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DATA MIGRATION / DATA PROFILING

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AN EVOKE SOFTWARE SUCCESS STORY

Key European Defence Ministry Deploys Evoke Axio to Assure Data Quality During Massive Five-Year Data Migration Campaign

GERMANY'S IT-AMT DER BUNDESWEHR (IT-AMT BW) IS ONE OF THE KEY ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE ALSO PROVIDING CRITICAL IT SUPPORT FOR NATO EXERCISES AND UNITED NATIONS MISSIONS.

THE ARMED FORCES OF GERMANY HAVE RECENTLY DECIDED TO STANDARDISE ON SAP FOR ALL MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICATIONS INCLUDING FINANCIAL CONTROL, LOGISTICS, PROCUREMENT, PERSONNEL RECORDS AND MAINTENANCE. TRANSFERRING EXISTING DATA INTO THESE NEW APPLICATIONS WILL BE A MASSIVE PROJECT, REQUIRING SEVERAL YEARS OF INTENSIVE WORK.

MORE THAN 250 SYSTEMS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT GERMANY AND OTHER COUNTRIES WILL BE AFFECTED. LEGACY DATA RANGING IN AGE FROM TWO YEARS TO 30 YEARS WILL BE MIGRATED FROM A VARIETY OF SYSTEMS INCLUDING OS/390 DB2, IMS, VSAM, LEGACY UNIX SYSTEMS, NT SERVERS AND FLAT FILES FROM CLIENT SERVER SYSTEMS. SOME OF THIS DATA IS CLASSIFIED AND SOME IS NOT.

"In the past, we have often faced problems mapping source data to SAP targets due to poorly documented or redundant data. By the time we identify the problems it is often late and we have to perform additional work. With Evoke Axio, these issues are easily identified early and are no longer a problem. Axio is our clear choice for quality management of mission-critical data sources."

-- Jürgen Geis, IT-AMT Project Manager for Data Migration

The IT-AMT der Bundeswehr functions as the IT support group for Germany's Defence Ministry. Its administrative responsibilities include developing, maintaining and running applications for financial control, logistics, procurement, personnel records and maintenance for the German Army, Navy and Air Force within Germany and for United Nations peace keeping deployments in counties such as Turkey, Croatia and Afghanistan.

Like many large companies and public organisations, IT-AmtBw has vast repositories of data dating back as far as 30 years in a wide assortment of data centers, office buildings, field locations and remote depots. Approximately 60,000 civilian and non-civilian users in about 5,000 different locations are directly affected by the data managed by IT-AmtBw.

"Migrating all of this legacy data to newly installed SAP applications will be a huge undertaking -- perhaps one of the largest SAP migrations ever done," said one manager working on the project.

"Much of this data is not well documented. The content and structure are sometimes unknown. There will be many surprises in the data that will cause problems for sure. Evoke Axio will provide much-needed transparency to the data. This will then help define what cleansing actions must be done and what preparation must be performed to make legacy data usable within the SAP applications," the manager said.

Under a plan launched in April 2003, IT-AmtBw's phased approach to moving its data into SAP will be completed in 2010. Axio will be used to automate data profiling, fixed target mapping and repository management.

"If this massive migration project was attempted without using Axio, the success of the migration would be in doubt. An uncountable number of hours of manual work by hundreds of people would have to take place, and the final data quality would not be as good," the manager added.



"IT people in many large organisations have complex data migration projects that they're afraid to start because they're afraid it would take far too much time and effort to finish these projects."

"If these people took a close look at Evoke Axio and considered the power and completeness of its automated data profiling capabilities, they might feel differently. It is possible to complete even the most challenging projects when Axio is part of the solution."

Within the early phases of this migration effort, Evoke Axio is being used to automate the complex process of data profiling to define the quality of the data structures and content. Automated data profiling is substantially more time and cost efficient than manual profiling.

Profiling data manually would require 10 to 15 times more hours spent per attribute. The data being migrated by IT-AmtBw contains more than 100,000 attributes.

"The main purpose of the data profiling and analysis phase is to prepare the data for use within SAP applications, but there is also a strong benefit realised from Axio's ability to perform automated profiling on the spot," the manager explained. "Because of the improved data transparency, data errors and inconsistencies can be discovered and repaired very early in the process. In the end, this means that the new applications will function better and the overall quality of the data will be superior."

To help IT-AmtBw complete this project on time and within budget, Evoke Software is providing much more than off-the-shelf software.

Teaming with expert migration consultants and partnering on engineering integrations with complementary technology vendors for ETL, data movement and data cleansing, Evoke is delivering a full service data analysis and data migration solution.

As part of its analytical services, Evoke is working with its partners to pinpoint potential data problem areas within IT-AmtBw's legacy applications and discover data relationships to help the migration consultants design and implement the target applications.

Thus far, training sessions have been provided for 60 IT-AmtBw data specialists and outside contractors who will perform the actual data profiling and migration.

"Many of the lessons learned and integration activities completed along with our industry partners during the course of this very large project are fully transferable to other SAP customers in private industry within Germany and throughout the world, said Eckhard Bogner, Evoke Software's General Manager for Germany. "The end result for SAP users everywhere will be faster data migration and application implementation, lower costs and better performance through improved data quality."



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BENEFITS TO THE ORGANISATION

- More than 100,000 data attributes from nearly 250 legacy applications affecting 60,000 people in 5,000 locations are being successfully analysed and migrated more quickly, less expensively and with greater ultimate quality
- Undocumented data and inadequately documented data are being automatically profiled and analysed, cleansed and successfully transferred into new SAP applications without the need for thousands of hours of manual data queries and labour-intensive data analysis
- A massive SAP migration initiative is being completed much earlier than would otherwise be possible
- Unwanted surprises are being prevented and data quality issues are being resolved before they become a problem
- Project risks, data rework and overall migration costs are being greatly reduced