



Service: Enterprise Application Integration Industry: Insurance Engagement: Full Lifecycle & Mentoring

Amentra Helps Fortune 500 Insurance Provider Create Foundation for Reusable SOA

INCREASED ROI AND REDUCED MAINTENANCE COSTS

AFTER AMENTRA

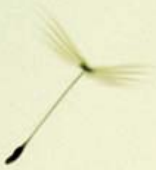
- Return on investment was dramatically increased by reusing common business functions throughout the organization, and hosting them on a single platform
- Costs were reduced by minimizing system maintenance and complexity, and by addressing common needs in a consistent way
- Risks of existing SmallTalk based systems were mitigated, by building new commons services on stable Java 2, Enterprise Edition (J2EE) technologies.
- Existing IT development staff is now proficient in more current technologies, resulting from effective mentoring and guided experience.

BEFORE AMENTRA

A successful auto insurance provider had traditionally built and maintained multiple systems that served similar business purposes. This is the common result of an organization consisting of multiple sub-organizations with overlapping business needs and requirements. When each sub-organization addresses those technical requirements in isolation from one another, it is rare that a common strategy and design can evolve. The need for the auto insurer to maintain common business functionality, implemented within several different systems, ultimately led to the unnecessary loss of revenue.

The auto insurer had previously created a service-oriented architecture for its enterprise sales application, with the help of Amentra, and that architecture was creating great business benefits in certain areas. Unfortunately, not all parts of the business were yet being considered for proper inclusion in such a service-oriented approach, so certain services were still handled individually, on an application-by-application basis. There was a need for a more complete analysis of shared knowledge and implementation.

Several existing systems within the auto insurer were already built on IBM Visual Age SmallTalk, which was being phased out of IBM's supported product suite. This created a large element of risk for those production systems, since much of the corporate domain knowledge was tied up in those programs and was not available in a shared manner. The plan to end support for the SmallTalk technology in use at the insurer created an immediate need to consider the proper manner to provide this logic in a more open and reusable fashion.



TECHNOLOGY USED

- J2EE
- Apache Axis
- SOAP-based Web Services
- IBM WebSphere Application Server 5.1
- IBM MQ Series

EVOLUTION OF THE BUSINESS PROCESS

By defining common business services, consumable by different systems in multiple groups, return on investment dramatically increases over the long term. Over time, the development of best practices for web service based, service-oriented architectures, and having existing frameworks in place, allows for the easy expansion of common service offerings. This effort further evolves the previous effort to implement a service-oriented architecture within and across business lines.

Implementing these common services with new technology creates new business risks, especially in groups new to the idea, since staff must be retrained on new approaches and processes. Expert mentoring was crucial to the successful implementation of these common services by the overall team.

APPLIED TECHNOLOGIES AND EXPERTISE

Creating scalable, extensible, and maintainable service oriented architectures requires expertise in large-scale enterprise architecture and implementation. The experience and expertise Amentra offered allowed the auto insurer to ultimately be successful in creating a framework to build a full scale SOA for the future.

This effort included implementing common business services on a J2EE IBM WebSphere application server, exposed as web services. While some business rules were implemented on the server, the application largely delegated business processing to back-end mainframe systems. Regardless of service location, all services were provided in a consistent and reusable manner in the middle tier.

To find out how Amentra can help you please call 804.355.9360 or visit www.amentra.com

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