



CHALLENGE

Implement a data services framework atop an enterprise data integration platform to tightly integrate an external salesforce.com Salesforce on-demand deployment with on-premise operational and analytic systems, and support master data management for cross-enterprise data consistency

INFORMATICA SOLUTION

- Informatica PowerCenter® and PowerCenter Connect Option for Web Services

BENEFITS

- Pioneered a data services approach to integrating data across internal and external systems
- Delivered a 10x improvement in developer productivity for Web services data integration
- Ensured information and business consistency through master data management
- Drove competitive advantage through a data-enriched Salesforce implementation

NUTS AND BOLTS

- Data Integration: Informatica PowerCenter® and PowerCenter Connect for Web Services
- Source: External salesforce.com Salesforce on-demand system; Oracle E-Business Suite 11i back-office applications
- Targets: Salesforce system; Oracle/Informatica-based data warehouse
- Platform: Shared data warehouse Sun Server v480, Solaris OS, 4 CPUs, 1Ghz, 8gb RAM

Brocade Integrates Salesforce Data with Key On-premise Operational and Analytic Systems using Data Services Delivered through Informatica PowerCenter

“Informatica PowerCenter functions as the data integration infrastructure that makes it easy to integrate customer information in Salesforce with our mission-critical operational applications and data warehouse. It’s the foundation for a data services framework that extends internal and external systems and improves data accuracy, timeliness, and consistency on both sides of the firewall.”

— Prasad Ramakrishnan, Manager, Business Intelligence and Data Warehousing Group,

Brocade Communications Systems

Founded in 1995, Brocade® (Nasdaq: BRCD) provides the industry’s leading platforms, solutions, and services for intelligently connecting, managing, and optimizing IT resources in shared storage environments. As a result, Brocade helps organizations of all sizes manage computing resources and data assets more efficiently to reduce IT cost and complexity across their enterprise.

The Challenge

Like thousands of companies around the world, Brocade Communications Systems foresaw compelling advantages in the outsourced sales force automation (SFA) model offered by salesforce.com. The on-demand SFA framework promised to improve the productivity of

Brocade’s mobile sales force in identifying, pursuing, and closing deals for Brocade application infrastructure and storage area network solutions.

“Informatica PowerCenter is the standard for cross-enterprise data integration at Brocade. One great advantage Informatica has given us over the years is the ability to extend the PowerCenter platform to meet new challenges, like our Salesforce system.”

— Prasad Ramakrishnan,
Manager of Brocade’s Business Intelligence
and Data Warehousing Group

In late 2005, Brocade business and IT managers mapped out a strategy to retire a homegrown SFA application and adopt the Web-based salesforce.com solution, to be accessed by approximately 300 Brocade sales personnel in U.S., North America, Asia-Pacific, and EMEA. By itself, that initiative was fairly commonplace—after all, Salesforce is (as of April 2006) used by more than 440,000 subscribers at 22,700 organizations worldwide.

Brocade, however, looked beyond a basic salesforce.com solution. It recognized an opportunity to implement a pioneering data services framework that could dissolve internal/external firewall boundaries and seamlessly integrate Salesforce with Brocade’s on-premises mission-critical operational and analytic systems. Key objectives included:

- Avoid developing Salesforce as a standalone silo
- Synchronize internal operational, HR, and accounting data to Salesforce
- Ensure data consistency among internal and external systems through master data management
- Leverage Salesforce data for operational and financial reporting and analysis

Brocade looked to enterprise data integration technology to help realize its ambitious vision, as well as complement its Salesforce solution with the robust and specialized functionality unique to data integration platforms, including highly granular data manipulation, metadata-driven visibility, and ready integration with any enterprise data source.

The Solution

For Brocade, the choice of a data integration platform that could supply a common service-oriented foundation for both internal applications and the external Salesforce instance was straightforward. Brocade has been an Informatica customer since 2000, and uses the PowerCenter platform to load data into a data warehouse based on Oracle.

“Informatica PowerCenter is the standard for cross-enterprise data integration at Brocade,” said Prasad Ramakrishnan, manager of Brocade’s Business Intelligence and Data Warehousing Group. “One great advantage Informatica has given us over the years is the ability to extend the PowerCenter platform to meet new challenges, like our Salesforce system.”

Brocade’s first challenge was to deploy PowerCenter to move Salesforce data into the Brocade data warehouse for analysis by about 300 sales, operations, and finance personnel on product sales by time of year, geography, customer type, and other dynamics vital to driving revenue. Accessing and transforming Salesforce data appeared to be a “huge risk” at first, because of concerns with integrating large amounts of mission critical data.

Proof-of-concept testing with PowerCenter proved those concerns unfounded. Moreover, Brocade took advantage of the advanced data access functionality available in the PowerCenter Connect Option for Web Services to build connectivity with the Salesforce system. Support for Web services standards in the Informatica API simplified the tasks of devising WSDL files to describe Salesforce schema and objects, and laying the groundwork for exchange of SOAP messages.

“PowerCenter’s native Web services support helped Brocade deploy its system 10 times faster than would have been possible through custom-coding alternatives,” said Patrick Nolan, Brocade business systems analyst. In just two months, Nolan and a developer fastracked through development, testing, and implementation, including 50 source-to-target mappings between Salesforce and the Brocade data warehouse. In production since February 2006, PowerCenter executes daily loads of roughly 200,000 records in about 30 minutes—well within Brocade’s performance window.

Synchronizing Operational Data to Salesforce

In a second phase, Brocade is leveraging PowerCenter to synchronize data from back-office Oracle E-Business Suite 11i applications for operations, accounting, and HR into Salesforce. This innovative Web services initiative enriches basic customer, opportunity, and sales activity information in Salesforce with key product and financial data to provide sales representatives with a comprehensive and timely information arsenal.

PowerCenter will synchronize loads of close to half a million records a day from the Oracle back-office applications to Salesforce in about 60-90 minutes, according to Nolan. Oracle Applications 11i is the system of record for most reference data including product information (e.g., product names, codes, prices, and hierarchy) and customer information (e.g., customer names, addresses, contact names, phone, email, and installed base information). This data will be synchronized (updated in Salesforce) daily. Other data including leads, opportunities, deals desk adjustments, commissions, and professional services management data will be synched (updated) back to Oracle 11i.

The initial implementation in Summer 2006 will use daily batch loading, but Nolan noted that PowerCenter’s flexibility will enable Brocade to scale up to real-time synchronization if business needs change.

Next Up: PowerCenter Connect for Salesforce

Brocade intends to beta test the PowerCenter Connect Option for Salesforce in mid-2006. According to Nolan, the new option promises to further simplify and accelerate development of access and connectivity mechanisms into Salesforce systems. Prebuilt configurations specific to Salesforce will abstract Salesforce schemas and Web services APIs, enabling developers to more efficiently manage application-level object details.

A Standard Platform for Web Services Flexibility

In a third phase to its project, Brocade is implementing PowerCenter to replace a problematic legacy ETL (extraction, transformation, and loading) tool for improved synchronization of online marketing data captured at its Web site to a separate Salesforce instance for campaign management. PowerCenter will also support a future Salesforce system for customer service and support. “As this evolves, PowerCenter will be instrumental in the wrap and reuse of data integration services across an integrated internal/external Web environment,” Ramakrishnan said.

“PowerCenter’s native Web services support helped Brocade deploy its system 10 times faster than would have been possible through customcoding alternatives.”

—Patrick Nolan,
Brocade Business Systems Analyst

The Results

Pioneered a Data Services Approach to Integrating Data Across Internal and External Systems

Brocade's implementation distinguishes it as an industry leader in leveraging emerging service-oriented architectural (SOA) paradigms to build a comprehensive data-driven ecosystem that seamlessly integrates both internal and external systems. The component-based extensibility of the Informatica PowerCenter platform will enable Brocade to rapidly extend its Web services solution to additional Salesforce instances for CRM and customer service and support. "To truly succeed, the outsourced SaaS (software as a service) model needs to function effortlessly within the overall data infrastructure without regard for firewalls," Ramakrishnan said. "The Informatica platform lets us build an SOA that is totally agnostic and transparent across enterprise boundaries."

Delivered a 10x Improvement in Developer Productivity for Web Services Data Integration

Brocade officials estimate having saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in deployment and ongoing maintenance sustaining costs by leveraging PowerCenter's drag-and-drop interface and PowerCenter Connect Option for Web Services connectivity to devise its Web service data integration infrastructure. The 10x improvement in developer productivity realized in the initial deployment will be even greater with the new PowerCenter Connect option for Salesforce, Nolan said. "To think about manually coding this system—we wouldn't even consider it," Nolan said.

Ensured Information and Business Consistency through Master Data Management

Throughout Brocade's deployment, PowerCenter serves a key role in a master data management initiative designed to ensure the semantic consistency of product and customer information among disparate systems and minimize the potential risks of contradictory data. PowerCenter's metadata-driven architecture helps Brocade to profile, standardize, and propagate consistent reference data across the operational systems, data warehouse, and Salesforce instance. By reconciling reference data into a single enterprise standard, Brocade has built a foundation for accurate decisionmaking that minimizes the chances for business disruption and automatically flags discrepancies for rapid resolution.

Drove Competitive Advantage through a Data-enriched Salesforce Implementation

With its enterprising deployment, Brocade achieves competitive differentiation and advantage. Daily synchronization of back-office operational data to Salesforce enriches the SFA instance with key data points designed to drive additional revenue. According to Brocade officials, the incorporation of the PowerCenter data integration platform is improving business agility, insight, and opportunity response time among both mobile sales personnel and in-house analysts.



Worldwide Headquarters, 100 Cardinal Way, Redwood City, CA 94063, USA
phone: 650.385.5000 fax: 650.385.5500 toll-free in the US: 1.800.653.3871 www.informatica.com

Informatica Offices Around The Globe: Australia · Belgium · Canada · China · France · Germany · Ireland · Japan · Korea · the Netherlands · Singapore · Switzerland · United Kingdom · USA

© 2008 Informatica Corporation. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. Informatica, the Informatica logo, and The Data Integration Company are trademarks or registered trademarks of Informatica Corporation in the United States and in jurisdictions throughout the world. All other company and product names may be trade names or trademarks of their respective owners.

6726 (09/16/2008)