

Ontologies-Based Business Integration

Michael Rebstock · Janina Fengel · Heiko Paulheim

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With Additional Contributions by
Christian Huemer, Klaus-Dieter Naujok,
Patrick Röder and Omid Tafreschi

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Prof. Dr. Michael Rebstock
Janina Fengel, MSc
Heiko Paulheim, BSc
Faculty of Economics
and Business Administration
Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences
Haardtring 100
64295 Darmstadt
Germany
rebstock@fbw.h-da.de
fengel@fbw.h-da.de
paulheim@fbw.h-da.de



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Preface

E-business integration is a vision we have developed over a long period of time. As we have worked in business practice for many years prior to and in parallel with our academic research, we have always thought of such integration not only as an intellectual challenge but also as a real business tool. Consequently, when we started our project on Ontologies-based Reconciliation for Business Integration (ORBI) in 2004, not only pure science but also business objectives were at the center of our research. We were very happy to be able to form a project consortium that consisted not only of renowned researchers but also of experienced business practitioners from a range of companies. Each played a specific role – as user, provider or co-developer of the application components that are based on the methods we have developed.

So may this book find its way not only to the desks of researchers and students, but also into the offices and minds of business practitioners worldwide who are dealing with the challenge of integrating their business processes, applications and information.

This book is, in the most general sense, about understanding each other – that is, what we do and think. Needless to say, within the project itself, and its environment, we had many opportunities to apply this underlying philosophy. In the end, the results prove it was worth the effort.

The book and the research it reports would not have been possible without the help and support of many people and organizations. We want to thank all of them for what they did for our work.

First, there are the present and past members of the ORBI project consortium. The academic partners include Gerhard Knorz from Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, Martin Minderlein from Ansbach University of Applied Sciences, Michael Herfert and Ruben Wolf from Fraunhofer Institute for Secure Information Technology, Omid Tafreschi from Technische Universität Darmstadt, and Carlo Simon from University of Koblenz-Landau. The business partners include Boris Reuter from axentiv, Dietrich Jäger from i-market, Thomas Kummeler und Mirko Doninger from Krombacher Brewery, Hubert Stockmeier from SupplyOn and Jan Matthes from EMB. Special thanks go to Klaus-Dieter Naujok and Christian Huemer from UN/CEFACT's and OASIS' joint former ebXML project as well

as to Patrick Röder and Omid Tafreschi from Technische Universität Darmstadt, who agreed to contribute chapters to this book.

Our research was supported by many present and past student assistants and master's students. We want to thank all of them, especially Margrit Schaeede who prepared the data for the system evaluation as well as Elzbieta Wieczorek and Martin Osuch who have helped to prepare the manuscript. Special thanks also to Martin Düpré for his technical support and to Melissa Nelson for proofreading.

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Darmstadt, November 2007

Michael Rebstock
Janina Fengel
Heiko Paulheim

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List of Additional Contributors

Klaus-Dieter Naujok
Former ebXML Chair
Illumonus, LLC
Founder and CEO
4410 Deermeadow Way
Antioch, CA 94531, USA
klaus@illumonus.com

Prof. Dr. Christian Huemer
Institute of Software Technology and Interactive Systems
Vienna University of Technology
Favoritenstrasse 9 – 11 / 188-3
A - 1040 Vienna
huemer@big.tuwien.ac.at

Patrick Röder
Omid Tafreschi
Technische Universität Darmstadt
Fachbereich 20 FG Sicherheit in der Informationstechnik
Hochschulstrasse 10
D - 64289 Darmstadt
roeder@sec.informatik.tu-darmstadt.de
tafreschi@sec.informatik.tu-darmstadt.de