

BRINGING TRADING PARTNERS TOGETHER INTO A LEADING ELECTRONIC TRADING CENTER

Challenge

Whether small to medium-sized (SME) companies or major corporations, some things are still in "the paper age" as far as purchasing is concerned: everything from ordering to invoicing is done on paper, driving up costs and lengthening processing times. And both direct and indirect purchasing often lack the cost transparency needed.

Solution

Swisscom IT Services' industry-independent Conextrade Trading Center solution using webMethods ESB (Enterprise Service Bus) and Trading Networks is Switzerland's leading electronic trading center.

Benefits

- Complete, integrated support for all processes – from purchasing to invoicing – without format conversions
- A more rapid return on investment through lower processing and personnel costs
- Reduced cycle times
- Close linking of those involved in the purchasing process
- Can integrate any purchasing or supplier IT system
- Quick and efficient access to Conextrade in the future for companies with low transaction rates using webMethods Composite Application Framework (CAF)

Swisscom IT Services' customers confirm the advantages:

- Savings of up to thirty percent
- Annual fees and transaction-dependent payments for Conextrade amortize often within one year



Swisscom IT Services, a subsidiary of Switzerland's largest telecommunications group, employs a staff of more than 2,600 and is among the leading Swiss suppliers of IT services. Swisscom IT Services' core business revolves around system integration and outsourcing IT services, and includes the electronic trading center developed and operated by the eTrade Solutions division.

Get There Faster.™



“From the beginning, webMethods helped us achieve a distinct competitive advantage. We want to maintain this by expanding Conextrade with Web 2.0 technologies for even easier access to our trading center.”

Andreas Brandl | Head of eTrade Solutions | Swisscom IT Services

A strong trading community

“We use what the customer has, no matter which data format, protocols, or networks are involved,” says Andreas Brandl, Head of eTrade Solutions at Swisscom IT Services, emphasizing the openness of Conextrade’s electronic trading center. Launched in 2000, this B2B platform has developed into Switzerland’s leading solution of its kind. More than 1,000 companies can now be reached on the purchasing and supplier side via Conextrade; four million business transaction documents are processed annually (e.g., EDI, XML, flat files, etc.) In recent years, Swisscom IT Services has recorded revenue growth between twenty and thirty percent with Conextrade.

Taking full advantage of potential savings

All trading partners linked to this platform can rely on functionality that supports all purchasing-related processes. This includes e-invoicing, a completely paperless VAT-compliant invoicing service that Swisscom IT Services offers its customers for payment transactions both in and outside Switzerland.

Conextrade is operated as an ASP (Application Service Provider) hosted service, so buyers and suppliers need not make any IT investments in existing ERP and financial systems. Where paper was still used for procurement management, now all processes can be handled electronically. This improves quality while shortening processing times and lowering costs. And Conextrade can also help companies who have already partially automated their purchasing processes; instead of setting up, maintaining, and operating many different interfaces, Conextrade allows them to interact with a multitude of trading partners via a single gateway.

Quick start to trading

“webMethods plays a central role in the success of our trading center,” Brandl confirms. “At the very beginning we used another platform, but were quickly persuaded of the advantages of the webMethods technology.” Along with high-performance and reliable processing of millions of documents, Brandl highlights the openness that enables efficient integration of all types of customers’ IT systems. Thus it is logical that Swisscom IT Services also relies on webMethods for a key milestone in the refinement of Conextrade.

Brandl explains with an example: “If we win a major customer for our platform, generally a number of suppliers will follow suit. Some of these are small companies with low transaction volumes. In those cases, even one or two onsite visits to implement Conextrade can be too expensive, in terms of the cost-benefit ratio. We want to use Web 2.0 technologies, as with business or social networks, so that companies like these can get started quickly all by themselves.”

The Web components in Conextrade combined with webMethods Composite Application Framework (CAF) means that customers can start using the trading platform with only three mouse clicks – and without initial integration costs. Advanced integration projects, such as an individual ERP connection, can be coordinated as needed keeping the actual transaction volume in mind. Brandl expects the project – scheduled to begin in 2009 – to provide them yet another significant competitive advantage.

KEY COMPONENTS

webMethods Trading Networks

webMethods Trading Networks is an enterprise-class B2B gateway built on the webMethods ESB (Enterprise Service Bus) platform. It provides a comprehensive, scalable solution for conducting B2B integration with customers, suppliers, distributors or other trading partners, enabling you to better monitor and manage your business.

webMethods Composite Application Framework

webMethods Composite Application Framework (CAF) provides integrated capabilities to build and deploy Web 2.0-based applications via a rich and interactive user interface (UI) with “drag-and-drop” to speed project delivery.

Take the next step to get there – faster.

ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

Software AG is the world’s largest independent provider of Business Infrastructure Software. Our 4,000 global customers achieve business results faster by modernizing, automating and improving their IT systems and processes to rapidly build measurable business value and meet changing business demands. Using our solutions, organizations are able to liberate and govern their data, systems, applications, processes and services - achieving new levels of business automation and transparency.

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

Software AG – Get There Faster

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