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The Challenge of Cloud Integration

Industry analysts often cite integration as one of the major barriers to adoption of cloud services, especially for apps that need to exchange logic and information along the way. It’s no wonder that SaaS integration has become one of the most sought after skills among IT professionals, including technical architects who understand SaaS connectivity and functional architects who understand the intricacies of the data being exchanged. SaaS integration, such as Salesforce.com, may in fact be bigger than the old integration challenges faced with on-premises CRM and ERP integration. While the integration issues haven’t changed, the cloud introduces additional complexities that need to be specifically accounted for. Barriers of isolation between Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Configure Price Quote (CPQ) and other applications are no longer acceptable in a world where sales reps need immediate access to their customer and prospect information. And what about “hot” leads that require an immediate quote? A study by InsideSales.com found that 35-50% of sales go to the vendor that responds first. Rapid vendor response requires a seamlessly connected flow of information from Salesforce.com to quoting to ERP and back.

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Introducing Oracle Integration Cloud Service

Until recently, most integration tools were too complicated for LOB users, resulting in costly delays and error-prone attempts at application integration. And while there is wide variation in the quality of SaaS-embedded integration tools across all vendors, too many are not able to address real-world business requirements. Furthermore, these integration tools lack recent innovations that dramatically simplify integration projects such as built-in guidance recommendations, pre-integration, and more.

Salesforce.com application Integration requires more than simply connecting a few web services calls. You must also consider important issues related to authentication, session management, transformation mappings, and more. Additional challenges include the isolation of Platform as a Service (PaaS) from the SaaS applications, resulting in potential errors due to version number mismatches, additional upfront set-up, and tedious security work. Many of these challenges are resolved by letting Oracle Integration Cloud Service manage these issues for you.

Oracle Integration Cloud Service is a simple and powerful cloud-based integration platform that maximizes the value of investments in SaaS and on-premises applications. It includes an intuitive, web-based integration designer for point-and-click integration between applications. It also includes a rich monitoring dashboard that provides real-time insight into transactions. Oracle Integration Cloud Service one component of Oracle’s integration platform as a service (iPaaS) and was developed to simplify integration projects.

ERP Application Integration with Salesforce.com

Opportunity to Quote / Opportunity to Order

As any seasoned field-based account manager can tell you, delayed quotes can often lead to lost revenue. In the era of instant-on, subscription-based SaaS, taking several days to deliver an accurate quote to a customer is unacceptable. A common scenario arises when a sales professional enters information into a CRM system and then a business user has to manually re-input that information into an order management application, which not only delays the quote but potentially introduces errors to the record. While some applications automatically share data, there are typically too many different applications from disparate vendors to make these seamless across all of the required applications.

Oracle Integration Cloud Service for Salesforce.com automates the fundamental steps in the sales cycle, freeing business users to focus only on rarely occurring complex exception management rather than basic data entry and integration. It leverages pre-built adapters and process flows from Oracle and its partners to streamline the flow of data from Salesforce.com to Oracle CPQ, Oracle E-Business Suite, Oracle JD Edwards, and other popular applications. JD Edwards order management information for advanced pricing, fulfillment, and outbound inventory management are no longer siloed from other key business applications. Likewise, order management technology within Oracle CPQ Cloud and Oracle E-Business Suite can manage orders and opportunities from Salesforce.com.

Use Case: Automating Opportunity to Quote

Shorter sales cycle

1. Create Opportunity
2. Update Contact
3. View Quote Details
4. Update Quote

Figure 1: When a sales representative enters account information into Salesforce.com, transformation occurs using Integration Cloud service to integrate Salesforce.com with Oracle E-Business Suite throughout the opportunity to quote sales lifecycle.

Case Study: JDSU - Opportunity to Order – Salesforce.com to ERP Integration
Consider JDSU (renamed Viavi), a manufacturer of products for optical communications networks, test and measurement equipment, lasers, optical solutions for authentication and decorative applications, and other custom optics. This well-known manufacturing company relies on a cloud-based CRM system from Salesforce. However, until recently, this CRM system was not integrated with JDSU’s on-premises Oracle E-Business Suite applications. This meant that the sales team spent an inordinate amount of time gathering information about customers and opportunities from Salesforce, while critical data about orders, purchase orders, and financial policies had to be manually extracted from Oracle E-Business Suite. This lack of integration made it difficult for sales reps to create accurate quotes and provide them to customers in an efficient way.

JDSU connected its Salesforce application with key modules from Oracle E-Business Suite. Rajeev Sethi, senior director of IT applications at JDSU, calls it a “seamless transition” for the field sales force.

Accelerating Quotes and Orders

The project was carried out in two phases. During phase 1 they integrated Salesforce with Oracle E-Business Suite accounts, contacts, opportunities, and quotes. During phase 2 they integrated “item” and “order” information into Salesforce. They also connected a Service-Now app to Salesforce and Oracle E-Business Suite to simplify user onboarding, as shown below:

Now, when a user performs specific operations in Salesforce, an outbound messaging process invokes a web service to sync-up with Oracle E-Business Suite. Oracle integration accepts the data from Salesforce and synchronizes data between Salesforce and Oracle E-Business Suite.

JDSU also established an application-refresh schedule that recognizes the dependencies among the entire IT ecosystem including Salesforce, the Oracle ERP system, a corporate data warehouse, and many third party IT assets. As a result, the field organization can now obtain quotes quickly and easily, improving operational efficiency by more than 20 percent while streamlining order delivery and minimizing errors in purchase orders. They have also increased the number of sales that include a services component by 40 percent. Quote approval cycles involving Salesforce and Oracle E-Business Suite have been reduced from an average of 48 hours to about 6 hours.

Oracle Integration Cloud Service

Prebuilt Integrations

Traditionally, software integration is a manual task requiring design, testing, debugging, and deployment to put new interfaces into production. Oracle Integration Cloud Service lowers the cost of building and maintaining complex business logic with a point-and-click interface. In addition, Oracle is introducing prebuilt integrations through the Oracle Cloud Marketplace. Customers can browse, search, and select these business objects and deploy them without needing to understand the underlying technical details, reducing time-to-market for new integrations among
cloud and on-premises applications. For example, a prebuilt integration might synchronize activities between Oracle Service Cloud and Oracle CPQ Cloud so that field service personnel have instantaneous visibility into orders for replacement parts and the status of customer requests. There is a growing collection of these prebuilt integrations available in the Oracle Cloud Marketplace, developed by Oracle and its partners. You can use these integrations as-is or modify them with Oracle Integration Cloud Service to jumpstart your projects and accelerate time-to-market.

Automatic Mapping of Data and Functions

With Oracle Integration Cloud Service, developers may accept recommendations for connections among objects to map and transform data from one SaaS app to the next. For example, it understands the similarities between “Org” in one application and “Account” in another. This inherent knowledge simplifies one of the most complex, error-prone, and time-consuming tasks in any integration project: trying to figure out how to map data fields from one application to another. Oracle Integration Cloud Service makes it easy to define mappings that range from simple data assignments to complex expressions and computations.

![Recommendations for: /InputParameters.To_Update](image)

Figure 3: Oracle Integration Cloud Service automates the matching and merging of application objects among multiple applications, on-premises and in the cloud. The more stars, the higher likelihood that the recommendation is correct. In this case, based on the experience and published results of many customers, Oracle Integration Cloud Service recommends that “INCIDENT_STATUS” maps to “Status” in the other application.

Automatic Association of Data Structures and Functions
A key differentiator of Oracle Integration Cloud Service compared to other PaaS offerings is “auto association” of Oracle applications to remove the time-consuming and error-prone process of configuring the integration platform. As a provider of both PaaS and SaaS solutions, Oracle automatically leverages each customer’s unique tenant ID to pre-configure connectivity for Oracle SaaS applications. This feature minimizes errors due to lack of familiarity or application version mismatches and lets you deliver integrations faster.

Accommodating Hybrid Cloud Environments

Whether you choose to deploy your Oracle applications in a public or private cloud setting, you can take advantage of a uniform set of components for mapping, data enrichment, integration monitoring, and lookup tables.

Oracle has developed integration solutions that share common architecture, standards, and products between cloud and on-premises solutions. Oracle Integration Cloud Service leverages the proven components of Oracle SOA Suite such as Oracle Service Bus and its many application adapters to simplify migrations from on-premises systems to cloud-based systems and from public clouds to on-premises deployments.

Comprehensive Connectivity

Oracle Integration Cloud Service contains an extensive library of application adapters. It reduces complexity and masks the differences among applications that require integration. For example, each vendor may require unique security protocols and methods for session management. The Oracle adapters resolve these differences with an intuitive, step-by-step, standardized way of integrating every application. This library of adapters makes it easy to integrate with both cloud and on-premises applications such as Salesforce.com, Oracle Sales Cloud, Oracle Service Cloud, Oracle Marketing Cloud, Oracle E-Business Suite, Siebel, PeopleSoft, JD Edwards and many other Oracle and non-Oracle applications, including Salesforce and SAP, using out-of-the-box adapters and standard web services.

Oracle Cloud Adapter for Salesforce.com enables seamless and simplified connectivity with Salesforce.com through its intuitive design-time wizards and rich processing options. In contrast to exposing complex WSDL interfaces for the original Salesforce.com service, the Salesforce.com adapter configuration wizard engages users with an extremely simplified view of the business objects and operations in Salesforce.com from where they could browse and select one or more objects of interest for executing CRUD style interactions, or graphically model SOSL/SOQL queries on these objects.

Most importantly, most of the nuances of integrating with Salesforce.com such as session management, handling the complex WSDL and security are addressed within the adapter itself. Users are not exposed to these complexities and instead, can focus on fulfilling the business requirement at hand. With all these tasks delegated to the adapter, the likelihood of manual errors is significantly minimized; development cycles are reduced and maintenance costs are also lowered.
Conclusion

Most integration platforms are too complex for LOB users to understand or use. Manually creating interfaces among cloud-based and on-premises applications can get complicated. Oracle Integration Cloud Service offers innovative methods for simplifying this process. It is a powerful, cloud-based integration platform that can help you maximize the value of your investments in SaaS and on-premise applications. Customers that have deployed Salesforce.com can take advantage of a growing library of prebuilt integrations that connect cloud-based functions to other apps, so they don’t have to start from scratch. These existing assets empower LOB managers to collaborate with integration experts and architects. They can also leverage crowd-sourced integration recommendations to further jumpstart integration. Oracle is the only technology company to provide these unique PaaS and SaaS solutions for public/private cloud and on-premises deployments.