SAP Snags 2 Companies, Partners with SunGard

May 15 2007

SAP opens the first day of its Sapphire Vienna users group with a raft of tech-based announcements.

At its annual international Sapphire user event, this year held in Vienna, SAP is stressing several themes centered on the notion of helping companies to keep up with global changes - mandates, regulations, consolidations - and to differentiate themselves by implementing SOA-based technology for a more agile business.

Underscoring the notion of a consolidating global market, SAP, headquartered in Walldorf, Germany, announced on May 14 two new acquisitions, identity management software developer MaXware and communication technology integrator Wicom Communications, a week after announcing its intention to acquire OutlookSoft, a provider of corporate performance management software.

With the acquisition of MaXware, based in Trondheim, Norway, SAP plans to upgrade the identity management functionality in NetWeaver to enable users to manage employee identities inside their own companies, but also across company boundaries when interacting with customers, distributors or suppliers, officials said. MaXware's software provides a centralized view of all identity data within an organization while automating and streamlining workflow around managing the data.

Wicom Communications' software falls more into the CRM (customer relationship management) arena, where its software is used to help

companies improve the performance of contact center processes. Using Wicom's software, SAP will develop multichannel contact center software capabilities to help users better integrate disparate hardware and software components and enable the central management and reporting of processes, officials said. Wicom's software - which can be deployed on premises, on demand or through a hybrid model combining both - already provides Web service-based integration to SAP CRM and SAP Interaction Center, SAP's current contact center application. Wicom is based in Espoo, Finland.

Drilling down to more industry-specific capabilities, SAP announced new software development to help banks better navigate shifting business processes in and outside their walls. Through a co-development partnership, SAP and SunGard plan to develop asset liability management software to assist banks in complying with increasing regulatory requirements and to control costs in the face of implementing compliance software by helping users tap service-oriented architecture concepts. As part of the deal, SunGard, headquartered in Wayne, Pa., will put its BancWare risk and performance management software on SAP's Business Process Platform - itself a compilation of SAP's NetWeaver integration platform and business applications - to help banks better manage the potential land mine of global regulations amid continuing mergers and acquisitions.

"At SunGard we expect the number of enterprise infrastructure providers to get smaller in the coming years, so we are pleased to collaborate … with SAP to offer banks our BancWare ALM - application lifecycle management - solution on SAP," said Harold Finders, division chief executive of SunGard's Financial Systems Business.

SAP is indeed increasing its focus on an emerging area of business known as GRC, or governance, risk and compliance. To this end, SAP

plans to announce two new applications at Sapphire Vienna to meet what one official calls the most pressing issues hitting the office of the CFO: risk management and corporate sustainability.

"We're seeing companies starting to create GRC groups - SAP has created one as well. - The idea is - you can drive risk; enterprise risk management has gotten to the point where it's a business opportunity. We can help companies balance opportunities with risk," said Amit Chatterjee, senior vice president of SAP's GRC unit.

Chatterjee, along with Doug Merritt, who was recently promoted to executive vice president and general manager of Suite Optimization, formed the GRC unit within SAP 18 months ago when the duo approached SAP CEO Henning Kagermann with the idea of forming a GRC unit. "We owned this topic from the get-go," Chatterjee said. "We went to Henning, convinced the board … to create a unit and … to funnel in funds."

Since then the concept of GRC has really taken off - not only with SAP but with its software competitors Oracle and Microsoft. Both companies announced separate initiatives the week of May 7 to win the office of the CFO.

SAP's plan, in part, is to provide a single repository where companies can document actions and track issues on the back end, to both manage risk and track compliance. Chatterjee gave the example of a company that needs to track key regulations. It would adopt SAP's tracking mechanisms and add all relevant information to a common repository. Over time, SAP's GRC repository will be integrated with back-end systems.

"Today our current product only integrates to the baseline; it doesn't have the capability to dive into CRM, SRM - supplier relationship

management - or SCM - supply chain management," Chatterjee said. "So you will have to take work from emissions management - for example, - and plug that into SRM. We will integrate to SAP first and then over time to non-SAP systems."

Copyright 2007 by Ziff Davis Media, Distributed by United Press International

Citation: SAP Snags 2 Companies, Partners with SunGard (2007, May 15) retrieved 27 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2007-05-sap-snags-companies-partners-sungard.html