MAP ACCELERATOR FOR IBM WEBSPHERE

CONSOLIDATING B2B AND A2A – THE CHALLENGE

Today, companies are facing the challenge of consolidating their internal (A2A) and external (B2B, EDI) application integration solutions onto one platform.

Until now, they have operated several different products to address the specific needs of A2A and B2B. Most of these systems are old, monolithic and expensive to maintain. By combining these solutions into one new platform, it becomes possible to handle both A2A and B2B with one product and manage and monitor the internal and external communications from one central point.

Besides these advantages companies can start using new technologies to lower the cost of B2B like exchanging EDI and XML messages via AS2 instead of via the traditional Value Added Networks, and implementing Business Activity Monitoring and Business Process Integration to streamline communications and make it more manageable.

IBM WebSphere is now implemented in order to accomplish the above, but there are several hurdles to take when converting from older integration systems to this new integration platform.

It is a commonly known fact that by far the biggest hurdle to take in migrating business integration solutions to a new integration platform is the effort and cost involved in the migration of maps and document specifications. Various conversion projects have shown that the average cost of manually converting one map to a new environment totals around US$ (or €) 5,000. Even if the development is done offshore, the average cost is still US$ (or €) 750 per map.

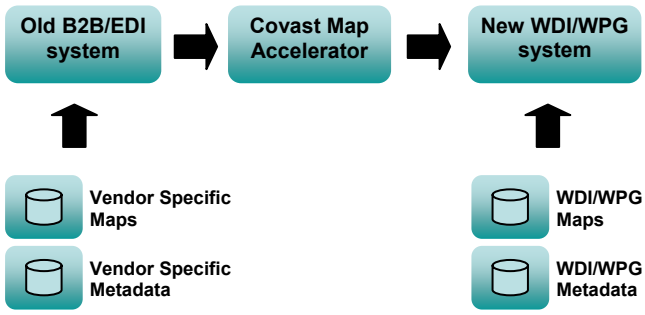
This document describes the Covast Map Accelerator for IBM WebSphere, a new automated solution to migrate business integration solutions to this modern integration platform.

COVAST MAP ACCELERATOR – THE PROCESS

Designs of maps and implementation guidelines (most of the time outlined in spreadsheets or developed using one of the commercially available specialized tools) hardly ever reflect the current version of specifications used in production. The best way to recreate the specifications in the new system is by directly generating them from the current document specifications and maps that are used in production.

The EDI document specifications and maps are usually stored in a proprietary format (database or flat files) in the current integration solution. These systems usually provide ways to generate document specifications and map reports or exports from their proprietary repositories.

These reports or exports can be parsed and can then be used to generate the source and target document specifications and the mapping between them, specifically for the IBM WebSphere product.



The Covast Map Accelerator creates WebSphere Data Interchange (WDI) or WebSphere Partner Gateway (WPG) document definition and map import files directly. The generated files can be imported into WebSphere using the WDI/DIS Client.
The WebSphere B2B/EDI consultant can modify, manage and test the produced schemas and maps directly from within the IBM WebSphere environment, without needing any additional access to the old system.

REDUCE B2B MIGRATION COSTS - NOW

Based on evaluations of migrations of business integration solutions to IBM WebSphere, a

100% migration success for the source and target document definitions and an average automatic conversion rate between 70% and 100% of the map is typically achieved.
The remaining "20%" of the map that could not be converted automatically will be annotated with all the details available in the original map. This will help the consultant responsible for the migration to finish the map development manually without needing access again to the previous system, since 100% of the original map information is available in the WDI/WPG Mapper environment.

One of the great things about the Map Accelerator is that it guarantees that *what* it converted automatically is *100% correct*. This ensures that the consultant responsible for the conversion does not have to go through the entire map again – which would result in almost 0% productivity gain.

The Raw Facts – Data Sheet

The Covast Map Accelerator supports the migration of the following EDI formats:

- Positional Flat File
- Delimited Flat File
- XML
- X12 (U.S.)
- VICS (U.S. general merchandise retail)
- WINS (U.S. warehousing retail)
- UCS (U.S. grocery retail)
- EDIFACT (Worldwide)
- EANCOM (European retail)
- Tradacoms (U.K.)
- Odette (Automotive)

The following business integration solutions are supported:

- Sterling Gentran:Server for Unix
- Sterling Gentran:Server and Gentran:Director (Pro) for Windows
- Sterling Gentran:Basic for Mainframe
- Axway AMTrix – All versions and platforms using Datamapper 3.x
- webMethods Integration Server
- Mercator
- TIE eVision – all versions using spEDI*map 2.0 or higher

For information about other business integration solutions, please contact us.

The Technical Requirements

To install the Covast Map Accelerator for IBM WebSphere, the following hardware and software is required at a minimum:

- Microsoft Windows 2000 (SP4), 2003 or XP (SP1)
- 450 megahertz (MHz) or higher Intel Pentium-compatible CPU
- 256 megabytes (Mb) of RAM
- 200 megabytes (Mb) of free disk space
- CD-ROM or DVD-ROM drive
- Super VGA monitor (800x600) or higher resolution monitor with 256 colors
- Mouse or compatible pointing device

The Map Accelerator is a stand-alone product and therefore does not need to run in a IBM WebSphere environment.

The output generated by the Map Accelerator is compatible with IBM WebSphere Data Interchange 3.2 and WebSphere Partner Gateway 6.0, both the most recent versions of these products.

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