

A CAST IRON Centric Integration Solution



The Cast Iron Application Router™ will improve the cost and ease of connecting business applications with different protocols and data formats, enabling Ridgian to quickly transform large volumes of data into business intelligence. It solves the most common integration problems by connecting, transforming, and routing data and events from source to target systems and includes sophisticated features such as guaranteed delivery of messages and failure notifications.

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Ridgian delivers Cast Iron Integration Solution.

Craegmoor Healthcare over a number of years have accumulated, through both development and acquisition, various disparate systems carrying out similar and in some instances, identical tasks. All of these systems throughout the company's evolution have been standalone and therefore were maintained individually.

Using HR as an example, one system would be used to maintain information relating to new employees, this would then be manually transferred onto a second system for existing employees. Three complementary systems were then also used, one for the maintenance of timesheets, a second to manage payroll and a third to track an employees training achievements. The result of this is that any changes to an employee's circumstance, i.e. name, address, or bank details, needed to be changed on up to five systems, manually.

This is not the only example, with some 16-18 systems requiring integration, 40+ integrations channels and the possibility of 80+ interfaces.

Whilst this was acceptable to the business through evolution, once an analysis had been completed of the amount of working hours spent completing these tasks, and others, it was clear that an alternate solution was required.

Possible Solutions

Option one would be to migrate all of the disparate systems to a single enterprise solution such as SAP or Oracle. From here it would be possible to manage the entire business using a single solution. The expense of implementing this kind of solution was cost prohibitive.

The second option was to allow each system supplier to create an element of bespoke code to allow its integration with another system. As this would result in a large number of bite sized pieces of code, all of which would need to be developed, maintained and supported, there were two reasons why this was not an ideal. Each supplier would make a charge for any development completed and all would require additional fees for support. In addition the knock on effects of changes on any one system would be difficult to manage across all of the interfaces created.

Option three would be to implement an Integration Solution that was capable of taking feeds from disparate systems, manipulating their content and feeding the data back into already existing interfaces. At this point Craegmoor made contact with Ridgian in respect of our Cast Iron Integration solution.



Solution Overview

Client Profile

Craegmoor Healthcare provides high quality, specialist care and support to individuals within the social and health care sector. Set up in 1994, and now with over 300 care homes, independent hospitals and supported living schemes providing places for over 5,800 people, the organisation is the leading independent provider of specialist care in the UK. **

Business Situation

Through business development and acquisition, Craegmoor have found themselves with various disparate systems carrying out similar or identical roles that are routinely maintained in a manual fashion.

Solution Benefits

By nominating "Master" systems and key processes it is possible to ensure that any 'linkable' system is also updated when certain events take place.

** Taken from www.craegmoor.co.uk
15th December 2004

Systems Integrations

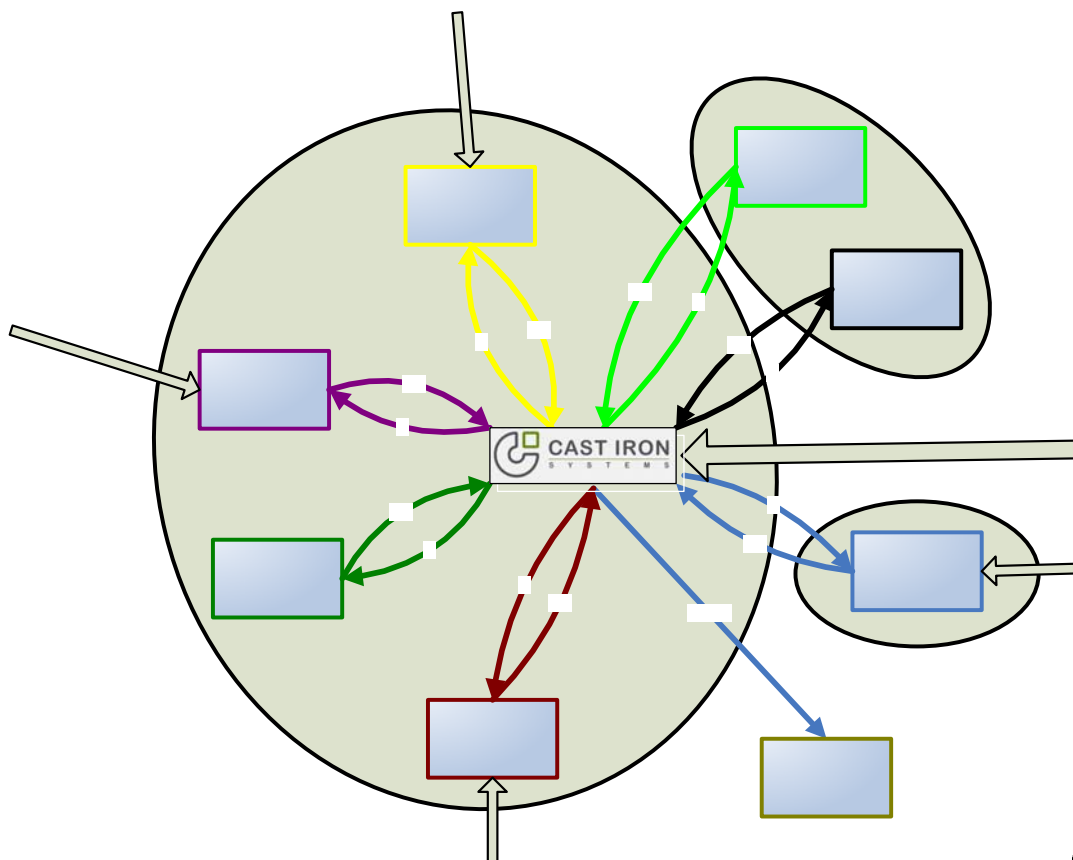
The Cast Iron solution can communicate directly with the industry standard ANSI SQL database systems, or take feeds from solutions in the form of Flat Files, Delimited Files, XML and many others.

Within the Craegmoor environment the following types of data were utilised:

- ANSI SQL for both Selection and Insertion of Data
- XML
- Fixed Length Data Files
- Comma Delimited Data Files
- Bar Delimited Data Files
- Printer Files
- Microsoft Excel

In addition connection methods used for accessing, transporting and depositing data were:

- TCP/IP
- FTP
- SFTP
- Web Services
- HTTP



Project Approach and Methodology

Whilst the Cast Iron Integration solution is a highly capable solution, it can only work with systems and processes that are understood. In many instances Craegmoor had supporting documentation that allowed integration to proceed rapidly.

There were however many areas whereby either new or relatively new systems were involved and in these areas it was necessary to carry out an intensive Business Analysis of both the Process that drove the integration and the methods by which the integration would take place.

For that reason the structure of the project was to include a single Project Manager, along with one or two Business Analysts depending on work loads. A Cast Iron Technical Analyst was available at all times to advise and was also used to complete integration processes as and when the documentation was approved by both Craegmoor and Ridgian.

Conclusion

Cast Iron Systems provides an appliance-based approach that is enabling Fortune 500 companies to connect applications in less than 30 days and slash data integration costs by as much as 80%. These companies are completing more projects by choosing the Application Router™ to solve their most common integration problems.

This hardware appliance is the simplest and least expensive way to solve data integration, enabling you to install and integrate within hours of delivery. And the results are impressive. Our customers are seeing ROI payback in as little as 4 months.

For More Information

For more information about Ridgian and our products and services, please contact us at:

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