

CLOUD COMPUTING

Cloud Computing is no Instant Coffee

Cloud challenges are not easy to tackle. Companies wanting to master the customer journey first and foremost need process know-how, along with know-how about SAP CX Suite and Hana cloud integration.

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Many companies believe that cloud projects involve only minimal effort and can be implemented rather quickly. Just as many companies are heavily disappointed when they realize that cloud computing is not that easy. Consequences of this wrong belief are manual processes in the back office, unsatisfied customers, reclamations due to processing errors, and often unmotivated users.

Customers would rather have the implementation of CRM applications in the cloud be like instant coffee. However, you don't have to be a fortune teller to know that it won't work like that. Customer expectations are growing more diverse and therefore more challenging. When, where, and what customers click is no secret anymore, and the data has to be leveraged during the next contact with users. Companies wanting to stay competitive need to orient their processes towards the customer journey; meaning that they have to manage the complexity and provide a suitable system architecture.

One incentive, many systems

The following example highlights the interdependencies during the customer journey through an online shop. A digital game (think drawing a ticket) is supposed to motivate customers to buy something. If the ticket is a winning one, the lucky customer gets a coupon which they can use for their next purchase. Now, let's take a look at the interdependencies of the systems. The marketing system recognizes customers who have already redeemed a coupon once before, meaning that they are likely to do it again. To make the campaign even more precise, only customers that have recently visited the online shop without buying anything are chosen. If customers agreed to the processing of their data according to GDPR (which has to be looked up using the master data system), the marketing staff can now start advertising via e-mail. Sending the e-mails requires yet another system. If a customer takes the bait, the link in the e-mail automatically sends them to the competition. After choo-

sing a ticket, they win a coupon for ten percent off on their next purchase. If you think this was a coincidence or that every customer gets the same coupon, you are wrong. The solution used for the competition works in real-time with the marketing system and determines which coupon would be the most likely one to motivate this specific customer to make a purchase based on past data and predictions.

High-tech automatic coffee machines

Our experience shows that companies can position themselves rather well with the five clouds of SAP's Customer Experience (CX) solution. These clouds all have unique functionalities just waiting to be combined through the right processes; which is a task for C/4 Hana experts with high knowledge of architecture and processes.

Our projects show that sometimes controversial discussions about integration already start with master data systems. In which system would the initial data set of business partners be created? Which data sets are synchronized when? The answers to these questions are the foundation of the operational processes. If data sets can be created in more than one system, the need for comprehensive integration becomes obvious to even the most unskilled layman. Does every software solution then communicate with every other or are there pre-defined workflows for master data enrichment? Many variants and possibilities as well as discussions about the best approach also pose the question of who is responsible for validity and conformity of the data.

If it was not clear before, it is now: before the implementation of functional applications in SAP's CX clouds or the data integration in the SAP Cloud Platform can happen, processes and responsibilities have to be defined. In this regard, cloud implementations aren't any different from on-prem projects. They need time and processing expertise - just like a good cup of coffee.

Cloud Computing is the practice of flexibly and dynamically providing IT resources, like hardware and software, to external service providers through networks.

Also have a look at the community info on page 68

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