Xtract IS

Intelligent Delta-Logic with Xtract IS and DeltaMaster

„With Xtract IS, we can extract data from SAP with ease and efficiency and make it usable for Business Intelligence requirements."

Christof Meier, Project Manager in charge at JUST AG

Company

The JUST brand name guarantees sensible and responsible action toward nature, since plants of Swiss origin from controlled areas of cultivation with a clear proof of efficacy are used primarily for the production of the numerous cosmetics, personal care products, and household products. 30 countries are supplied with creams, bath essences, body lotions, shampoos, and many other items, which

are produced under the strictest of controls in Walzenhausen, the headquarters of JUST Schweiz AG. Staying true to its motto, which is to always visit its customers in person, the JUST brand name delivers on what it promises. Its products, with their unique quality, are sold worldwide via personal contact by its consultants numbering over 60,000. The connection between tradition and

the guts to innovate is a part of JUST's corporate philosophy. That goes not only for product development, but also in the field of information technology. The traditional Swiss company is thus using SAP ERP (ECC 6.0) to map all key business units in its head office.

Challenges

There was a need for optimization in reporting. To date, an employee from Accounting was needed to create a monthly report on the basis of data from SAP (80-90 percent), Excel and third party systems. Creating this report takes 5 days per month. In addition, the company wanted to also be able to generate department-specific key figures. In this case, the evaluation of data directly in SAP was also too complicated and time-intensive. Given this background, JUST decided to implement a business intelligence solution. 5 different BI suites with corresponding extractors and data transfer modules were evaluated for the integration of the SAP data. The implementation of SAP BW was ruled out at the outset due to its content complexity and high costs.

Solution

DeltaMaster from Bissantz was able to be implemented. A key factor for

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the decision was the high-performance interface for data transfers: Xtract IS from Theobald Software GmbH based in Stuttgart. Xtract IS is a record of a total of 9 components for SQL Server Integration Services, which enable the full range of differing requirements for SAP data extraction to be covered.

Advantages

»Simple and secure transfer of SAP data to a suitable BI tool was a very important aspect«, said Christof Meier, the project manager in charge at JUST. »Xtract IS convinced us very quickly in terms of both price and performance.« Among other things, its high user-friendliness was decisive: »I downloaded the trial version, received brief, very good instructions from Managing Director Patrick Theobald himself, and was able to extract data from SAP in no time. The ability to initially work in a test environment, also in the full version, allows you to harmlessly try out new things and thus expand your knowledge.« Another plus: The available delta logic. The component suite has a special BI component (DeltaQ), with which SAP ERP's Extractor API can be controlled directly. By doing that, exactly the functionality can be used, which BW systems also use to back up the data passed to them from the production system. »Since SAP does not provide deltas for all of the tables, we were furthermore able to program a type of delta logic in Visual Studio for the FI field on an annual basis with the help of Theobald Software. Proprietary deltas are also used for customer-specific tables, which can be imported into SQL without a problem.« Meier added. The integration of Xtract IS into the Visual Studio programming environment is also advantageous for JUST. »Thanks to that, I always have the ability to transfer all of the data, if certain types of data are not automatically comparable in the SQL database, through a corresponding conversion.« said Christof Meier. Meier was impressed by the implementation's time span: »The installation only took one day. We transferred the first tables together with Theobald Software and were then able to continue working on our own.« The high quality of service of the interface experts from Stuttgart left a positive impression. »We made a release change one weekend. Then an error message appeared around 5:00 PM on Saturday afternoon«, Meier recalled. »I then wrote an email to Support and hoped to receive an answer Monday morning. Instead, the phone rang less than 10 minutes later and we were able to solve the problem on the same day. I never expected so much customer focus.« Presently, about 100 tables with a data volume of approx. 3.5 million data records are extracted from SAP into SQL and evaluated with DeltaMaster every night. They include for the most deltas and complete content as well as a few BAPIs. Management can thus retrieve an up to date cockpit from the previous day and inform themselves of the company's situation.

November 2011

„Xtract IS is a really intelligent interface thanks to the available delta logic - and it also comes at a very fair price.“

Christof Meier, Project Manager in charge at JUST AG

www.theobald-software.com