Connecting Software

GETTING DATA INTO MICROSOFT DYNAMICS 365 AUTOMATICALLY
CONNECT BRIDGE ENABLES REAL-TIME DATA COLLECTION FOR ITALIAN SUPERMARKET CHAIN

SUCCESS STORY
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Customer	**Activity**
Iperal Supermercati	Retail–Supermarket chain

Headquarters	**Products and Services**
Italy	CB Linked Server Connect Bridge with the Dynamics 365 connector

> **In just a week we had the solution we had in mind up and running**
>
> - Ing. Filippo Besana – Business Intelligence Specialist & Data Manager at Iperal Supermercati

> **More than ever, we are proud to support our customers and bring trust in times of turbulence**
>
> – Mag. Thomas Berndorfer – CEO of Connecting Software

Iperal Supermercati S.p.A. owns and operates over 40 supermarkets and hypermarkets in Italy. Its history dates back to 1986, but the company is always looking for the most advanced technological solutions to be able to provide added value solutions to its customers.

The problem - How to Get Data into Microsoft Dynamics 365 Automatically

For customer relationship management, Iperal had installed a cloud-based Microsoft Dynamics 365 solution. Each contact with a customer started being tracked in Dynamics, but this involved inputting the data manually when it was not already in the system. Data was entered manually by using the Dynamics web interface. It was very time consuming and inefficient to do it this way.

Besides, as that customer data was being initially stored in a Microsoft SQL Server database, moving it manually when there was new or changed data didn't make much sense. Even because there are many reasons for such changes. The customer himself can edit his data at any given moment, using the many channels available to them such as the web site, the mobile application or an interface available in every shop. Also, other data relating to the customer changes every time the customer makes a purchase.

Iperal wanted to make sure all these changes propagate from their Microsoft SQL Server databases to the Customer Service that is based on Dynamics so that they can offer quick and full support if the customer has any issues.

"We knew we had to fill in the CRM data in another way. We wanted

a way to do it efficiently and in real-time, from SQL Server to Dynamics" explains Filippo Besana.

Looking for a solution

Knowing what their goals were, they started what could have been a long quest for the perfect solution... Filippo Besana goes on to describe their initial ideas for this project.

"At first, we thought about developing a data import procedure on the CRM side that would be filebased. We would have to build a massive export of modified data to a file like .csv, send it to CRM and run the import on the CRM side. This would take a long time and it would be expensive. Plus, the final result would not have the real-time performance we wanted."

Finding Connect Bridge

Then, after a quick online search, they landed on Connecting Software's web site and found Connect Bridge. Filippo Besana says they immediately knew it was what we were looking for: "a middleware software that using a linked server could translate all TSQL queries from/to the CRM Webservice, in a way that is transparent to the developer."

From that point onwards, it was pretty straightforward. Iperal asked for a demo, checked if this way they could handle the few hundred thousand rows they wanted to input and moved right on to implementation. Their chief difficulty ended up being how to connect to a server outside their network. "Dynamics only provides

a webserver to interact with from the outside" Filippo Besana details.

Customer review of Connect Bridge

Nonetheless, they ended up reaching their goals in a short amount of time "From the SQL developer point of view, the operational tasks are the same as other heterogeneous databases connected by Linked Server. This kept our development times short and meant our 1st goal was reached.".

Furthermore "by using a trigger on the main table, we are now able to update or insert new data in real-time". This meant that "our 2nd goal was also reached, and we are now very happy with the end result".

How short was this short amount of time to implement the solution? "In just a week we had the solution we had in mind up and running" Filippo Besana reveals.

In this case, Connect Bridge enabled an integration project for getting data into Microsoft Dynamics 365 automatically and in real-time. But, in fact, this is a super flexible integration platform and it can meet any integration challenge.

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