the data migration and the integration of both systems as well as in its implementation in a timely manner.”

No Middleware!

It was another goal for Dr. Nicolescu and his team, to implement the interface without the deployment of an additional middleware platform. “To accept the implementation of a complex third system as an interface between two systems was never an option for us. Therefore we were looking for a solution, that supports our existing infrastructure and ideally builds upon the SAP and Salesforce platforms“, Dr. Nicolescu, clarifying the procedure. Because of this objective, the traditional integration solutions could no longer compete and the attempt to develop an interface between SAP and salesforce.com on our own was quickly dismissed. Stephan Taufenbach adds: “Aside from the technical realisation, the biggest challenge while implementing the spare part management, was to adjust all the disciplines to a uniform procedure with standardized tools and processes. A new process with diverse documents, like action models and overview style sheets, was also reliant on the support of IT-tools to lastingly document the information and to provide them in the long run.“

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SKYVVA's native platform concept juts out!

The SKYVVA Integration Suite is an integration solution that follows a native platform concept and offers components for Salesforce and SAP, among others. The force.com component provides functions for field mapping, data transformation, workflow logic, message handling as well as data validation and can be installed with just a few mouse clicks using Salesforce.com's AppExchange. An “ABAP Adapter“ is transported into SAP, which is mounted on the SAP message infrastructure. It interprets and transforms BAPI's and IDOC's for the communication with Salesforce. Now the interfaces only have to be coordinated and configured in SAP and Salesforce in respect of the integration processes. Thus it was possible to implement the interface between SAP and Salesforce.com in the test environment in only three days with the help of SKYVVA. All data in connection with the material master will hence be collected in a SAP-report and transmitted to Salesforce. In Salesforce, 13 objects like e.g. material, product description, availability, vehicle manufacturer, vehicle type, will, among others, be fed from the report. “We were really surprised by the pace, with which we could implement the interface together with SKYVVA“, Dr. Nicolescu affirms. “Only three weeks passed between the initial contact and the contract and after three days of field work, the SKYVVA supervisors could be sent home for the time being.“ The SKYVVA Integration Suite could meet all the requirements made by Webasto. “The SKYVVA solution is absolutely in accordance with our targeted goals: no middleware, no third party system, direct integration of SAP and Salesforce“, says Dr. Nicolescu happily. “Moreover, the solution proves to be very intuitive and user-friendly. In the course of the project, we were able to test and extend the interface to additional objects and fields without any deeper briefing. The SKYVVA Integration Suite survived all the performance tests in the test environment of Webasto and proved to be a robust and reliant solution, a statement about the long-term use however, can be made no sooner than 2012.“ The cooperativeness between Webasto and SKYVVA also passed smoothly. “During the project we soon realised, that the SKYVVA Integration Suite is a very powerful tool. But the most powerful tool is of no use, if the team and the support behind it lack of competence. At SKYVVA, we got to know professionals, that always assisted us quickly and exemplified customer service“, a content Dr. Nicolescu summing up.

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