Desktop Office Integration Architecture

Purpose

You can use Desktop Office Integration to connect any application that supports OLE2 to your SAP system. You can trigger office applications from the SAP system and react to office application events.

Implementation considerations

The applications must support the OLE2 interface. The presentation servers must be running under Windows95 or Windows NT.

Integration

You should store documents on the Business Document Server. Ensure that SAP GUI is installed with all of its components (especially the OCX modules).

Features

Desktop Office Integration is an ABAP Objects interface that you can use to open, close, and control special desktop Office applications using the OLE2 interface. You can start the Office application either in a separate window or within the SAP GUI window.

You can store the documents in any way. For example, you can use the SAP database, HTTP and FTP servers, or the local file system on your frontend. You address documents using URLs, and load them into the office application using a special data retrieval component.

You can react in the ABAP program to events that are triggered in the Office application. You can also import data from the SAP system (fields, tables, pictures, RTF texts) into the document using links. You can ensure that everything in the document is up to date by updating the links.

Architecture

The SAP integration technology allows you to integrate any OLE-compatible desktop application such as Microsoft Office, Lotus SmartSuite, CorelOffice, or Visio into the SAP system. Communication and data transfer work as follows:

Communication between the SAP GUI (presentation server) and the SAP application server was extended in Release 4.0. This made it possible to include ActiveX controls in SAP GUI (Control Framework).
Desktop Office Integration uses this interface for special controls (SAP Document Container Control and SAP Data Provider) that are the communication channel between the SAP system and the Desktop Office Application.

The SAP Document Container Control uses methods and attributes to communicate with a desktop application using the OLE2 interface.

The SAP Data Provider is a container and converter for data in different formats. Data that you import into an application is converted into a readable format based on the Internet standard MIME. The SAP Data Provider buffers document data that is administered in the SAP system. It also buffers SAP data, which can be inserted into documents using R/3 links.

Both controls have an interface to the SAP system. The interface to the SAP Data Provider is implemented using function modules. ABAP classes and interfaces for Desktop Office Integration provide the interface to the SAP Document Container Control.

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