



Strategic Thinking

New Business Models for Tech Success

Informatica Adds Data Quality to Integration Solutions in the Cloud with Contact Validation Service

Cloud-Based Integration Platform Provides Unified Suite and Rapid Connectivity Framework for Customers and Partners

Opening Thoughts

The proliferation of Cloud-based, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) business applications have created a growing challenge for organizations of all sizes trying to fully leverage these powerful solutions by tying them together with other cloud applications, as well as their legacy applications, systems and data sources.

Numerous market research studies have identified data integration as a key concern of customers and vendors alike. Compounding the data integration challenge is the need to ensure the quality of the data traversing today's Cloud/SaaS applications. Clogging Cloud apps with bad data defeats the economic and functional benefits which they can provide.

While many of today's Cloud-oriented integration solutions promise simpler connectivity between on-demand and on-premise applications and data sources, users are still stymied by age-old data quality issues. Although there are many traditional systems targeting the data quality challenge, organizations are increasingly looking for Cloud-based alternatives which can address this issue more quickly and cost-effectively.

This profile will examine Informatica's latest Cloud-based data integration and quality capabilities (www.InformaticaCloud.com) which are designed to address these increasingly important issues.

Informatica Cloud Addresses Data Integration and Quality Issues

Informatica launched its Informatica On-Demand division in 2006, and subsequently rebranded Informatica Cloud. The goal of the unit is to provide a set of dedicated, self-service, data integration and quality solutions to address the needs of organizations of all sizes contending with the issues associated with pulling together the resources in a hybrid environment of on-demand and on-premise solutions, systems and data sources.

The unit has evolved in three stages:

- Phase 1: Connectivity to Leading SaaS/Cloud Vendors
- Phase 2: Cloud-Based, On-Demand Data Integration Solutions
- Phase 3: Cloud-Based, On-Demand Data Integration Platform

Today, the Informatica Cloud unit boasts over 1,500 companies running the service, and supports over 20 billion transactions per month. Company-wide, Informatica serves over 4,500 enterprises.

Informatica has also established the INFORM for Systems Integrators (SIs) Program for consulting, platform, and software companies, including Accenture, Astadia, Deloitte, Fujitsu, Infosys, and Wipro.

In its Winter 2010 Release a year ago, Informatica Cloud introduced the industry's first usage-based data integration service, Informatica Cloud Express, to enable SMB users to more easily schedule data loading tasks between databases/files and CRM, all without coding. The Summer 2011 Release focused much more on enterprise IT requirements – specifically fine-grained access controls, delegated administration, and a REST API.

Data integration and quality control are critical to leverage the power of today's Cloud-based, SaaS solutions, especially in a hybrid operating environment.

Informatica Cloud has developed a data integration and quality service portfolio which provides a sophisticated, yet scalable Cloud-based service delivery platform.

More recently, the Informatica Cloud Winter 2012 Release has expanded the unit's portfolio to include a wider range of data integration and quality solutions, including:

Informatica Cloud Contact Validation - Allows users to validate and correct postal addresses from over 240 countries. Users can enrich the addresses with geocode data, validate email addresses, and check phone numbers in the National Do-Not-Call registry.

Rapid Connectivity Framework - Enables Informatica's customers and INFORM partners to more quickly connect to virtually any packaged source or target application. They can also make them available on the Informatica Marketplace. The Framework also encourages 'crowdsourcing' by Informatica's customers and partners who can create and share their own custom data integration, quality and connectivity solutions.

New Informatica Cloud Connectors - Adds over forty (40) pre-built, process-centric templates and connectors to the Informatica Marketplace Cloud Data Integration Mall. The latest templates include: SAP and Salesforce CRM Account and Contact synchronization; Oracle EBS and Salesforce Order status synchronization. The latest connectors include Eloqua and Zuora. Informatica Cloud has also announced new connectivity for Microsoft Dynamics CRM, which permits users to more easily and economically set up data synchronization with Microsoft Dynamics CRM and other applications and data sources.

Although the Informatica Cloud solutions are designed to be economical and easy to use, they are also built to be scalable to meet business-critical and complex, enterprise-class needs. Informatica's Winter 2012 Release includes the following new enterprise-class features:

- Enhanced real-time out-bound messaging support for Salesforce CRM and Force.com.
- Bulk application program interface (API) support for Salesforce CRM and Force.com.
- Built-in Live Chat included with Enterprise 24/7 customer support.
- Data replication change detection enhancements.
- Improved activity logs and error messages.
- Android support for the Informatica Cloud mobile administration application.

One Informatica Cloud success story is Sterling & Sterling which uses the Cloud-based data integration and quality solution to connect its agency management system and Salesforce CRM. Other customers who have endorsed the new release include CETCO and Pac-Van.

On the partner side, a number of SIs including Astadia are using the Informatica Cloud Connector Framework to rapidly and more cost-effectively integrate its clients' ERP and marketing automation systems to Salesforce.com's customer relationship management (CRM) solution to improve SaaS/Cloud application adoption and create a better operating environment with greater analytic capabilities.

Informatica Cloud's' multitenant, metadata repository has been architected to ensure its security and reliability. It is hosted and managed in a SAS-70 Type II compliant, third-party data center. Customer data does not leave their systems until users order it to move bi-directionally via the Secure Agent between approved end-points, which can be applications, files, or databases.

Strategic Thoughts

Data integration and quality control are critical to leverage the power of today's Cloud-based, SaaS solutions, especially in a hybrid operating environment. Informatica Cloud has developed a data integration and quality service portfolio which provides a sophisticated, yet scalable Cloud-based service delivery platform which can be self-provisioned and customized to meet the evolving needs of organizations and channel partners worldwide.

About THINKstrategies, Inc.

THINKstrategies is a strategic consulting services firm that helps enterprise IT and business decision-makers with their sourcing strategies, IT solutions providers with their marketing strategies, and venture capital firms with their investment strategies. It also administers the Cloud Computing Showplace (www.cloudshowplace.com), an online directory of over 1800 Cloud solutions and best practices resource center. For more information, visit www.thinkstrategies.com, or contact Jeffrey Kaplan, Managing Director, at 781-431-2690 or jkaplan@thinkstrategies.com.