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In the current business scenario, enterprises are supposed to access and manage huge amount of data from variable sources. These sources include web data sources, social networks, SaaS and above all Cloud. Therefore, there is a dire need for effective application integration to ensure seamless flow and usage of voluminous data and information.

Application integration or enterprise application integration (EAI) is about integration of different and many applications within the organization to encourage unhindered data-flow and seamless integration of business processes. Application integration is a tool to simplify business processes without molding any application or modifying data structures. EAI enables automating the entire process and work without any hindrances in processes.

On its introduction, application integration is a complex process involving integration of multiple applications at multiple source systems. Further these systems are located at multiple locations using multiple files and multiple databases. This posed a great challenge to integrate and connect each application and ensure uninterrupted data flow. Traditional applications of introducing a middleware brought from vendor or custom code specifically for integration was used but it had many shortcomings and was quite expensive also. Therefore, its usage was short-lived and people looked for better application integration procedures.

Application Integration and cloud computing

Enterprises welcomed the advent of cloud computing as they were plain upset with the drawbacks of traditional approach of data integration. Today, cloud computing usage is well known and many enterprises are taking application integration into the cloud.

Challenges posed by Application Integration in Cloud

Cloud is an all new way of delivering integration, however the biggest drawback is of proliferation of business data which is also a very serious issue but hasnâ€™t been resolved as yet. There have been great advancements in certain aspects but the dependency on hand-coded solutions and point-to-point solutions is still a major point of issue in application integration. Programming languages like PERL, Python, PHP, Ruby are in use but this doesnâ€™t make integration easy in anyways. The reason is hand coded language solutions are fragile, cannot be used again, very hard in maintenance and inaccessible as requirement change. Hand coded solutions need high cost of development and incur great cost of maintenance. A better solution is capability of handling the data deluge and different data sources.

Cloud application integration solutions

A new approach of simpler, consistent, reusable and easy to use, infinitely extensible option is used to facilitate better and easy integration between various applications. Availability of latest integration software in the market has enabled things easy as management of integration needs is done by them.

Most useful aspect of application integration solutions is that it eliminates hand-coded solutions and in place brings custom-made data-packets that help in integrating all kinds of applications. These data packets are enabled with cloud application integration to make them accessible from any location to read, write or transform these from desired location, allowing database, files, Web and

SaaS data sharing and their utilization by apps. Many application integration solutions are available for free but most are charged.

Cloud Application Integration is a welcome relief to the organizations who are tired of facing application integration solution issues.

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