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Integrating Salesforce.com Applications and Oracle e-Business Suite

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Contents

Introduction

Many people use salesforce.com's solutions because of the rapid time to value, ease of use, and consistent performance delivered by the software-as-a-service (SaaS) model. But few people use salesforce.com applications in isolation. That is why all applications from salesforce.com were designed from the beginning to run on the Force.com platform. The Force.com platform is the underlying foundation of salesforce.com's service and provides all the tools needed to integrate with external applications and environments. It lets Salesforce CRM applications, Force.com custom applications, or Native partner applications participate as part of larger end-to-end business processes that involve other business applications such as the Oracle e-Business Suite.

Today, the majority of Oracle customers are running either version 11i or moving to the latest version 12 of the Oracle e-Business Suite. Either way, most customers find that integrating Oracle ERP applications with the Force.com platform is more common and easier than they expected. Applications that run on the Force.com platform, such as Salesforce CRM, have proven to be an excellent way to get critical data from Oracle ERP applications, Oracle databases, or Oracle Fusion Middleware into the hands of a much larger user audience. For example, by integrating data locked in an Oracle ERP system—including invoices, orders, products, pricing, and shipping data—with the easy-to-use, high-perfomance applications of Salesforce CRM, customer-facing employees such as sales executives, call center representatives, and marketing professionals gain a more complete view of the customers they work with every day. The result is increased user adoption, more effective customer interactions, and higher overall customer satisfaction and retention.

For companies seeking to combine applications that run on Force.com and Oracle ERP applications within the same landscape, the news is good. Both salesforce.com and Oracle provide many methods for making their software work together. This paper gives an overview of the best ways to integrate Oracle applications successfully with salesforce.com applications running on the Force.com platform, with information about flexible choices, real customer examples, and best practices based on years of experience and hundreds of successful customer implementations.

Integration: Easier Than Ever

Historically, integration has been an IT headache. Vendors didn't build their solutions to interact with external applications, so integration often meant digging into each vendor's proprietary application programming interfaces (APIs) or underlying data structures and building custom integrations. These integrations were difficult to change and even harder to upgrade.

Today, companies seeking to integrate applications have many choices for sharing data, moving it back and forth, and letting processes flow from one system to another. Over the last 10 years, application providers—including Oracle and salesforce.com—have dedicated significant resources to ensuring their applications and platforms can communicate with one another. Web services, service-oriented architectures (SOAs), and mashups have made integration simpler and more powerful. Now, the way you string together the many business applications that run your company may determine your competitive differentiation in the marketplace.

From an IT perspective, many companies like the idea of a single solution provider because they assume integration will be easier with solutions from one vendor. Not surprisingly, Oracle and other large vendors encourage this viewpoint. In practice, however, modern suites are made of heterogeneous components acquired from various suppliers with contrasting data models and technology stacks. The reality is that the industry is rapidly moving to SOAs that are—by definition—based on heterogeneous services designed to be more easily connected and disconnected according to a customer's business requirements.

As we will show in this paper, integrating with applications from salesforce.com is often easier than with alternatives from a single vendor because of the Force.com platform's multitenant architecture. In fact, more than half of all salesforce.com customers integrate with external applications. Today, the Force.com API supports more than 2 billion integration transactions per month, representing more than 57 percent of all salesforce.com traffic.

The good news for IT professionals is that integration has never been easier. What used to take months—and cost millions—can now be accomplished in weeks for a fraction of the cost.

Integration no longer has to mean custom development, broken upgrades, and long, complex implementations. Instead, multiple integration options are available to address any customer's specific needs.

Multitenancy and Integration

What makes integration with the Force.com platform particularly easy—both initially and in terms of ongoing maintenance—is its multitenant architecture. Perhaps the best way to understand multitenancy is to think of an office building. Everyone shares common aspects of the facility such as the lobby, elevators, and building security. Despite this sharing, everyone's office is private and furnished according to the occupant's business needs. The result: shared services that provide greater economies of scale and deliver new services more rapidly to the entire community.

The word "multitenancy" obscures the fact that the value is created not by having multiple tenants, but by having a single, shared infrastructure. Multitenancy and the SaaS model eliminate time-consuming tasks from the process of delivering, managing, and integrating software. Customers can focus critical resources on creating a better product, with faster cycles of innovation, instead of managing the complexity of many different versions to support a vast installed base.

The benefits of a multitenant architecture apply to integrations as well. Just as Amazon.com and Google expose and manage multitenant APIs for their customers, Force.com includes a multitenant, platform-based API to support all integration traffic. This SOAP-based API provides a powerful and consistent integration experience to all salesforce.com customers. In fact, it has become one of the most heavily used business APIs in the world.

Integration as a Service

With a multitenant, platform-based API, Force.com ensures integrations don't "break." All integration touchpoints and service volumes are proactively tested in each upgrade cycle. Integration traffic is monitored and tuned in real time to provide the highest levels of performance and security. Automated testing routines are run at regular intervals to ensure that all operations and system changes are fully compatible with existing integrations. As a result, both the initial integration and its continued maintenance are simplified—something on-premise integrations typically can't achieve because they have to support multiple versions and complex migration procedures when it comes to updates.

The ability to integrate with existing systems protects previous investments, while integrating with evolving technologies ensures innovation. With salesforce.com,

Figure 1: The Force.com platform lets you build apps in weeks, not months, with a complete application development and delivery infrastructure.

you get both protection and innovation. By providing integration as a service as part of its Force.com platform, salesforce.com gives customers the best of all worlds.
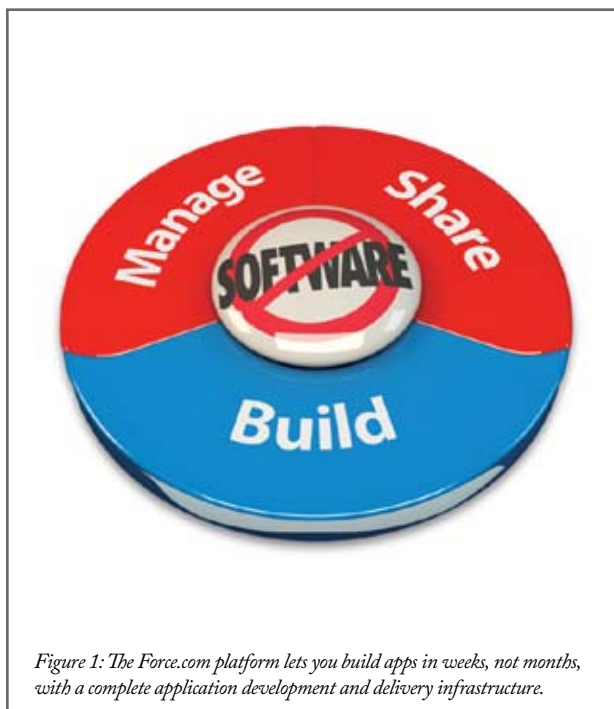
Productized Integrations

Integrations between popular applications such as Salesforce CRM and Oracle are increasingly offered as productized integrations. In productized integrations, the integration is delivered as a prebuilt, configurable solution that can be deployed, modified, and upgraded rapidly, with minimal risk. Productized integrations cover the most common integration design patterns and business processes that span applications. Productized integrations typically include prebuilt data

mappings, transformations, and process orchestrations. Such integrations may come in the form of integration appliances, packaged applications, connectors, and predefined process flows. They are either provided by the application vendors or by one of many integration partners that specialize in Oracle and salesforce.com integration.

Three Paths to Oracle Integration

Salesforce.com provides five ways to meet any integration need. Most Oracle customers find that three of those five ways solve their integration needs:
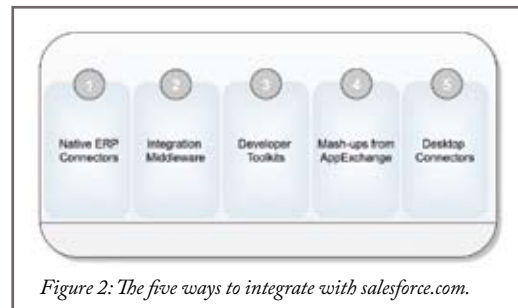

Figure 2: The five ways to integrate with salesforce.com.

- :: Use the **Force.com native connector**. This productized integration from salesforce.com provides one of the most common integrations between Oracle's ERP applications and Salesforce CRM: customer-master synchronization.

- :: Use an **integration middleware solution**. Force.com works with all major middleware solutions, including BEA, BPEL Process Manager, Cast Iron, IBM, Informatica, Oracle Fusion, TIBCO, and many others.

- :: Build it yourself. Use the **Force.com API** and a variety of innovative development tools to create the integrations you need. Salesforce.com provides toolkits for the most common programming languages—including Java, .NET, Ruby on Rails, and PHP—to give programmers the flexibility to build any integration.

Force.com Native Connector

Force.com Connect for Oracle is a productized integration that synchronizes customer data between Oracle 11i and 12 e-Business Suites and Salesforce CRM. It is deployed on premise together with the Oracle e-Business Suite. The connector, which maintains a cross-reference of synchronized objects in both systems, includes an administrative console for monitoring the flow of data and offers a flexible configuration mechanism for mapping and transforming data based on XSLT.
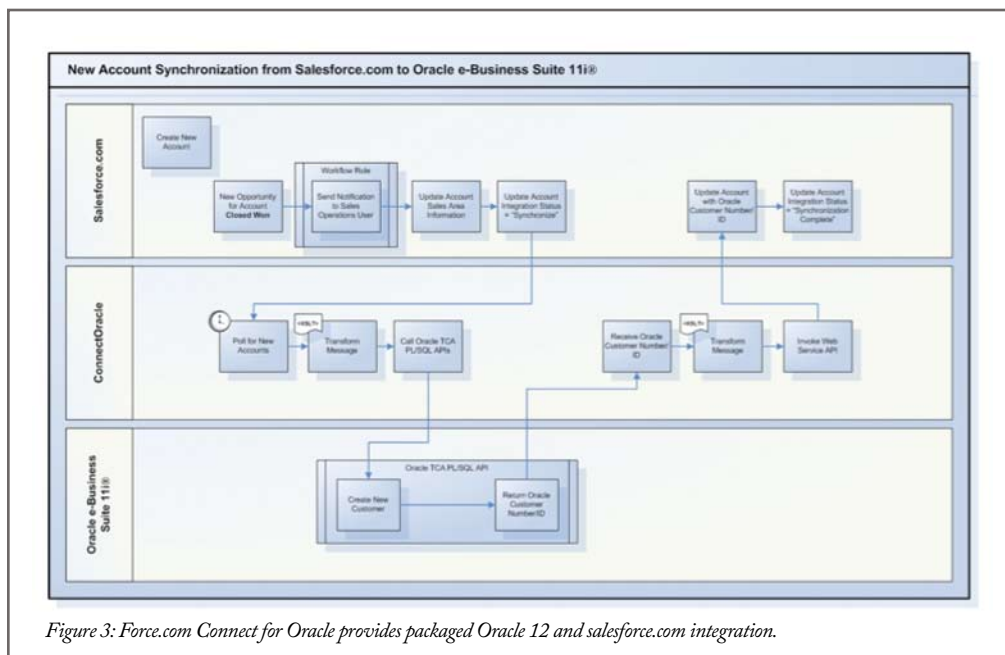

Figure 3: Force.com Connect for Oracle provides packaged Oracle 12 and salesforce.com integration.

This native connector synchronizes Salesforce CRM account records with the customer records stored in the Oracle e-Business Suite. When changes occur on either end, the information

automatically flows back and forth. The connector includes the most commonly used semantic transformations so that all mappings from the Salesforce customer record structure to the Oracle structure are available out of the box. The connector keeps a cross-reference of the records, which makes it easy to find an ERP customer record associated with a particular Salesforce customer or account. And with the administrator console, you can observe the activity flowing through the connector.

The native connector is a great fit for companies looking for a single-vendor solution that provides one of the most common integration needs: fast customer-master synchronization. Companies have found that the native connector can be implemented quickly—ranging from a few days to 2 or 3 weeks—to jump-start an integration process.

Integration Middleware

Integration middleware is one of the most common integration approaches today. Most customers already have one or more middleware solutions in house, which may include Oracle Fusion Middleware or another middleware platform such as BEA, IBM WebSphere, Informatica, TIBCO, or WebLogic. The Force.com platform works with all major middleware solutions, with more than 80 certified solutions available through the Force.com AppExchange. Middleware provides prebuilt connectivity to all major business applications, including those for Oracle and salesforce.com. Many middleware solutions also provide packaged integration processes such as customer- and product-master synchronization or quote-to-order management.

Integration middleware capabilities generally include functions for creating, sending, receiving, and routing structured and unstructured data; XML messages; inline translation; user interface development frameworks; event infrastructure; multichannel alerts; and support for long-running transactions. Most middleware solutions now provide an environment that includes embedded logic, business rules, and approvals to orchestrate the flow of an application process across a set of Web services. Recently, many middleware providers have begun providing cloud-based solutions. These solutions are often a fraction of the cost of traditional on-premise solutions and provide rapid implementation and seamless upgrades of the SaaS model.

Custom Integrations

Frequently, companies decide that the best way to create an integration is to build it using in-house development tools, APIs, Web services, and mashups. These companies generally have developers who are highly skilled in specific languages or development techniques as well as resources within their IT organizations that can be dedicated to the integration's implementation and ongoing maintenance.

The Force.com platform supports all major development environments and tools—including J2EE, .NET, AJAX, Ruby on Rails, and PHP—for building custom integrations that interact directly with data and functions that run on Force.com via the Force.com API. Such custom solutions often run on the customer's on-premise servers.

However, you can also create integrations that run natively on the Force.com platform. Force.com Apex Code, salesforce.com's programming language, lets customers directly consume external Web services that expose Oracle data and/or functionality. They can also use Apex to create custom Web services that can be consumed directly by Oracle development environments. Freed from client-side considerations, developers can enable intelligent integrations with existing applications that enforce business logic and rules such as data validation as part of complex business processes such as inventory checking and order fulfillment. Such application integrations, which are 100 percent multitenant and encapsulated to protect customer implementations against faulty code, will be automatically upgraded.

Mashups are an innovative and quick way to create custom integrations. Mashups provide synchronous presentation-layer integration that doesn't require moving data into the Force.com database. With mashups, Oracle screens and views can be exposed within the salesforce.com application user interface as either custom links or Visualforce components. There are several benefits to mashups, including synchronous integration, rapid implementation, and the ability to expose sensitive data to the user without storing it outside your firewall. Mashups often are used in parallel with traditional data integration or middleware solutions to support reporting and analytics within salesforce.com applications.

Choosing Your Integration's Architecture

The three ways to integrate Oracle and salesforce.com applications explain the high-level options when you're deciding how to source an integration. But that's only part of the story. Because each integration solution can take place at different layers of a software application—the presentation layer, the application layer, or the data layer—you also need to consider which technical layers make sense for your integration needs.

Data-layer integrations are still the most common and most widely understood form of integration, especially among Oracle customers familiar with the Oracle database and the underlying data and its structure. Application-layer integration has gained momentum in recent years as customers seek synchronous integration transactions facilitated by access to more modern application APIs, such as the Oracle Open APIs. And presentation-layer integration, also known as mashups or composite integration, is becoming increasingly popular due to its ease of deployment and rapid time to value.

Choosing the appropriate integration technology layer is an important decision that can affect the cost, speed, and overall performance of your integration. To understand which layer is right for you, it is important to know what options are provided by each vendor at each layer.

Overview of Oracle/Force.com Integration Technologies

Both Oracle and Force.com provide integration technologies that make integration across the three traditional layers of an application possible:

Layer	Oracle Technologies	Force.com Technologies
Presentation layer	Oracle Portal	Mashups
Application layer	Oracle PL/SQL APIs Oracle Fusion Middleware • Application Integration Arch • BPEL Process Manager • Business Process Analysis tools • PIPS (processes built on BPEL)	Force.com API • Apex Web services • Force.com Connect for Oracle • Certified Middleware • Force.com Callouts/SOA • Force.com Data Loader • Real-Time Outbound Messaging
Data layer	• Open Interface Tables o JDBC	

Presentation-Layer Integration

Integration at the presentation layer means displaying data from one application inside the user interface of another. Such integrations started when portal technologies made it possible to create new interfaces from data gathered from many different applications. Now, presentation-layer integration is usually achieved by creating mashups that display data from various sources, frequently by using some sort of user interface widget framework.

Mashups can use Web services to reach out and grab data from remote applications. More advanced mashups can write data back to the remote application as well. Mashups can be inserted wherever needed to provide access to data. Mashups are rising in popularity because they make quick access to data from many sources possible. Displaying data is easier than moving large amounts of data between applications and helps address certain compliance issues.

Oracle Presentation-Layer Capabilities

Oracle user interfaces are not as open and configurable as those of Force.com. Most Oracle customers that want to display external data within the Oracle user interface access the external data through the application or data layers and then pass that data to the interface through the standard processes.

Oracle provides an enterprise portal that can be used to expose both Oracle ERP data and external data as portlets within an Oracle environment. Oracle Portal, a member of the Oracle Fusion Middleware family of products, is an on-premise software solution that provides a framework for building, deploying, and managing enterprise portals.

Force.com Presentation-Layer Capabilities

Mashups are a popular way to integrate salesforce.com applications with external applications or services. These presentation-layer integrations display external data within salesforce.com application screens, either as links or as custom buttons.

Visualforce is a full-function user interface development environment. You can use Visualforce to tailor the look-and-feel of any screen to any device and the application's behavior according to specific logical patterns. With Visualforce, you can create mashups that access data from other applications or services, including Oracle applications, and display it in salesforce.com application screens. This technique is particularly useful if you want to provide access to data that is either too large or sensitive to store in the Force.com database. Mashups can be used to check pricing, confirm product availability, check credit status, and many other such tasks by accessing Oracle applications. For example, one salesforce.com customer uses mashups to give sales reps access to each of his clients' financial trade data. Although the client's account balances and summary statements are integrated using traditional data integration techniques, individual trades can be viewed in a mashup from within Salesforce CRM, in real time.

Figure 4: With mashups, you can display Oracle date in a salesforce.com user interface.

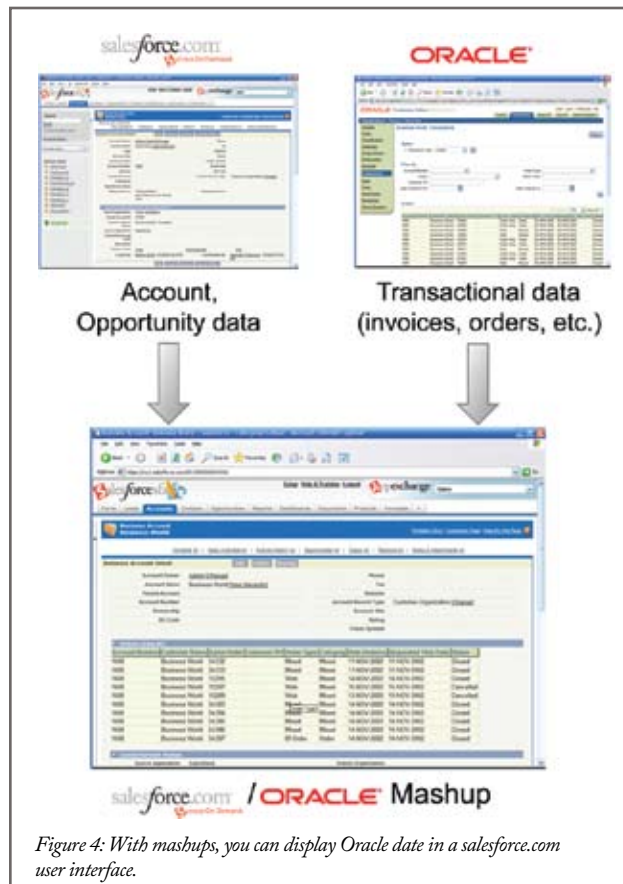### Application-Layer Integration

Application-layer integrations connect applications with other applications using APIs. Instead of accessing the data directly, APIs provide a layer of abstraction and a set of rules that govern how information is presented and shared with external applications. Application integration has become much more common with Web services and the widespread support for SOAs. Most modern business applications, including those from both salesforce.com and Oracle, now provide documented APIs to support such integrations.

Application-layer integrations often send and receive XML messages. Messages can be sent and received synchronously, meaning the sender waits for a response, or asynchronously, meaning the sender just sends the message to one or more recipients and continues without a response. A middleware solution often is used to orchestrate the messaging traffic; however, middleware is not required.

Oracle Application-Layer Capabilities

Oracle e-Business Suite 12 and other Oracle applications participate in application-layer integrations in the following ways:

- Most application-layer integrations with Oracle applications, such as the **e-Business Suite**, use Oracle's application APIs. The e-Business Suite APIs leverage the PL/SQL language to access data and execute logical statements within Oracle applications. Oracle APIs are Web services–enabled and can be accessed with several programming languages, including Java, Ruby on Rails, and PHP.
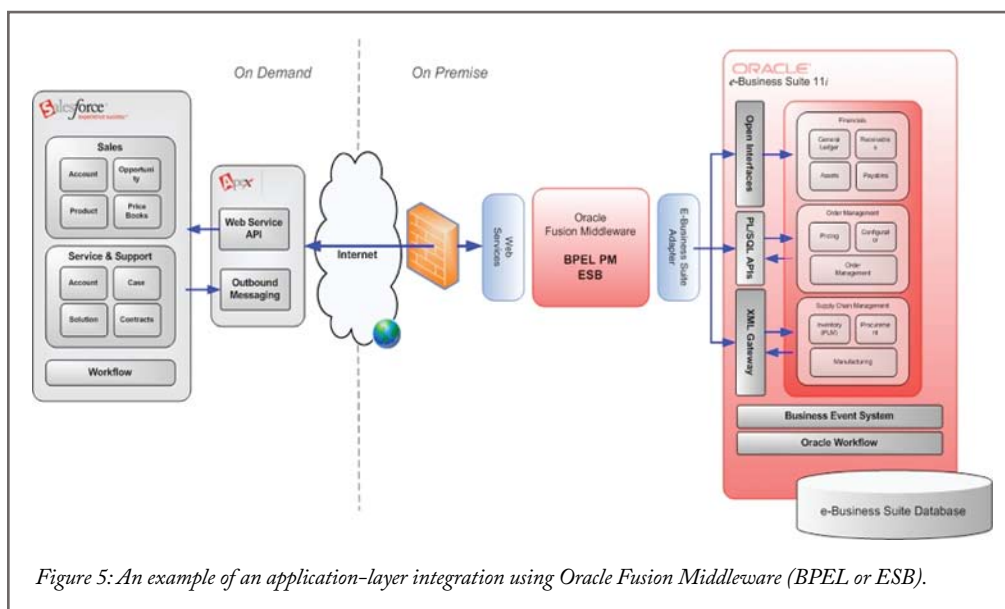
Figure 5: An example of an application-layer integration using Oracle Fusion Middleware (BPEL or ESB).

:: **Oracle Fusion Middleware** spans several technologies that are generally deployed either together or in addition to the Oracle Application Suite. This middleware includes portals and process managers, application infrastructure, developer tools, and business intelligence solutions. Customers that use Oracle Fusion Middleware can expose Oracle application data as Web services and use the middleware as a central messaging hub or enterprise service bus (ESB) for their Oracle environment.

:: The **Oracle BPEL Process Manager** is part of the Oracle Fusion Middleware family. Developers can use the Process Manager to specify the flow of a business process integration, using the BPEL language for Web services orchestration. When Web services from Oracle applications are made available through Oracle Fusion Middleware or other means, programs written in the BPEL Process Manager can control the process flow.

Force.com Application-Layer Capabilities

All integration with salesforce.com applications goes through the **Force.com API**. Several technologies are designed to work together with the API to support different types of integration.

The Force.com API is the foundation for all integration with salesforce.com applications. The API provides complete access to a customer's data, including both standard objects and any custom objects created by the customer. All integration traffic with salesforce.com applications communicates with the Force.com API as SOAP calls. Customers can generate a customer-specific Web Services Definition Language (WSDL) from within the application. The WSDL defines the data and metadata within a particular Salesforce customer or partner org.

The Force.com API can be called from a wide variety of client-side languages, including Java, .NET, PHP, Ruby on Rails, and Perl. Most middleware solutions now offer salesforce.com application connectors that are certified with the Force.com API. As an application API, it automatically enforces the application's security and sharing rules and works with all major single-authentication solutions.

Several additional integration capabilities are provided with the Force.com platform and work together with the Force.com API:

:: **Callouts** let customers invoke any external Web service, including services made available by Oracle applications.

:: **Custom Web services** make it possible to create new Web services that can be invoked by external programs. Customers can create custom Web services with Force.com and expose them to the Web using via the Force.com API.

:: **Real-time outbound messaging** makes it possible to use Web services to send messages containing alerts and other notifications to applications and receive back messages acknowledging receipt. With real-time outbound messaging, Force.com can immediately alert external applications or services when an event occurs within a salesforce.com application. That event can proactively trigger a process flow, request information, or notify a key user.

Data-Layer Integration

Data-layer integration generally refers to moving data back and forth between the databases of two applications, either in real time or as a nightly batch. Because salesforce.com does not provide direct access to the underlying database, all data-layer integration goes through the Force.com API. Data-layer integration between this API and a customer's on-premise database is a common form of integration because it is both well known and cost-effective. Common data-layer integration use cases include initial data migration, ongoing replication, and data synchronization.

With data-layer integration, data is moved either as a one-way flow or as a bidirectional flow in which changes made on either side update the other side. For example, many customers use data-layer integration to move key ERP data—such as price lists, invoices, order status, or new accounts—from the Oracle ERP system to a set of objects in Salesforce CRM to give customer-facing employees quick access to such information. Data quality checks are frequently part of such integrations to reduce data duplication and to enforce data standards against external formats. Common quality checks include zip codes, phones numbers, or addresses.

Figure 6: An example of data-layer mapping from the Force.com connector for Oracle.

Oracle Data-Layer Capabilities

Perhaps due to its roots as a database company, Oracle offers direct access to data in its applications in addition to providing access through PL/SQL APIs. One method of achieving data-layer integration is with **open interface tables** that allow data to be moved into Oracle applications through JDBC or Oracle ETL tools. Open interface tables are staging tables that can be populated with large amounts of data to be added to an Oracle application. Once the data is written to these tables, a background process moves the data from the table into the application's live database. Open interface tables are often used when bulk loading large amounts of data.

Force.com Data-Layer Capabilities

The Force.com platform offers several mechanisms to support data-layer integration with Oracle ERP. As with application integration, data is shared with external applications via the Force.com API. Salesforce.com provides a free, general-purpose data replication tool to support common data integration requirements and a native connector for synchronizing account data with Oracle 12.

:: The **Force.com Data Loader** moves data in and out of salesforce.com applications in bulk. The Data Loader can handle millions of records and enforce rules for data quality. The Data Loader includes wizards and methods of storing maps for data formats as well as a command-line interface that can be used with scripting languages.

:: **Force.com Connect for Oracle** is the productized integration solution from salesforce.com for integrating account information.
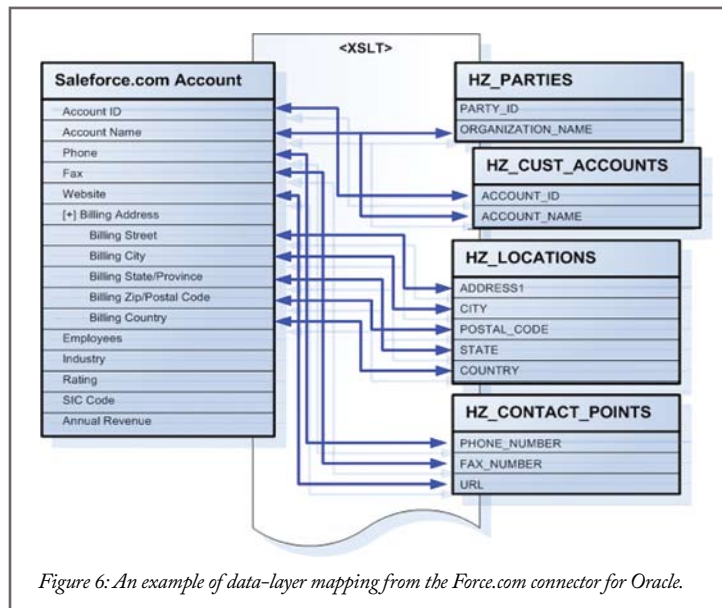
The Semantics of Integration: Optimizing the End-to-End Process

The three ways of integrating with Oracle and methods for integrating the various technology layers are primarily concerned with the form of the integration; that is, the mechanisms for moving data and invoking application functionality. End-to-end process integration, which is about the meaning of information, addresses the value applications can create by automating business processes. Process integration can use any of the integration approaches and technologies to achieve its goals.

For example, in many companies the initial data about a customer is gathered in Salesforce CRM by a marketing executive or telesales representative. The lead may come from Google AdWords or a direct email marketing campaign. As the lead progresses through the sales cycle, it becomes an account with an associated order. At this point, the customer information may need to flow from Salesforce CRM to the Oracle ERP application or to other applications so the order can be processed and the customer billed. Perhaps the order information also must be transferred to a supply chain system for distribution, and order-status information may flow back from the Oracle ERP system to the Salesforce CRM call center solution.

Figure 7: Common process integrations between Salesforce CRM and Oracle e–Business Suite 12.
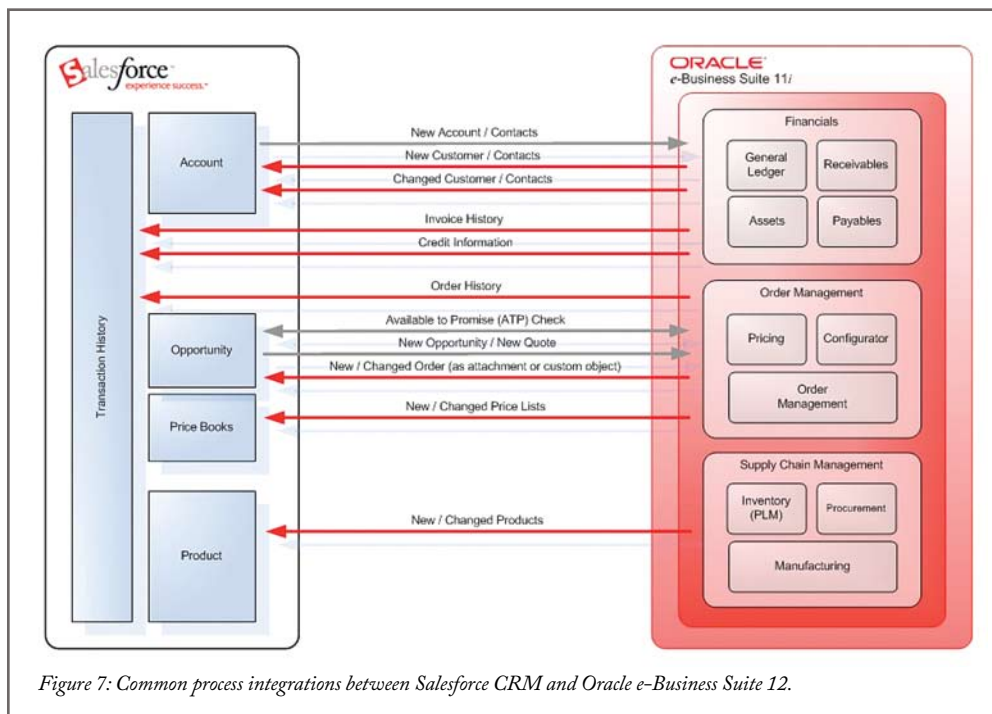
In such cases, the end-to-end process is larger than the tasks performed by any single application. The goal of an integrated end-to-end process is to overcome the arbitrary boundaries of the applications involved to put the needs of the people carrying out the business process first. In a successful end-to-end process, every person at every step has the information he or she needs, no matter where the data resides and how it must be moved and transformed.

Figure 7 shows the most common ways information flows back and forth between Salesforce CRM and Oracle e-Business Suite 12 to achieve process integration.

As Figure 7 illustrates, the data flow in end-to-end process integrations goes in both directions. Here are a few ways that Oracle and Salesforce CRM business processes commonly work together:

:: When a customer is created in Salesforce CRM, that customer can be added automatically to the customer tables in Oracle, or vice versa. As updates are made to customer records on either side, the changes are synchronized.

:: Invoice or order history, as well as credit information from Oracle or from other sources, can be made available in Salesforce CRM either in real time or in batch mode.

- Orders can be created in Salesforce CRM with the assistance of available-to-promise checks and then transferred to Oracle for fulfillment. Changes to the orders in Oracle can then be synchronized back to Salesforce CRM.

- Product catalogs and price books from Oracle can be made available in Salesforce CRM to support the creation of a more complete order system or an advanced product configuration.

These are just a few of the information flows that support end-to-end CRM processes such as opportunity-to-order, order-to-cash, and procure-to-pay. The key to successfully creating such integrations is first to understand the needs of the people at each stage and then to choose the integration mechanism best suited to the task.

For example:

- When a large amount of Oracle information must be made available on a read-only basis in Salesforce. CRM applications, or to expose Oracle functionality such as order capture in real time in Salesforce CRM account and opportunity management screens, presentation-layer integration and mashups are a good choice.

- To bidirectionally synchronize key data—including customers, products, invoices, orders, and order status—between Oracle and Salesforce CRM, you can use productized integrations such as Force.com Connect for Oracle or an integration middleware solution.

- For multistage processes that require both human and application intervention, span long periods of time, and involve many disparate applications, consider SOA-based middleware solutions such as IBM, Oracle Fusion Middleware, or TIBCO.

Whatever the needs of a specific business process, it is likely that those needs can be met with one of the many integration options between salesforce.com and Oracle.

Customer Examples

Many of salesforce.com's customers have used the Oracle and salesforce.com technologies discussed in this paper to successfully integrate their businesses. For the stories of 50 customers that integrated to a wide variety of business endpoints, including Oracle ERP, see the book *Integration Success on Demand with Salesforce.com*. Below are some examples of customers that used integration with Oracle ERP to maximize their Salesforce CRM implementations.

- **Heald College,** a private career college, wanted greater visibility into its inquiry-generation process to more effectively market to potential students and boost admissions. To do so, it had to integrate its CRM with its existing PeopleSoft FT system to link marketing, inquiries, and enrollments. Using the **Force.com API**, Heald created a custom, bidirectional integration between Salesforce CRM and PeopleSoft, providing complete visibility into the marketing and enrollment process for new students.

- **MDS Pharma Services** is a global contract research organization for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. When the company wanted to implement a centralized CRM system to bring together its seven business lines, it also needed to integrate with its existing Oracle e-Business Suite. MDS Pharma Services used **Boomi On Demand** for a fully on-demand integration system that provides greater business visibility, synchronization with Oracle Projects, and avoids the productivity loss resulting from manually checking the status of scientific studies.

- **Mirapoint**, a provider of appliance-based solutions that create secure messaging infrastructure, needed to integrate its sales, support, and financial information for complete customer visibility. Integration with Oracle Financials lets information on shipped products and account data flow from Oracle to Salesforce CRM. **Scribe Sales Order Component** converts opportunities to orders and moves them from Salesforce CRM to Oracle. Management now has deeper insight into the business.

- **Stratus Technologies** used the **Force.com platform** to implement bidirectional integration to Oracle. While in the process of replacing two failed CRM investments, Stratus also wanted to align key business functions, measure expenses against sales, and integrate data silos globally.

Stratus completed the integration in 7 weeks, including integration with Oracle Financials via the Force.com native ERP connector plus multiple languages and currencies to align global forecasting and lead management.

:: **Yamaha Corporation of America** manufactures a complete line of musical instruments, professional audio products, customer-driven support products, and computer-based products targeted at the amateur and professional markets. The company wanted to consolidate and automate processes. It needed a CRM system that could integrate with Oracle and other applications—including the product item summary and dealer eligibility—to create a single user portal for field staff calling on the same dealers from multiple divisions. Using the **Force.com API**, Yamaha rapidly completed systems integration. Improved management of customer information and better coordination between sales and marketing has resulted in increased sales.

Summary

The Oracle family of enterprise applications has been assembled through a series of high-profile acquisitions. Oracle e-Business Suite 11i (and now 12) is the company's flagship ERP solution, but products from other companies such as JD Edwards, PeopleSoft, and Siebel are now also part of the Oracle fold. The result is a significant effort within Oracle to make integration to heterogeneous services and applications easier than ever before. Oracle's overall philosophy is that a heterogeneous world is inevitable, so rather than attempting to force everyone onto a single data model and technology stack, the company believes it is better to build solutions that are standards based and designed to participate in a service-oriented world.

The good news for companies that use applications that run on the Force.com platform—or are considering bringing it into the mix—is that there are many integration approaches and technologies to choose from. Force.com was designed from the start to integrate with any Web service–enabled application or solution. The Force.com API is both proven and easy to work with, supporting nearly 2 billion API calls per month. More than 40 integration middleware partners offer more than 80 certified integrations with Force.com, giving customers real flexibility and a host of choices. Oracle customers can use native Oracle technologies such as Oracle Fusion Middleware; third-party middleware from companies such as Cast Iron, Informatica, and webMethods; or build the integration with variety of development technologies.

Whatever solutions you already have and however your needs evolve, salesforce.com can work within your Oracle environment. That means you can leverage your existing investments, unlock the data trapped in the back office, and make the most of all your applications without compromising performance, ease of use, or functionality.

For More Information

Contact your account executive to learn how we can help you accelerate your CRM success.

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