

NEWSLETTER

Issue 6 | January 2013

www.auto-gration.eu



One simple connection
to many partners

www.auto-gration.eu



2013 & auto-gration

2012 was a successful year for **auto-gration**, we expect to build on this in 2013.

In March 2012, the two-year project as defined and funded by the European Commission came to its conclusion with a very successful Conference held in Stuttgart.

In the months following the Conference, there was a question mark over the future of auto-gration. The most enthusiastic supporters were fully confident about the validity of the auto-gration principles and the fantastic opportunity that it offered for European SMEs. On the other hand, some commentators were more sceptical and were convinced that the end of the project meant the end of auto-gration. This is not surprising because whenever a new technique, a new technology or a new idea emerge, it takes time for it to be accepted by the whole community, which is very often divided between supporters and opponents.

Before going forward into 2013, we can make a stop and assess where we stand nine months after the closure of the official European project.

The Joint Working Group (formed by Odette, CLEPA and FIGIEFA) which took over responsibility for the maintenance of the auto-gration architecture has been very active and the results have been impressive.

A number of additional messages have been released and further messages are under preparation. Some new messages extend the reach of the auto-gration infrastructure beyond the logistics and commercial areas that were the original focus of the project. This is a result of new requests and interest from different organisations about the auto-gration solution:

- The German automotive association, the VDA, has officially announced their move to the Global EDIFACT messages and, as an alternative for SMEs, to the auto-gration messages. After the recommendations about the auto-gration Invoice and DeliveryInstruction messages, the InventoryReport was developed. In 2013, new messages, such as RemittanceAdvice will be defined to complete the set of business messages.
- In the area of technical data exchange, the VDA proposes to develop the Prototype message for tracking prototype products throughout their life cycle. The message will be released early in 2013.
- The MaterialCertificate message for exchange of material certificate data has been finalised with CETIM, the French Technical Centre for the Mechanical Industry. In early 2013, this message will be implemented during a first prototype phase run by CETIM.
- Those ERP Vendors which decided to integrate auto-gration to their own ERP infrastructure gave very positive feedback and suggestions. As an example, the JITDeliveryInstruction was defined to better suit the requirements of the French industry. The Acknowledgment message has been discussed as a consequence of the first implementation of auto-gration exchanges between two SMEs.
- The Synchro message has been defined at the request of SKODA Auto to support their production synchronous supply processes with their smaller suppliers.

In parallel, the auto-gration Connector has been enhanced with new functionality:

- It is now possible to set a routing rule to have the same message sent to multiple receivers. This new functionality will be especially useful for subcontracting SMEs of a supplier.
- The acknowledgment message will be automatically sent back to the sender connector to confirm the physical reception of the message. Additionally, an acknowledgment message can be issued by the receiving ERP System to confirm the validity of the message.

In this issue

- Editorial
- auto-gration at Odette Conference in Berlin
- A first auto-gration IT Partner in Belgium and a new one in Germany
- Meeting at Galia, Paris
- The first auto-gration to auto-gration connection between two SMEs in the automotive supply chain is now alive
- Four new messages in the latest release 2012B
- auto-gration Material Certificate messages to start the proof-of-concept phase
- The auto-gration Connector version 2.8 now available with new functionalities

Cont'd/



In 2013 the auto-gration deployment will maintain the same momentum:

- auto-gration implementation will be carried out by BMW, Volkswagen and Ford for the e-Invoicing process with their SME suppliers and by Skoda Auto to manage delivery instructions with their smaller suppliers in Eastern Europe.
- In the supply chain, the implementation of auto-gration will be more active with the deployment of ERP systems which are natively auto-gration compatible.
- Discussions with existing IT Partners will be pursued. A meeting is planned in March with ERP Vendors and B2B Service Providers to decide on future message or connector developments.
- New IT partners will be approached throughout Europe in order to increase the knowledge, the competence and the developments about auto-gration.
- Potential domains of interests for the auto-gration architecture such as collaboration with transport service providers and the exchange of test data will be assessed.
- The maintenance of the messages and the Connector will be proactively conducted to support implementation projects and change requests from our partners.
- The relationship with aftermarket stakeholders and TecCom, as their main IT service provider, will be strengthened to keep consistency between the auto-gration supply chain and aftermarket messages.

This ambitious programme for auto-gration in 2013 will be a success thanks to your participation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much, you and all our partners throughout Europe, for your support and feedback. The wider the adoption, the more SMEs will be connected and the more efficient the automotive supply chain will be.

I wish you and all of us together a successful 2013 with auto-gration.

Jörg Walther
Programme Manager
Odette International

auto-gration at Odette Conference in Berlin

‘Connecting SMEs to the automotive digital supply chain: the auto-gration Project update’ was the theme of the presentation made during the first day sessions by Bernard Dubois, the auto-gration consultant for France.



Bernard Dubois at Odette2012 in Berlin

The major accomplishments of the past year concerning the deployment and the maintenance of auto-gration were presented according to three themes:

- Overview of the auto-gration recommendations and partners
- Implementation status and roll-out plans
- Looking beyond logistics and financial messaging

The presentation is available on the Odette Conference web site.

In the Conference Exhibition area, the auto-gration stand received a steady stream of visitors. Bernard Dubois and Ralf Hille, from ROTAS AS, the auto-gration support partner for Germany, provided information and

demonstrated data exchanges with the auto-gration Connector. Many key contacts with automotive stakeholders and future IT partners were achieved during the two day event.



A first auto-gration IT Partner in Belgium and a new one in Germany

It is our pleasure to welcome our new IT partners:

- Babelway, based in Belgium, is the leading integration Platform-as-a-Service (iPaaS) for B2B electronic document exchange allowing business partners to easily configure and operate EDI exchanges such as invoices, orders and delivery notes. Babelway has a strong footprint into the automotive, transportation and logistics industry.



- RC Midmarket solutions GmbH is based in Koblenz and has locations all over Germany. They offer extensive automotive competence along the whole supply chain from suppliers through OEMs up to the dealer market. Their new “AX-businessMotor” solution based on Microsoft Dynamics AX is natively auto-gration enabled thanks to their partnership with the French ERP Vendor Silverprod.



Meeting at GALIA, Paris

Since June 2011, regular workshops have been organised in France to discuss with ERP vendors and B2B service providers how the implementation and use of auto-gration in the French automotive industry can be extended and promoted.

The latest working session took place on October 3 in the GALIA office in Paris with the French IT Partners as a follow-up to the previous meeting organised in April. The key subjects were the InventoryReport message with its related business processes and the acknowledgment feature.

The next workshop is planned for March 2013.

The first auto-gration to auto-gration connection between two SMEs in the automotive supply chain is now live

The pilot case as presented by Evelyne Braun, MIS from Anixter, during the auto-gration Conference held in March in Stuttgart is now fully in production between Anixter Fasteners (www.anixter.com), a Tier 2 supplier located in Sarreguemines, France and Bowden, a T1 supplier, located in Boynes, France (www.bowden.fr).



Both companies are equipped with the AGI ERP system from Infodev whose latest version is natively auto-gration enabled. Since September 2012, after a six-month test period, they can exchange live auto-gration delivery instruction, despatch advice and invoice messages which are directly issued or integrated by their respective ERP systems. The auto-gration Connectors have been installed on both sides by Infodev. They exchange messages under the HTTPS protocol over the internet via a server which is administered by Infodev. This implementation was the first complete end-to-end auto-gration connection to go live in the automotive digital supply chain in Europe.



Infodev (www.infodev.fr) is a French ERP Editor which develops AGI, a complete ERP system especially dedicated to SMEs. Infodev SME customers belong to the automotive, electronics, mechanics, foundry, plastics processing and trade industries. Since 2011, Infodev has been an auto-gration IT Partner and actively participated in the Early Adopters Programme.

Regis Protte, Infodev CEO, has confirmed that he is prepared to deploy auto-gration as the new exchange format for AGI. On-going tests are currently made with Silverprod and some other ERP Vendors to validate direct auto-gration/auto-gration exchanges between different ERP systems.

Furthermore, because auto-gration will be the pivot format for AGI, Regis Protte added that it was likely that sooner or later, Infodev would deploy auto-gration for customers outside of the automotive industry for ordering, delivering and invoicing. If needed, the message format translation will be done by the SME's B2B service provider.

Four new messages in the latest release 2012B

The message release 2012B introduces four new messages:

▪ The InventoryReport message

This message completes the set of business messages, following the delivery instruction, despatch advice and invoice messages. It is based on the EDIFACT INVRPT data structure and will be used for inventory management processes especially for VMI scenarios. It will be the alternative to the Global INVRPT EDIFACT message for SMEs in Germany, as recommended by the VDA.

▪ The MaterialCertificate message

In a close collaboration with CETIM - the Technical Centre for the Mechanical Industry in France, Odette has developed a new message to transmit material certificate information, which is vital for quality assurance in the automotive industry and other mechanical engineering industries.

▪ The Acknowledgment message

In order to enable end-to-end acknowledgment processes between the message sender and the final recipient, the acknowledgment message has been developed. It will be sent by the final receiver connector to acknowledge the technical reception of the message. It could also be sent by the receiver ERP system after processing the message in order to acknowledge the functional validity of the message.

▪ The Prototype message

The message is intended to track the technical data and integration processes related to a prototype product throughout its life cycle into the supply chain from the product manufacturer to the OEM via the different suppliers. The message will be firstly used by German automotive industry as recommended by the VDA.

This new release is available at: <http://www.auto-gration.eu/repository/auto-gration-messages/2012b/>

Auto-gration Material Certificate messages to start a proof-of-concept phase

On October 23 2012, a meeting was held in the Maison de la Mécanique in Courbevoie by CETIM, the French Technical Centre for the Mechanical Industry, where the outputs of the material certificate dematerialisation project were presented to auto-gration team members. The team approved the principle of a proof-of-concept to be managed by CETIM in early 2013. The objective of this six-month project is to prototype the exchange of auto-gration material certificate messages, to assess the organisational and technical impacts on the participating companies and to measure the effort and evaluate the benefits for further deployment of this new way of exchanging material certificate information.

The project will be kicked-off in early February. Several scenarios will be prototyped. The first will involve several volunteer companies including Ascometal as steel mill, Forges de Courcelles as product transformer and Renault as final customer.

More information about this proof-of-concept project will be provided in our next newsletter.



The auto-gration Connector version 2.8 now available with new functionalities

The auto-gration Connector has been developed by the auto-gration team for exchanging auto-gration messages over the internet and the HTTPS protocol. It is an open source software freely available on the auto-gration website. It is maintained by the auto-gration Joint Working Group. In November, a new release of the Connector was issued with several new functionalities:

- Implementation of 1 to N communications. The Connector is now able to send the same message to several destinations. This feature will be used for example by a subcontractor to inform both its contractor customer and the final customer of the delivery of the goods when they are directly shipped from the subcontractor to the end customer. In order to send the same message to several destinations, i.e. to several outbound connections, you must create at least one routing rule for each destination in the routing table.
- Improvements of the user interface: a double click function on the table rows to activate the most used options, the highlighting of the current menu item and a "check-for-update" feature in the About menu in order to check the availability of a new release on the auto-gration web site.
- Updated Setup and User Manuals (English and German versions).
- Added documentation for the new messages schema V2012A.
- First connector 64-bit distribution for Windows and Linux platforms.
- Improved software installation process: when installing a new version, there is no longer a need to uninstall the existing one. Installation can supersede the previous one. The software is updated with no modification for the current setup and data.
- Encryption of all passwords stored in the system.
- Correction of all the bugs reported by users.



The acknowledgment feature will be available in further releases.

The latest version is available for download in the auto-gration software download folder:

<http://www.auto-gration.eu/downloads/software>

*Visit our website to learn more about the auto-gration Architecture and the benefits it can bring to your company.
If you would like to receive a copy of our publication "Integrating Automotive", please email us at the address below.*

The Joint Working Group Members

