



LEADING SWISS ENERGY SERVICE COMPANY BUILDS ADVANCED DATA EXCHANGE USING CONNECT BRIDGE FOR REAL-TIME INTEGRATION BETWEEN MICROSOFT DYNAMICS 365 AND SQL SERVER INSTANCES



SUCCESS STORY swenex





Customer

swenex



Activity

Energy Service Provider



Headquarters

Kriens, Switzerland



Products and Services

Connect Bridge Platform



“Connect Bridge works like a Swiss watch. We haven't had any issues since the launch”

– Alexander Zehnder, CTO at swenex – swiss energy exchange Ltd

Renewable energy has always been a challenging and exciting business. But managing and predicting photovoltaic production on 4600 installations – sounds especially demanding, right?

A Swiss-based company swenex (that's right, with lowercase "s") is a leading energy service provider in Switzerland for end consumers in the field of ongoing energy management. It represents the interests of customers in dealings with energy providers and transmission grid operators. To organize smooth and efficient data exchange between software, swenex has applied the Connect Bridge integration platform by Connecting Software. We have asked Mr. Alexander Zehnder, the Chief Technical Officer at swenex, about their experience with the integration platform so far.

How the system works

“The data exchange happens between an SQL server on Azure, an XRM (an extended CRM, in our case Microsoft Dynamics) and another SQL server on a virtual machine. The Connect Bridge platform is a central communication point between the systems”, says Alexander Zehnder.

On the Azure side, swenex predicts photo voltaic production for 4600 solar energy installations around Switzerland. One value per 15 minutes is produced based on temperature, location, solar radiation, the angle of sunlight, the angle of PV-installation, performance ratio of the PV, etc.

The Azure server communicates these data to the XRM, which, in its side, provides static information about the location and ownership of a photovoltaic plant, its maintenance if needed, etc.

The predictions also travel to the SQL server and get published on Swissgrid, a Swiss transmission grid operator whose main function is providing energy and making sure there is no blackout in the country.

At the moment, swenex is proud with their prediction accuracy – 96% which is impressive -ve taking into account all the weather-related variables.

“We now sell renewable energy which will be produced only in two years. If we sell more than we produce, we will need to pay penalties. So the forecasts need to be as certain as possible”,

says the swenex representative.

In the nearest future, the current data exchange system will get even more complicated: with an Oracle database for Energy Data Management and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central. It means, the Connect Bridge platform will have more work to do.

How the integration platform was chosen

We asked the CTO how the data exchange system worked before using the Connect Bridge platform.

“It didn’t”, he replied. As Alexander Zehnder explains, the system architecture was designed in July 2018 with the intention to use an integration platform from the very beginning. After research and evaluation, the choice was made in favor of Connect Bridge, and the whole system was launched on 1 January 2019.

“I had met Thomas Berndorfer (Connecting Software’s CEO and Founder) at a Microsoft World Partner Conference in Washington a while ago. Since then, we were connected via LinkedIn. In his updates I saw that their integration platform started providing connectivity to Microsoft Dynamics online. I thought: this is the parcel we need. So we went ahead”, he tells.

Customer review on Connect Bridge

The whole system setup required two people’s efforts and not more than two weeks: one week of analysis and conception and 2-3 days of

implementation and testing. “It was quite straightforward, especially if you know SQL commands and ODBC bridge”, says Alexander Zehnder.

From his experience, system integrators need to keep in mind that no integration platform is a 100% match for every requirement – there will always be some specific demands that can’t be fulfilled with existing functionality. But it is critically important to have a highly competent partner with easy access to. “Our communication with the support team of Connecting Software was excellent, and this is a crucial part of the relationship”, he reflects.

Why was Connect Bridge chosen over other integration platforms?

“We did have several ideas. I usually rely on Microsoft products, you can say I have been “married” to Microsoft technology for more than 20 years. And at the moment of decision making, there were some options from Microsoft. But going with Connect Bridge was the easiest”, explains our interviewee.

«As a closing note, “Connect Bridge has been running without any downtime since we started. If the platform crashes down, we can be losing 2.3 million Swiss francs per day. But the platform works like a Swiss watch. It is the software I do recommend”, says Alexander Zehnder.

Thanks a lot to swenex for this detailed case study of the integration platform application.

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