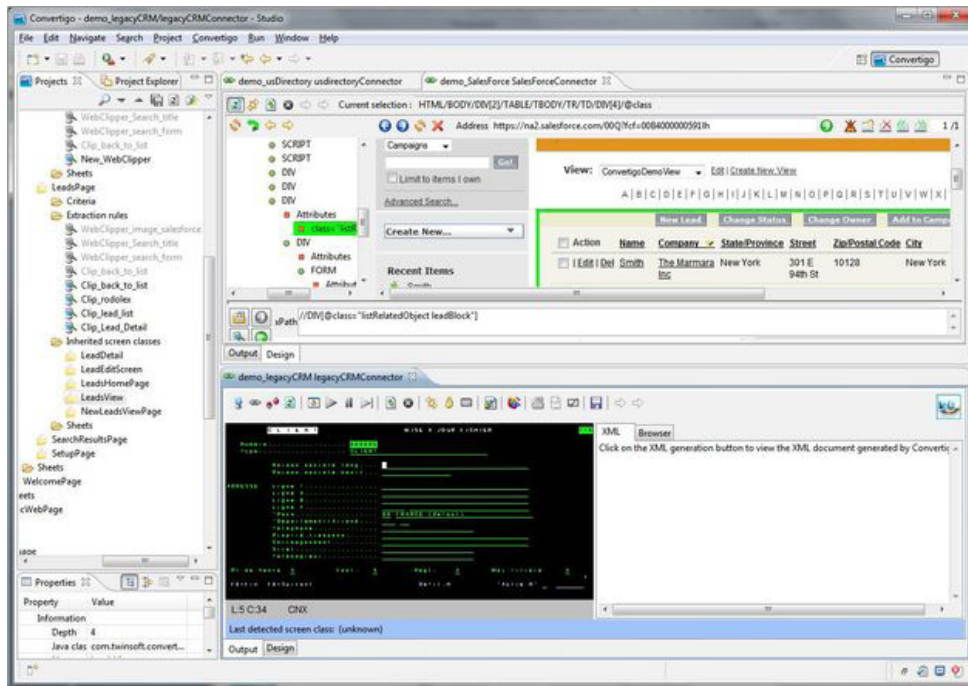


Convertigo on a Cloud

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Convertigo (known as Twinsoft until 2009) is an enterprise mashup software publisher. Its C-EMS platforms enables enterprises to re-use and extend the capacities of their applications assets to build and rapidly deploy new, more cost-effective WEB 2.0 applications.



Eric Samson, Convertigo's Product Marketing Manager, explains how his platform works in Cloud Computing mode, and which markets it is aimed at.

Basic principles: how Convertigo works in Cloud mode

Users start by downloading the free version of Convertigo Studio (see illustration in header) and can freely deploy the mashups they build into the Convertigo Shared Cloud, a shared evaluation space.

Once the mashups have been validated, users can deploy them to a secure private space, the Convertigo Private Cloud.

The Convertigo Cloud is based on proven technology (Amazon EC2), but provides additional administration, fault tolerance, load balancing and other services.



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Can SMEs make effective use of this tool?

SMEs, just like major corporations, will find benefits in using the Cloud, but not necessarily for the same reasons.

SMEs will appreciate the ease and speed of deployment in the Cloud.

No need to acquire servers, configure them, install a whole stack of software (OS, database, web servers, mashup servers), then install a composite application and finally monitor production. All of that is outsourced.

Nor is there any need to learn how to deploy applications in Amazon EC2, or even how to deploy Convertigo: you can go live with a single click in the Convertigo Studio. But the main benefit for SMEs is economic rather than technical: there's no need to bank on future success by investing too early in an oversized infrastructure. The subscription principle means that you can adjust the Convertigo Cloud resources dynamically to fit your needs, providing flexible support for the growth of the enterprise. In times of crisis, that elasticity can even be reversed: you can trim your sails and wait for better days.

For IT departments, it implies switching from an investment model to a subscription model. There is generally little reticence, because the benefits are so numerous; all the same, it's wise to learn how to handle the contractual aspects linked to the Cloud, some of which may be unfamiliar.

What do your customers gain from running Convertigo services on the Cloud?

One of the main advantages of Cloud Computing is that it considerably reduces the lead time between a new business idea and the production application that can support that idea. Users can quickly assemble their mashups and publish them directly to the Cloud, without having to go through their IT department, and without infringing the IS governance rules. What makes that possible is that Convertigo supplies tools at the same time for developers and for users. The developers define how the widgets interact with the IS, while the users focus on building widgets into mashups. This logical distribution of labor is fundamental for the successful deployment of mashups in the Cloud.

Another benefit is that it reduces training needs when starting to use mashups. Once the mashups have been validated, they can go live with a single click. In the same way, it reduces administration needs. All of that is vital for SMEs: it means users can focus on WHAT (business processes in composite applications) rather than HOW (deploying mashups effectively).

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But doesn't SaaS “force” your customers to remain loyal?

For an SME faced with a choice between one solution or another, that is, effectively, an important question. With Convertigo, the Cloud solution is complementary to a conventional enterprise server deployment model. That means that customers are free to transfer a deployment from the Cloud to their internal servers, or vice versa, or even to run both models concurrently.

Not only does that offer great flexibility in terms of architecture; it provides the firmest possible guarantee of security and independence.

The switch to Cloud will take place gradually – we have to make it easy for customers to assess for themselves the level of confidence they can place in the Cloud. That calls for technology; but it also requires clear contractual commitments and high-quality customer relationships.

That, at any rate, is the pragmatic approach that Convertigo has taken.