



PostFinance

DIE POST 

Company Details

PostFinance, a major division of Swiss Post, is the leading provider of mass-payments in Switzerland. It has a workforce of 2,000 and 2,940 branches.

Location

- Switzerland

Industry

- Finance

Business Challenges

- Allow the introduction of a new range of products
- Implement an integration solution that is flexible and scalable for future growth
- Need to process a high volume of messages with payment and transaction management
- Simplify interfaces between systems and applications
- Handle large files of up to 100MB

"The goal was to streamline processes, reduce costs and to enable PostFinance to integrate its existing I/T applications and new financial products more flexibly in future." **Dr. Harald Aust**, Head of Business Unit, Middleware and EAI, PostFinance

Business Challenges

With its entry to the credit market in May 2003, PostFinance offers additional products for its private and business customers, as well as new public corporation customers, including mortgages for private individuals as well as overdraft facilities and fixed advances for businesses. In order to seamlessly deliver this broad spectrum of products, numerous systems must be integrated.

In order to achieve this goal, interfaces between the individual IT systems and applications had to be simplified. In 2001 when a CORBA solution was proposed to PostFinance, it was quickly realised that that option was too rigid and that PostFinance required a solution that was more flexible and that could scale with its growth. PostFinance realised that an eAI solution was more appropriate for their needs. An eAI solution would help process 1 KB to 100MB file messages efficiently with the same message queue/message broker technology and also, allow PostFinance to leverage its existing system and application landscape to adapt to new requirements.

During PostFinance's extensive and thorough search for an eAI vendor, all vendors were required to participate in a proof of concept involving a function test using EDIFACT data in PostFinance's accounts payable sector. Following the first test, the Company short listed three eAI vendors, SeeBeyond being one of them. A subsequent performance test saw SeeBeyond clearly emerge ahead of the competition.

Solution Overview

PostFinance has been using the SeeBeyond platform since October 2002 to integrate a large part of the payment process for its more than 2 million customers. By mid-2004 PostFinance is proposing to integrate additional components of the SeeBeyond solution with the Company's main internal applications.

SeeBeyond's eGate Integrator was the only platform able to handle the required volume of 70 million transactions per day, three times the transaction volume currently handled by PostFinance. According to Dr. Aust this proved that the SeeBeyond solution was able to scale and this was essential to supporting PostFinance's future plans and growth. eGate Integrator allows PostFinance to develop their own solution. Previously within the company, specification and programming had been separate but now those designing the system can also program and test the transformations due to the enhanced functionality of eGate Integrator.

Business Benefits

The SeeBeyond solution has been running stably at PostFinance since October 2002. Employees involved in the project reported that it was the first time in their career that a system ran without a hitch from the first day of the installation. *"Thorough testing beforehand helped PostFinance's efforts and the prototyping was important for achieving high throughput and stability,"* affirms Dr. Aust.

An appropriate methodology, suitable for integration, was as essential. The methodology used by PostFinance, emphasised the distribution of responsibility amongst the team, with one group dedicated to interfaces and the other to content. As soon as the infrastructure work had been completed, the developer checked that it ran, ensuring the flow of data, enabling them to concentrate on the transformation and mapping. This division of the traditionally lengthy interface discussion makes for faster completion of the overall implementation. The time required for interface development and production in IT has been reduced by half.

A further advantage of the SeeBeyond solution is its flexibility. It was possible to reproduce tried and tested operational sequences and processes.

Plans for the Future

SeeBeyond enabled the old and new systems to run in parallel allowing the gradual controlled migration from old to new. This is often a key requirement in the banking market. This migration is now completed freeing up the old hardware for other applications.

"It was essential to us that the existing systems could remain the way they were." **Dr. Harald Aust**, Head of Business Unit, Middleware and EAI, PostFinance

Solution Overview

- Selection of SeeBeyond
- SeeBeyond system required to handle 70 million transactions per day, ten times the current volume and scale for future growth
- Ability to develop their own interfaces and test in-house

Business Benefits

- Ability to use EDIFACT to connect systems
- Flexible solution will support future growth requirements
- High performance platform supporting 70 million transactions per day
- Ability to run old and new systems in parallel and perform gradual step-by-step migration

Technology Profile

- SeeBeyond Components
- eGate™ Integrator

Integrations

- Accounts payable system
- Existing legacy systems

Sizing

- SunFire 6800, with 12 CPUs and 32 GB RAM

Hardware OS

- Sun Solaris 5.8