

Reality Check: A Case Study of an EII Research Prototype Encountering Customer Needs

Eric Simon
SAP Business Objects

ABSTRACT

Le Select is a research prototype of an EII (Enterprise Information Integration) system (also known as a mediation system), which was developed from 1998 to 2001 at INRIA (France). Le Select was then transferred to a start-up company named Medience, which was purchased in 2005 by Business Objects. Under its new brand, the EII system now called "Data Federator" is a master piece of Business Objects' Enterprise Information Management (EIM) offering. During this period of nearly ten years, the EII system has

been rewritten almost three times, not only for industrializing its code, but mainly because the system was confronted to customer needs that required modifications in order to address functional needs that were not anticipated. The aim of this presentation is to review these main transformations of the system and relate them to Business Intelligence application requirements. We emphasize a few problems such as designing complex views, data cleaning, and query optimization strategies for "narrow" and "mega" queries. The presentation makes extensive use of customer cases to illustrate our purpose. We conclude with a list of open issues.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Simon (SAP Business Objects).

Eric Simon is currently a Senior Director at SAP Business Objects in charge of product development for Data Access and Federation. He was a founder of Medience, a start-up company issued from INRIA,



which was acquired by Business Objects in 2005. Previously, he was a tenure researcher at INRIA-Rocquencourt (France). There, he initiated the design and implementation of Le Select mediation system. Previously, he also worked on the design of systems, languages and algorithms in the areas of deductive, active, and object-oriented databases. Eric received a PhD in Computer Sciences from University of Paris 6 in 1986 and his habilitation in 1992.

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