

CASE STUDY

How Aareon adopted the MATRIX ERP Accelerator to replace their own in-house developed solution for Coupa to SAP S/4HANA integration

SUMMARY

MATRIX is a Coupa App Marketplace ERP Accelerator delivered as a service that enables rapid deployment of Coupa with ERP implementations using off-the-shelf proven accelerated business scenarios that can be deployed in days rather than weeks or months.

Aareon recognised the limitations and ongoing support overhead of using their own in-house developed Coupa integration solution and took the decision to transition to MATRIX and benefit from MATRIX's accelerated deployment and standardised business scenarios. This provided Aareon with a fully supported Coupa integration solution going forward, it overcame a number of immediate challenges with their incumbent solution and freed up internal resources to focus on other business priorities.



CHALLENGE

Aareon had previously implemented Coupa BSM (Business Spend Management) and had used their own in-house IT team to build the interfaces and integration between Coupa and their SAP S/4HANA ERP application. At the time they believed this would be straight forward and anticipated that the ongoing management of their chosen integration solution would not require significant resources. However, it quickly became apparent that this was not the case and consequently Aareon's internal team had to deal with the unexpected level of resource and effort required to maintain and support their Coupa ERP integration, and the competing demands of Aareon's other business priorities. Furthermore, in addition to the routine support and regression testing of the in-house integration solution (in line with Coupa's update release schedule) it became necessary that some re-development of the bespoke interfaces would be required to support Coupa's OAuth 2.0 rollout.

A visit by Aareon to Coupa's EMEA Inspire conference led to a meeting with Mandant where the Mandant team described how Mandant's MATRIX ERP Accelerator for Coupa could provide a ready-made solution in place of Aareon's bespoke solution. A demonstration of MATRIX quickly convinced Aareon that there was a better more efficient way of doing things and the opportunity to enhance the Aareon business integration processes, by providing centralised visibility of data flows, transaction delivery in real time and targeted error reporting and reprocessing capabilities.



OUR SOLUTION

Once Aareon had decided to use the MATRIX ERP Accelerator a plan was established to replace Aareon's in-house developed interfaces and integration between Coupa and SAP S/4HANA and migrate them to the pre-built MATRIX business scenarios. As Aareon was already live with Coupa BSM and SAP S/4 HANA it was necessary to do this in a way that would have minimal impact to Aareon's business.

As an added benefit of using the fully managed MATRIX solution it meant that internal Aareon IT resources were freed up from having to provide support and maintenance of their own integration solution, and also helped to simplify the roll-out of Coupa to other countries in the future. Finally the switch from batch processing to near real-time transaction processing was deemed a huge benefit for the business.



THE PROCESS

It was first necessary to gain an understanding of the in-place solution. The integration scenarios to be implemented using MATRIX were to be the same as those already implemented using the bespoke solution. However, as the existing solution was an ABAP-based SAP-centric development it was necessary to carry out some investigative work and identify all instances where the Aareon solution was using SAP capabilities (e.g. data validation/conversion) that would have to be configured in the MATRIX solution. Mandant's experience as an SAP

Partner with many years of SAP integration experience and in-depth knowledge of both the Coupa and SAP data models enabled them to adopt a more standardised approach whilst retaining all the functionality required by Aareon.

There were some specific challenges in key areas for example invoicing and VAT processes for multiple European entities were a source of data related errors in the existing solution. Aareon recognized that their own master data quality was the contributory cause and therefore decided to conduct a review and clean-up of this data. Aareon conducted a review of their supplier data modelling, which differed between Coupa and SAP and was another source of data errors.

An example of another significant challenge was the variety of invoice texts and the rules regarding data mapping to SAP. Though complex, once analysed and understood the actual build of the maps and deployment into the MATRIX standard data mapping framework was a quick process and the project rapidly gained traction. Aareon realised that one of the key benefits of the MATRIX solution was that they were able to achieve a higher level of customisation than they originally thought would be possible whilst still using the standard MATRIX business scenarios. As a result, although now following a standardised approach there was no loss of functionality or capability within any areas of the MATRIX ERP Accelerator when compared to Aareon's bespoke solution.

RESULTS

All Coupa / SAP interfaces are now processed through the MATRIX ERP Accelerator, supporting 500 Aareon users across Germany, France and the UK. More recently Aareon rolled out Coupa to the Netherlands, and thanks to the flexibility and future proofing of MATRIX there was no additional work required to support this or expected for subsequently planned future roll outs.

It was very important for the Aareon IT team to see a long period of system stability and an improvement to the quality of service to their business. The Aareon IT team are happy with the stability of the system and even happier that by implementing MATRIX ERP Accelerator their internal resources have been freed up to work on other key projects. The team now has access to integration transaction history, giving them greatly improved visibility of the data flows, and the enablement of automated responses and alerting. Business errors are intelligently routed to key business users who are often able to resolve issues particularly if data related without IT involvement.

HOW IS IT GOING NOW?

Aareon is happy that the MATRIX ERP Accelerator is providing secure and effective data integration that they can rely on to support their business. Happily, defects are few and far between and when they do occur are promptly dealt with by the MATRIX support team.

“ If we had known the Mandant MATRIX ERP Accelerator solution existed we would have done it in the first place... and avoided all the double effort! ”

ABOUT MANDANT SOLUTIONS

Mandant Solutions are specialists in accelerating the integration of ERP applications. They are recognised experts with many years of experience of working with all sizes of companies and organisations. Mandant are also long-standing Coupa partners with proven expertise in best-practice ERP integration between Coupa and ERP applications.

ABOUT AAREON

Aareon is a European provider of SaaS solutions for the property industry. With over 40 years of expertise, Aareon supports social landlords in their daily operations and digital transformation through it's digital solutions. Aareon, headquartered in Mainz, Germany, operates in several countries across Europe. Aareon has over 7,000 customers who trust their systems, and these systems currently manage more than 12 million units across various properties.

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