



## EFFICIENT MAINFRAME INTEGRATION – THE BACKBONE FOR MULTI-CHANNELING AND NEW DISTRIBUTION CONCEPTS IN THE FUND BUSINESS

### Challenge

All direct trading operations at DWS are conducted via its IKS investment account service. As Europe's largest supplier of public funds, DWS has been handling all necessary customer and account management since the late 1980s with an Adabas- and Natural-based mainframe application. In the late 1990s, DWS put its entire IT landscape, including this essential application, to the test. The need for action arose in particular because of insufficient integration of the different IT systems.

### Solution

For IKS, DWS has built an integrated and open-software architecture, called Investment Account Manager 2000. The core Adabas/Natural application is seamlessly integrated within this .NET-based multilayer architecture via webMethods EntireX. DWS employees, customers, and partners are all using this basic application in real time, no matter which communication channel or solution they use to do business with DWS.

### Benefits

- High-performance, reliable management of 4 million investment accounts
- Consistent support for multi-channeling, including Internet business with end users and partners
- No redundant data management required for Internet transactions
- Quick and cost-efficient implementation of new projects thanks to reuse of existing IT components
- Time-to-market advantage of approximately 1.5 years in the provision of a DWS fund platform developed for distribution partners



DWS Investments is the mutual fund arm of Deutsche Asset Management. Founded in 1956, DWS's activities span not only the European markets. Over the last few years, the DWS Investments brand has been rolled out to cover countries and products across the Americas, Asia Pacific and the Middle East. DWS has outstanding expertise in all of Europe's core markets. Its international network enables it to identify market trends at an early stage and swiftly translate them into investment ideas. By bringing the right products to market at the right time, DWS turns current market conditions into investment opportunities.

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**“Choosing webMethods EntireX has been a stroke of luck for us; with it we are continuing to benefit from the advantages of our central Adabas/Natural application. It also allows us to implement new IT projects extremely quickly and economically.”**

Dietmar Dunkel | Vice President of Global Solutions, German Asset Management, European and Asia Pacific IT | DWS Group

## An influential IT investment

In the late 1990s, with IT projects like the Y2K conversion and the introduction of the Euro looming, companies increasingly focused on reviewing the fundamental sustainability of their IT landscapes and individual applications. DWS Investments was among them, as European market leader in the public fund business with administered assets of more than €120 billion and more than four million customers.

A need for modernization was quickly identified in the IKS department, DWS's internal distribution channel for the funds trade. Over the years, a number of isolated solutions with only limited interaction capabilities had emerged. The mainframe application was developed with Adabas and Natural in the late 1980s for central customer and account management. It was distressing that marketing and distribution applications, such as call center and document management, could only access the mainframe application via workaround solutions or, in some cases, could not access it at all. “Instead of being able to concentrate on developing applications for new technical requirements, the majority of IT expenses had to be used for data transfer on the basis of various communication protocols and interface programming,” said Dietmar Dunkel, Vice President of Global Solutions, describing the situation in the late 1990s.

## IT architecture for multi-channeling

From this analysis Dietmar Dunkel's team developed the key system requirements for a future IT infrastructure: Investment Account Manager 2000 (IAM). Thus existing and future marketing and service channels - mail, fax, e-mail, telephone, various Internet and intranet applications, mobile solutions - were to be supported consistently, namely by reusing central IT components. In addition, all user groups should have optimal access to all existing applications.

To achieve these goals, the project team conceived a multilayer architecture that communicates between the various backend and front-end systems. Today the browser-based front-end solutions include the IKS internal IAM2000 Enterprise Client for operational management of investment accounts as well as the Web solutions [www.dws-direkt.de](http://www.dws-direkt.de) and the DWS fund platform (formerly PartnerWorld). The latter enables exclusive sales partners to use IKS technology and expertise, under their own label, for trade with DWS and outside funds. In addition to the central Adabas/Natural application, there are three other IAM2000 back-end systems for digital document management, data warehousing, and user management, including system control and other administrative purposes.

At the beginning of the project, it was questioned whether the Adabas/Natural mainframe application should continue to operate. However, there was no doubt of its effectiveness in the matters of technical functionality, stability, and performance, even when processing mass data. “We had been running the solution for eleven years already, so we were not sure how we could integrate this operational settlement system into our new architecture,” said Dunkel, explaining the critical point: IAM2000 is based on Microsoft technology, at first Transaction Server, and .NET since 2002.

Faced with the decision to retire the application or reengineer it, the DWS team familiarized itself with the webMethods EntireX integration platform. “Having selected this product continues to be a real stroke of luck,” Dunkel confirms. Because webMethods EntireX supports different object models and, through its wrapping functionality, can integrate Adabas and Natural applications seamlessly into a .NET environment, IKS was able to achieve its goal with the IAM2000 project quickly and confidently. “You have to take into consideration that this application contains the essential business logic for handling funds transactions. Developing a new product would not only have been

more expensive, but it also would have delayed the entire project.” Now even Internet transactions can be carried out on the mainframe in real time. There is no need to build a redundant data set.

## Faster to market with new financial products

Overall, Dunkel verifies the importance of having chosen to integrate the Adabas and Natural application into the IAM2000 architecture via webMethods EntireX. “We were able to use about 70 percent of the existing functionality in the provision of our DWS fund platform, allowing us to go to market almost 1.5 years before the competition.”

### KEY COMPONENTS

Natural and Adabas were chosen as the platform for reliable application development.

webMethods EntireX provides the gateway between the data on the mainframe and the Web.

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