Dialed in: Vodafone D2 wanted the ability to provision new services for customers quickly and needed a service-oriented architecture to make the connection.

CASE STUDY

BUSINESS PROFILE

Vodafone D2, the German division of oneof the world's leading mobile telecommunications companies, Vodafone Group Plc (ADR) (Nasdaq: VOD), provides more than 24 million customers with mobile phone, paging, multimedia, and Internet services.

vodafone.de

ENVIRONMENT

SonicMQ® Enterprise Message Server BEA WebLogic® application servers Sun Solaris™ operating system

INDUSTRY

Telecommunications

SOLUTION

Vodafone D2 has developed an advanced general service provisioning platform with Sonic technology, creating a service-oriented architecture (SOA) that automates the provisioning of new services and features to consumer mobile devices.

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR INTEGRATION

With hundreds of millions of mobile phone users throughout Europe, providers are highly competitive and are engaging in rampant price-slashing and jockeying to be the first to market with the latest data and value-add services desired by consumers. Amid this fierce market, Vodafone has emerged as one of the industry's success stories.

To stay competitive, Germany's Vodafone D2 provides best-in-class services, such as trendy phones that can take and send digital photos. At the same time, Vodafone D2 needs to realize a solid return on its investment in advanced third-generation (3G) technology—the Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS). This new technology allows mobile phone companies to transfer large amounts of data over phones, and thus offers customers a wide range of data and multimedia services, such as the Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), gaming, and streaming content.

To support the integration of these new services that accompany UMTS, Vodafone D2 set out to develop a general service provisioning (GSP) platform to enable real-time service provisioning for its rapidly changing services. Eliminating manual and repetitive data entry, real-time service provisioning ties together essential operational support system (OSS) components—ordering, service delivery, customer care, billing, and activation.

"We needed our system architecture to automatically activate services and distribute all customer care information to subsystems, such as customer portals, allowing customers real-time access to their accounts, billing summaries, and content they receive through our services," says Roland Zimmermann, Vodafone D2 project manager.

Vodafone D2 called on Sonic Software to provide the messaging infrastructure across its disparate customer data systems and enable standardized data exchange for service provisioning across its network.

INTEGRATING A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Initially, the Vodafone D2 architecture consisted of tightly coupled point-to-point connections for provisioning based on legacy systems. With the new technology requirements for UMTS services and the increasing number of new services that would be supported by the architecture, handling of the provisioning activities became more complex and expensive.

In 2001, Vodafone D2 set out to build a provisioning architecture that could help cope with the requirements for the integration of UMTS services and the subsequent numerous new services the company planned to offer customers. For example, when a

customer subscribed to a service at VodafoneLive!—the company's multimedia service—the new subscription would be reflected in all Vodafone D2 systems with no extra steps required for activation. The provisioning project objectives included establishing the GSP architecture, standard Web interfaces for online customer and vendor services, speeding up customer care and billing database updates, and lowering IT operational costs for the provisioning architecture.

"To take a GSP approach, we needed a platform for reliable data exchange—when you're dealing with customer information and subscriptions, data must never get lost," Zimmermann says. "After evaluating three other vendors, we chose Sonic because its products are the most reliable, surpassed our performance requirements, and had the most flexible architecture for standards-based messaging to realize our service provisioning approach."

ROLLING OUT SERVICES FASTER

Aiming to shorten development and change management cycles, Vodafone D2 required a product that supported XML data exchange, Java™ Management Extensions (JMX) technology, and operations support systems through Java (OSS/J) application programming interfaces (APIs). SonicMQ® was the only messaging product that provided out-of-the-box support for these standards.

Starting in March 2002, Vodafone deployed SonicMQ as part of its general service provisioning launch, and the rollout was completed in six months. In 2003 alone, Vodafone D2 was able to integrate 20 additional systems into the architecture. "We are on track because we have this platform in place and can fulfill the marketing requirements to launch new services faster," Zimmermann says.

Today, Vodafone D2 can launch provisioning projects at half the cost of previous approaches. "With help from Sonic, we've established a reliable, scalable, and cost-effective system for provisioning new services," Zimmermann says."I would choose Sonic again based not only on its products, but also on the support and rapid deployment time."

BENEFIT

Sonic provides a reliable, standards-based messaging platform, enabling Vodafone D2 to implement a provisioning platform that integrates customer care and billing systems, services, and external data storage. The time-to-market for new services has decreased by up to 30 percent, and operating costs to launch new projects are 50 percent lower compared to individual peer-to-peer provisioning solutions.

ABOUT PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation (Nasgaq: PRGS) provides application infrastructure software for the development, deployment, integration and management of business applications. Our goal is to maximize the benefits of information technology while minimizing its complexity and total cost of ownership.

www.progress.com

Worldwide Headquarters
Progress Software Corporation, 14 Oak Park, Bedford, MA 01730 USA, Tel: +1 781 280-4000 Fax: +1 781 280-4095,
On the Web at: www.progress.com

Europe/Middle East/Africa Headquarters
Progress Software Europe B.V. Schorpioenstraat 67 3067 GG Rotterdam, The Netherlands Tel: 31 10 286 5700 Fax: 31 10 286 5777

Latin American Headquarters
Progress Software Corporation, 8323 Northwest 12 Street, Suite 216, Miami, Florida 33126 USA, Tel: 305-716-1007, Fax: 305-716-0133

Asia/Pacific Headquarters
Progress Software Pty Ltd. Level 2, 194 Miller Street, North Sydney NSW 2060, Australia, Tel: 61-2-9919-7100

For regional international office locations and contact information, please refer to the Web page below:
http://www.progress.com/worldwide

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