



ERPConnect Services

ERPConnect Services makes SharePoint
the central hub for SAP data

„ERPConnect Services enables us to perfectly connect and take full advantage of the features and strengths of SAP and Microsoft technologies.“

Alain Deschamps, Département Informatique - IT GSO,
Ores OPÉRATEUR DES RÉSEAUX GAZ ET ÉLECTRICITÉ

Company

Ores is an operator of electricity and gas networks in southern Belgium. The network operator supplies around 1.4 million households and companies from 198 communes in Wallonia on a daily basis. Approximately 2,350 employees are responsible for the administration of distribution networks, connection work, troubleshooting and repairs, meter reading and managing consumption data, fulfilling public service obligations and managing the access register.



Challenge

Like many SAP user companies, the energy supplier also utilizes SharePoint as the front-end for their business applications. Connecting to SAP systems is a common challenge that was also faced

by Ores: The plan was to develop an application for portfolio project management, which would be accessible to a broad range of users in SharePoint. In the final stage, this would number 650 employees. As a way of enabling interoperability between SAP applications and the Enterprise Edition of SharePoint, Ores needed to find a suitable connector.

Solution

The initial solution that was favored for the integration of data from SAP ERP and SAP PPM proved to be too complex in regards to the implementation. Following a recommendation, the energy supplier took a close look at the ‚ERPConnect Services‘ product suite from the Stuttgart-based SAP interface specialists, Theobald Software. The suite enables a seamless connection between SAP ERP and SharePoint Server. ERPConnect Services contains a range of different tools for SharePoint integration scenarios with SAP. Ores opted for the ‚ERPConnect Services Runtime‘ component. The runtime provides

Solution at a glance

Company

ORES OPÉRATEUR DES RÉSEAUX GAZ ET ÉLECTRICITÉ (Operator of electricity and gas networks in southern Belgium)

Departments

Company-wide

Location

Belgium, Wallonia

Challenge

- Development and provisioning of a project portfolio management application in Microsoft SharePoint Server
- Integration of data from SAP ERP and SAP PPM

Solution

Interface programming in .NET via ERPConnect Services Runtime

Advantages

- Reliable, automated data integration
- User interaction with SAP processes without having to use the complex native SAP GUI
- Increased SAP reach in the company
- Better use of SAP investments

Data Sources

- SAP ERP
- SAP PPM



.NET developers with the opportunity to access the SAP system using SharePoint as the data hub. It can be accessed using Visual Webparts, Silverlight or regular .NET applications, including Microsoft Office add-ins. All security-relevant requirements are fulfilled thanks to the pre-configured access to the SharePoint Secure Store and other single sign-on mechanisms. Development was very demanding as a result of the complex overall constellation for single sign-on. SharePoint users belong to a different Windows domain than the SharePoint server, and the SAP systems are not part of a domain. Only a one-way trust relationship was in place between the two domains. When SharePoint users connect to SAP, a single sign-on mechanism with Active Directory (Kerberos) authentication and a SAP ticket issuer come into play. Theobald Software provided the Ores team with professional, fast and uncomplicated support in the development, as confirmed by Alain Deschamps, Département Informatique - IT GSO, Ores OPÉRATEUR DES RÉSEAUX GAZ ET ÉLECTRICITÉ. »We always received prompt, competent, expedient

answers to our questions. Theobald Software even sent an expert to us in Belgium, who helped us to work directly on the solution onsite.« The SAP-certified partner and Microsoft Gold Partner, Theobald Software has well-founded developer competence in the field of SAP interface technology as well as wide-ranging project experience. About 2,000 companies around the world already rely upon solutions from the Stuttgart firm.

Advantages

The project also fulfilled Ores' expectations. »SharePoint provides visualization possibilities for applications that are more attractive and easier to understand than the significantly more complex SAP GUI,« says Deschamps. »Furthermore, the applications can be supplied to employees in a simple, browser-based manner. The use of ERPConnect Services Runtime provides users without SAP expertise with a simple way of accessing SAP data.« At the same time, the SAP range within the company has increased and SAP investments can be put to better use. As a result of the positive experience, Ores also decided to tackle another



challenge related to the use of SAP data with another product from Theobald Software: The SAP data provider Xtract RS, which is optimized for Microsoft Reporting Services, is being deployed in order to display operational reports in SharePoint. This is seamlessly integrated into the Reporting Services server as a so-called data extension. Access takes place in real time, just like with ERPConnect Services Runtime, and the direct access means it is free from any additional software layers or other middleware.

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„Our valuable SAP data is now also available for employees who do not have SAP expertise.“

Alain Deschamps, Département Informatique - IT GSO,
Ores OPÉRATEUR DES RÉSEAUX GAZ ET ÉLECTRICITÉ

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