



ECHOSTAR TUNES IN TO SATISFIED CUSTOMERS COURTESY OF WEBMETHODS TECHNOLOGY

Challenge

With 24 separate back-end systems handling an immense variety of services, it was impossible for EchoStar to share information between the separate applications. With over 6,000 customer service center agents for its over six million customers, the company needed to find an integration solution to tie together all of its systems.

Solution

Using the webMethods Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) Platform, databases, billing (ERP) applications and eligibility systems for determining new customers were tied together. Web applications were connected with the outsourced billing system and many disparate sources of data were interlinked to create one single view of the enterprise.

Benefits

An infrastructure that seamlessly integrates multiple vendors' applications enterprise-wide resulting in: improved business operations, the automation of manual processes, the offering of new customer services and the flow of information between systems in near real-time.



Through six satellites, EchoStar Communications beams over 500 channels of digital video and CD-quality audio programming to more than six million customers of its DISH Network Direct Broadcast Satellite TV system.

As well as delivering the news, NASDAQ 100-listed EchoStar made headlines in 2001 when it leapfrogged rivals to become the leader of its hotly-contested market after clinching the \$25.8 billion deal to buy Hughes Electronics (owner of DIRECTV, the US largest satellite broadcaster) from General Motors.

Get there faster.™

“This integration allows EchoStar to provide its DISH Network customers with the very best service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

Dr. Germar Schafer | Vice President of Information Technology | EchoStar

More than 24 separate back-end systems

Offering a multiplicity of channels may be great for its consumers, but having a myriad of back-end systems was proving tough for EchoStar. The Colorado-based US company, started in 1980 by current chairman and CEO Charlie Ergen, was using more than 24 separate back-end systems to handle its vast universe of services. EchoStar rapidly found it impossible to share information between the separate applications. According to Dr. Germar Schafer, Vice President of Information Technology at EchoStar, “We have over 6,000 customer service center agents for our over six million customers nationwide. It was clear that we needed to find an integration solution to tie together all of our systems.”

EchoStar could not jeopardize its hard-won customer satisfaction ratings. DISH Network was ranked number one among satellite/cable TV subscribers by the J.D. Power and Associates 1999 and 2000 Cable/Satellite TV Customer Satisfaction studies. EchoStar knew that accelerating customer-facing processes via back-end integration and outsourced operations could strengthen its position among DISH Network clients who were also serviced by EchoStar Technologies Corporation (ETC). ETC designs, distributes and oversees the manufacturing of DBS set-top boxes, antennas and other digital equipment for DISH Network and various international customers, including Bell ExpressVu Canada and the Via Digital system in Spain.

EchoStar also wanted to streamline the billing system for its customers. Previously, billing systems at EchoStar did not have a clean API; manual processes could take weeks to accomplish and some programming tasks were impossible to perform without an integrated infrastructure. Ultimately, EchoStar wanted to build an infrastructure that seamlessly integrated multiple vendors’

applications enterprise-wide. To exceed customer expectations and further improve their service, EchoStar needed to implement a simpler, more efficient way for customers to maintain their accounts. In order to do so, EchoStar needed to connect its Web applications with the outsourced billing system and interlink its many disparate pockets of data to create one single view of the enterprise.

End-to-end integration including automated processes

EchoStar selected the webMethods ESB platform to tie together its databases, billing (ERP) applications and eligibility systems for determining new customers.

Using webMethods technology, EchoStar achieved end-to-end integration between front and back-office operations, which enabled new services for its customers. Essentially, customers can log and resolve service requests over the Web and open new accounts online. For EchoStar, the integration improved business operations by automating manual processes that were previously time-consuming and redundant. The integration also allows EchoStar to complete tasks in a fraction of the time because business processes are automated and information can flow between systems in near real-time.

Improved customer care operations

The webMethods ESB platform gave EchoStar a foundation to revolutionize its customer care operations through Web-based applications that provided customer service center agents with immediate access to customer information. Customers benefit as well by having the ability to access their accounts online. Now, customers can upgrade their service, pay their bills and add programming anytime, from anywhere.

Schafer asserts, “We chose webMethods technology because it had the breadth and depth necessary to integrate all of its separate applications, making them work together seamlessly. This integration allows EchoStar to provide its DISH Network customers with the very best service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

KEY COMPONENTS

webMethods ESB Platform

The webMethods ESB Platform combines proven application integration capabilities, high-speed messaging, support for B2B, legacy applications and event-driven technologies to create the most complete integration infrastructure available.

ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

Software AG is the world’s largest independent provider of Business Infrastructure Software. Our 4,000 global customers achieve measurable business results by modernizing and automating their IT systems and rapidly building new systems and processes to meet growing business demands.

Our industry-leading product portfolio includes best-in-class solutions for managing data, enabling service-oriented architecture, and improving business processes. By combining proven technology with industry expertise and best practices, our customers improve and differentiate their businesses – faster.

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