FIS-iLog Company Foundation: New FIS Subsidiary Starts with Cloud Platform for Returnable Transport Packagings

On April 01, 2016, FIS GmbH founded its new subsidiary FIS-iLog integrated Logistics Platform GmbH (FIS-iLog) based in Grafenrheinfeld. The business concept of FIS-iLog is to provide neutral and trustworthy cloud platforms, where companies can display noncritical company data as well as processes and jointly handle them online. Ralf Bernhardt and Johannes Wegwand are the managing directors of FIS-iLog. FIS managing director Ralf Bernhardt now also holds the position of commercial director of FIS-iLog. Johannes Wegwand is in charge of technical aspects, strategic orientation, operational implementation and staff responsibility.

The first FIS-iLog platform is called iRetPlat. It focuses on returnable transport packagings for trade and logistics. Returnable transport packagings, such as europallets, wire mesh boxes, containers etc., are intended for repeated use in mutual exchange and can be posted in exact quantities on iRetPlat. “So far, companies have cut themselves off from the outside world for understandable reasons as far as their EDP/IT infrastructure is concerned. However, the market increasingly demands that companies break this rigidity,” Johannes Wegwand explains the reasons for his innovative solution. “Where pallets slip once were confirmed and countersigned at the loading ramp, iRetPlat makes it possible to post them online and bilaterally via smartphones, tablets or PCs by using easy and user-friendly technology. All that is required is an Internet browser, an Internet connection and access to the iRetPlat platform.”

FIS-ASP and SAP SE are partners of FIS-iLog, when it comes to secure hardware operation and future-proof software. Another partner is GS1 Germany, which defines worldwide standards (e.g. EAN bar code) and arranges for a common language between the companies. After test phases at a local freight forwarder and a shipper, there is nothing to stand in the way of a successful market introduction as a trustworthy cloud supplier as of January 2017 and the certification with the “trusted cloud” seal by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

FIS GmbH as New SAP Partner for Application Development and Cloud Solutions

FIS GmbH, certified as SAP Partner Center of Expertise (PCoE), is now SAP Platform Application Development Partner as well. As such a partner, FIS is able to design new applications based on SAP Platforms and Technologies – SAP HANA Cloud Platform, SAP Mobile Platform, SAP HANA, SAP Business One, Business Intelligence as well as further SAP Database Technologies – and sell them as a participant of the SAP PartnerEdg e Program for Application Development in the SAP Store. Here, FIS obtains technical resources and tools from SAP to accelerate its development success.

With the partner agreement concluded as SAP Cloud Solution Partner, FIS will furthermore expand its activities in the area of Cloud solutions and intensify its cooperation with SAP in this essential future field. Since the beginning of 2016, FIS offers its customers the acquisition of the Cloud-Based CRM Solution SAP-Hybris C4C and starts with modules “Sales” and “Service” here. A trend towards cloud services and, in this connection, towards mobile access for customer data and processes is obvious. As an SAP Cloud Solution Partner, FIS picks up on this development and enables its customers access to the latest SAP Cloud Technologies.

The advantages are obvious for all parties involved: manufacturers benefit from transparent commodity flows, accelerated processes, stock queries in real time, reduced administrative efforts and, as a result, reduced transaction costs. Freight forwarders can avoid empty runs by settling their accounts via clearing procedures.

FIS-iLog starts with cloud platform for returnable transport packagings

Dear readers,

Digital transformation puts our world into a period of transition – not just since yesterday – and we witness the constant and fundamental change of business models. New companies of any industry sector become market leaders within a very short time and business models established for decades are losing their importance. Some companies have already started to adjust their existing processes based on IT or to create completely new business models. Others are just beginning to deal with this topic more intensively. This is absolutely necessary since the change comprising all of our areas of life moves at an extremely rapid pace.

According to forecasts by the Gartner Group, the global network is growing daily by 5.5 million new “things” resulting in new networks used to exchange huge amounts of data and deliver essential information. This continuously growing network of digitized data streams in connection with the use of new technologies enables the processing of information in real time and, as a consequence, represents the basis for ever new business ideas.

Topics such as Cloud Services, Big Data and Analytics, Commerce, Customer Engagement, Mobile Computing, Social Media, Augmented Reality or Internet of Things are representative of the change. The progress in regard to digitization is essential in order to keep up and to be part of the changing competition rules in the future, which requires a flexibly usable, scalable and efficient information and communication technology.

SAP user companies have the best prerequisites. SAP currently provides the most extensive application portfolio on one of the most state-of-the-art and most efficient platforms. The S/4HANA application suite based on the in-memory SAP HANA platform connects with current cloud applications such as Cloud for Customer, Success Factors, the commerce and marketing solution by Hybris or the HANA cloud platform.

Furthermore, FIS customers benefit from the FIS solutions in the automation and digitization areas enhancing the SAP portfolio. As a longstanding SAP partner with “Gold” status, we gladly support our customers during the transition into the new SAP Live Business and offer support for all questions concerning the applications mentioned.

At this point I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you for the long-standing loyalty and for inspiring and helping us again and again to continuously further develop and optimize our solutions and services.

Cordially yours

Wolfgang Ebner
Managing Director – Head of Business Unit Smart Products

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On June 22, 2016, the recent FIS user association meeting took place at the Spreitenbach Umwelt Arena in Switzerland. The event was designed to demonstrate in an impressive way the central topics “environment”, “energy”, and “sustainability” of the 100 percent CO2-neutral operated Umwelt Arena. The central topics of the meeting, however, were as always: exchange of experience, know-how transfer and networking between the participants as well as current IT trends, solutions and strategies of SAP SE and FIS GmbH.

“Our user meetings are close to our customers and in direct contact with their requirements here, which is an important pillar of success of our user meetings,” explains Dieter Ball, member of the management board and head of the SAP, Technical Wholesale and Industry Business Unit. One result of this close collaboration are new Mobility Apps that were presented in Spreitenbach for the first time – the solution requirements have been elaborated beforehand in joint user association workshops. Furthermore, Joachim Wittke, head of Product Design at FIS GmbH, informed on new and promising features of the FIS wholesale solution and explained in detail the FIS product strategy under SAP S/4HANA. FIS partner mobileX AG informed on its Mobile Workforce Management solution and presented the new interPlat Cloud Platform for empty management based on SAP HANA.

“The FIS user association meetings do not focus on sales but on IT trends, processes and solution strategies and, in particular, on the exchange of ideas of the participants. This year, the participants certainly could get much valuable information on important topics such as renewable energies and sustainability. The feedback was positive,” says Dieter Ball.

4th FIS Forum: Digital Transformation as Overall Strategy

Fully occupied rows at the Audi Forum Neuerschulm on May 12: FIS informed visitors about SAP process optimization and facets of digital transformation. With its 4th FIS Forum, FIS GmbH is impressively continuing the successful series of events focusing on SAP process optimization. The latest event was entirely devoted to “digital transformation.” How can companies implement a digital overall strategy that includes all administrative areas and transforms them into the new digital world? On May 12, 2016, over 50 visitors (most of them sales prospects) met at the Audi Forum Neuerschulm to get to know more details.

The lectures held at this year’s FIS Forum were precisely embedded in the schematic framework of this day. Practice-based reports were given by FIS customers and Cetinge Group that use FIS solutions for incoming invoice processing and consequently achieve maximum performance in the SAP invoice receipt. Audi explained how the accounting department already works itself as value-added partners into the digital transformation strategy and what financial potential Audi AG has already brought to light. Cetinge, a Swedish manufacturer of medical technology has implemented the FIS monitor solutions (including OCR) for invoices, purchase order confirmations and payment advices in 30 countries worldwide – based on digital transformation as competitive advantage.

ECM analyst Berhard Zoller, managing director at Zoller & Partner GmbH, informed the visitors about legal and fiscal aspects of digitalization. The FIS team as well embedded its lecture “Meet the circular to the app” into the transformation strategy topic. Finally, the guided plant tour through production units A6 and A7 showed the status of Industry 4.0 at FIS and impressively underlined the framework of the event.

SAP’s S/4HANA stands for lean and speedy processes as well as for a considerable simplification of corporate data structures. SAP in Walldorf describes S/4HANA as digital core. Together with different “Lines of Business Solutions”, this core is connected into the S/4HANA Suite in real time. Consequently, FIS developed Apps that are offered as a tool for fulfilling the requirements of digital economy in the best possible way.

Anyone who follows the latest FIS news knows: the FIS/wws® industrial solution for technical wholesale has long been executable on the HANA platform. The previous FIS/wws® version is now amended by an S/4HANA Enterprise-Management-based release track. This S/4HANA-based release will get a new face and a new name. The new solution will be launched on July 01, 2017 with S/4HANA as additional delivery system. To achieve this aim, the FIS Product Design department is now working intensively on a new system landscape for development, test and delivery systems.

New functions are already available, such as the enhancement by additional express functions for internal processes (LPS), which the system connects via Web service and, as a result, simplifies label printing. The previous “information by phone” has been graphically redesigned and now includes a shopping cart function. This can be used at item level to treat several articles differently, i.e. to provide information more rapidly. Other new features exclusively use the S/4HANA base enabling possibilities that would be unthinkable with a standard database or would require very long runtimes. One of these features, for instance, is a cross-organization search string which also supports search strings and achieves suitable search results much more quickly and easily than in the past.

In addition, further new Fiori apps are being prepared, such as a self-collector app identifying the craftsman in the shop of the wholesaler (similar to a customer card). It also authorizes the cashier for the acquisition of specific material groups. Further plans include integrated SMW, MM and LE processes with S/4HANA Finance or S/4HANA LDG/SLDG. Role-based Fiori apps provide a solution with the least possible effort and functional enhancements. Consequently, FIS customers are well-prepared for the requirements of Industry 4.0, Cloud and digital transformation.