CENVEO SELECTS ALLORA TO TRANSFORM DATA BETWEEN SAP AND WEB CATALOGUES

Cenveo retains a multi-million account with a Fortune 20 health care services provider using Allora

Background

Cenveo, Inc. (NYSE: CVO), www.cenveo.com, is one of North America's leading providers of visual communications with one-stop services from design through fulfillment. The company is uniquely positioned to serve direct customers through its commercial segment, and distributors and resellers of printed office products through its Quality Park resale segment. The company's broad portfolio of services and products includes e-services, envelopes, offset and digital printing, labels and business documents. Cenveo currently has approximately 10,000 employees and more than 80 production locations plus five advanced fulfillment and distribution centers throughout North America. The Data Center in Chicago manages networks and software for the envelope portion of the commercial segment. According to Bob Weinstein, Director Information Resources La Salle Data Center for Cenveo, "Our company is a leading provider of commercial printing products averaging $1.6 billion in sales. My team serves about 1000 end-users, in 20 locations around the country."

Product Strength

Ease-of-use: Though we had never worked with Java before, using Allora was straightforward. We easily created a mapping file visually and a Java class using the Allora Wizard. Only elementary programming was involved.

Empowerment: It gave us a lot of emotional satisfaction to see that our small IT team could build this process, whereas many consultants had failed. We now own our solution and do not need to rely on external help anymore.

Technical support: The HiT Software team were very supportive and helped us each step of the way despite the fact we had no Java experience.

Case Problem and HiT Software Solution

We were required, as a condition of retaining a $3.2 million contract with a 'Fortune 20' health care services provider, to be able to interface our web catalog with their SAP-based procurement system, receive POs, and transmit acknowledgements and invoices automatically using the xCBL (Common Business Language) XML standards. Our research showed that the best design for the process would be through some kind of Java-based programming and we lacked the in-house expertise. We worked briefly with consultants who left us feeling that even if they could do the job - and that was not a sure thing - the costs would be higher than we were prepared to pay.

We loaded WebSphere on the iSeries and made a few dry-run proof-of-concept efforts to get the process to work using the WebSphere tools. One of the consultants attempted the same thing. Both they and we failed. WebSphere was a disappointment in this project. We were looking for a simpler, more agile solution. The whole project, in fact, didn't seem particularly complex to us - except for the part that would translate between XML and DB2/400. We also tried a parsing tool that was published on IBM's alphaWorks website. It worked as a prototype but was complex and awkward to deploy. We didn't think it would work for us.

We tested Allora after reading the extensive and detailed product documentation on the HiT website. The results were very positive and we felt if we got the tool, we could put together all the rest of the parts (the catalog and the interface to our internal systems) by ourselves without any outside help or additional expense. The Allora wizard worked beautifully with Borland's JBuilder to create the Java objects we needed, based on the projects we had set up and tested in the Allora application.

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HiT Software Case Study : Allora XML Transformation

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Platforms

- AS/400, iSeries
- Windows 2000-based servers

"We also have a few applications running on Linux. Cenveo as a whole has over 80 locations and many more IT platforms," said Bob Weinstein

Product Functionality

The application we built with Allora is simple and powerful. First, one of our processes is decrypting, renaming our customer XML transactions, and dropping them into a network folder. Then, we built a small Java program that looks every hour for new transactions and triggers the Allora process to auto-matically import (unmarshal) the customer XML PO into our iSeries database. Once a day, we FTP an XML invoice back to the customer from the iSeries using the Allora export (marshal) function. We built our Java classes using the Allora plug-in for JBuilder. It runs on a Windows 2000 server that requires no maintenance. Whether we are supporting SAP xCBL standard or ARIBA cXML, building a new interface takes very little time. I am recommending Allora at other Cenveo locations as no other product provides as much value to support XML schema-centric messaging. I know we are only using 10% of the power of Allora using elementary marshal and unmarshal function; nevertheless, we have accom-plished all our objectives. In the future, we may also use more evolved transportation protocols like JMS or Web Services, which are already supported by Allora.

Customer Support

I have been very impressed with the excellent level of technical support in the HiT Software team both by phone and email during the course of our evaluation of the tool and with technical problems that came up during the project development. They are very responsive and knowledgeable.

Vendor Selection

The most potent benefit for our department was achieving the goal by our own labor, and the vindication of our belief that we could do it without pouring out buckets of consulting money. The hard benefits that convinced us to use Allora were:

Business retention: We retained the account. And the system went live on October 18th, 2004.

Development time and cost savings: Allora enabled us to use our own resources for the project, and we believe the savings from doing the work internally are no less than $50,000. We are going live with another Allora-enabled project for a national financial services company. The protocol this time is cXML but the project process was easily repeatable.

Competitiveness: In bidding on future RFP's, we can now say we can do the job, not 'we're working on it' or 'we might be able to do it.'

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