



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 | November, 2011

[www.auto-gration.eu](http://www.auto-gration.eu)

**Dear Colleague,**

In this second issue of the auto-gration newsletter we provide you with some more detailed information about the auto-gration Architecture and update you on recent developments within the auto-gration initiative. In particular, we bring you testimony from one of our Early Adopter companies. We welcome your feedback and remain at your disposal for any further information.

*The auto-gration Team*

## Auto-gration works!

### **An Interview with an Early Adopter**

**Cologne – Germany.** The auto-gration consortium has successfully completed the first pilot of its Early Adopter Programme (EAP) with an automotive parts distributor in Cologne, Germany. The aim of the EAP is to test the auto-gration architecture under real-life conditions within companies in the automotive industry and to demonstrate the benefits of the auto-gration solution both to the industry and to the outside world. Funded by the EC, the auto-gration solution offers interoperability between the existing EDI systems and standards of the major players on the one hand and the currently non-connected back-office systems of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) on the other; thus giving them the opportunity to become more integrated in the digital supply chains of the European automotive industry.

The first SME benefiting from auto-gration was **Alfah GmbH**, a regional spare parts distributor with 12 employees whose business consists of sourcing parts from major automotive suppliers such as SBS Germany and selling them on to small automotive repair shops.

The low-cost implementation was carried out by TecCom, the leading B2B platform for the international automotive aftermarket, acting as auto-gration EAP Facilitator.

From an interview conducted with Alfah general manager, **Mr. Tilman Veltjens**, it is clear that the company received significant benefits during the EAP pilot phase. Therefore it has now been decided to use the auto-gration solution in its day-to-day business processes.

In this particular case, auto-gration messages were implemented with the help of Alfah's software partner. Enquiries made by repair shops in the Alfah system are electronically forwarded to the suppliers via TecCom. Before auto-gration was in place the company had to check the availability from the upstream supplier manually by phone and then order the parts. Possible alternative parts also needed to be checked and then discussed with their customers before ordering. This was obviously a complex and time consuming process. Now, with auto-gration, there is an immediate availability response via TecCom from the upstream supplier and Alfah can give their customers an immediate answer to their enquiries.

The implementation of auto-gration at Alfah has resulted in integration with all their suppliers that are already connected to TecCom, counting for 80% of their business. This means that from 100% manual enquiries before auto-gration there are only 20% manual enquiries done today. Mr. Veltjens is convinced that the automatic process reduces errors and increases the reliability of their part information in terms of quantity and price information. In addition, he estimates a time saving of 60 to 70% compared with the previous manual enquiry process.

***"Auto-gration increased my customer service and also reduced the manual time effort considerably. This was all established with the same solution, that's what all businesses strive for"*** **Tilman Veltjens, general manager of Alfah GmbH.**

The company feels a higher customer satisfaction due to the fact that they can now respond more quickly and more accurately to the customer when he asks for the availability of a specific part. "The customer no longer has the notion to call my competitors, while I am checking the availability before I can call him back." This is a tangible increase in customer service resulting in more orders.

The implementation process was felt not to be complex and whilst running the solution Alfah did not need any support from TecCom. More importantly, Mr. Veltjens is already looking further ahead; on the agenda for end 2011/beginning 2012 is the implementation of order processes and reverse messages using auto-gration. **This will surely result in even more time saving and more happy customers.**

*Did this article made you wonder whether you too could benefit from auto-gration, whether you are a large company, SME or IT service provider? Do not hesitate to contact the auto-gration consortium!*



## NEWS

### **Even more IT service providers announce support for auto-gration**

The auto-gration Early Adopter Programme (EAP) is now underway and an increasing number of automotive SMEs around Europe are using the auto-gration solution in their day to day business data exchanges. The EAP has also attracted strong interest from IT service providers, including ERP Vendors and B2B Service Providers, many of whom have been incorporating the auto-gration Architecture in their products and services, further extending the auto-gration Community.

For the up-to-date list of auto-gration IT supporters, please consult:

[www.auto-gration.eu/early-adopters-programme/it-supporters](http://www.auto-gration.eu/early-adopters-programme/it-supporters)

### **Mark Your Calendar for the auto-gration Conference in Stuttgart!**



**The closing Conference of the auto-gration project will take place on 15th and 16th of March 2012 in Stuttgart**, home to many of the world's leading automotive companies.

Taking place in the centrally-located **Liederhalle**, the one and a half day event will bring together more than 200 automotive players from across Europe, including vehicle manufacturers, Tier1 suppliers, SMEs, automotive industry associations, standardisation bodies, IT service providers, eBusiness experts and senior representatives from the European Commission. The conference will present the results achieved by the auto-gration project, showcase success stories from the Early Adopter Programme (EAP) and prepare the way for wide-scale implementation of the auto-gration Architecture throughout the automotive value chain.

Participation in the conference is free of charge and the event programme will be combined with a parallel exhibition of the products and services offered by official auto-gration Partners.

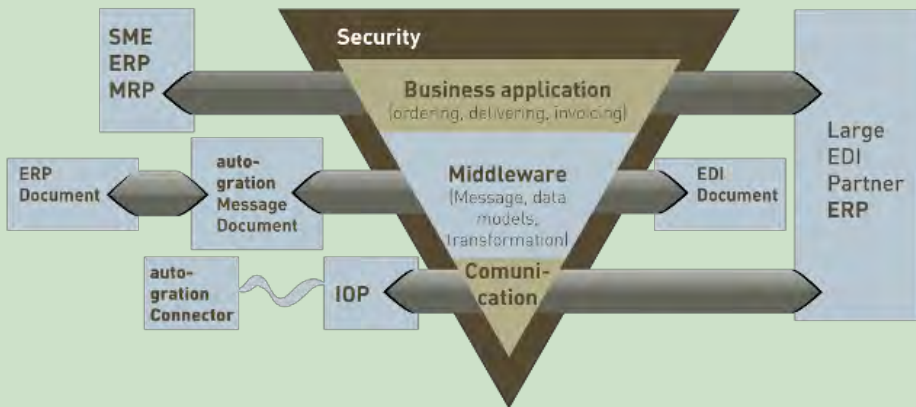
*Further details of the programme will be made available in the next few weeks.*



# auto-gration Architecture

The auto-gration Architecture is the collaborative reference architecture designed by the auto-gration project team to integrate SMEs in the digital supply chain and to enable application-to-application data exchanges between SMEs and their larger business partners. In that sense, the auto-gration Architecture is a complete suite of specifications and software that comprises:

- The list of business processes supported and the respective business documents;
- The specifications of the auto-gration Messages for the data communication via an internal data format, based on the widely accepted Joint Automotive Data Model. This format can be easily transformed from/to the established EDI formats in the automotive industry and beyond;
- The description of the transformation processes (from established EDI formats to the auto-gration Message format and vice versa) to be realised by the B2B service providers, acting as Inter-Operability Platforms (IOP)
- The way to transport those documents between existing ERP/MRP systems of organisations in the automotive supply chain: web services via HTTPS are the auto-gration recommendation;
- The auto-gration Connector specification and open source software, which is a plug-in software installed in the SMEs' ERP/ MRP systems (auto-gration Connector) and on the IOP platform (Remote Connector), which executes the message transformation.



## e-Invoicing Recommendations



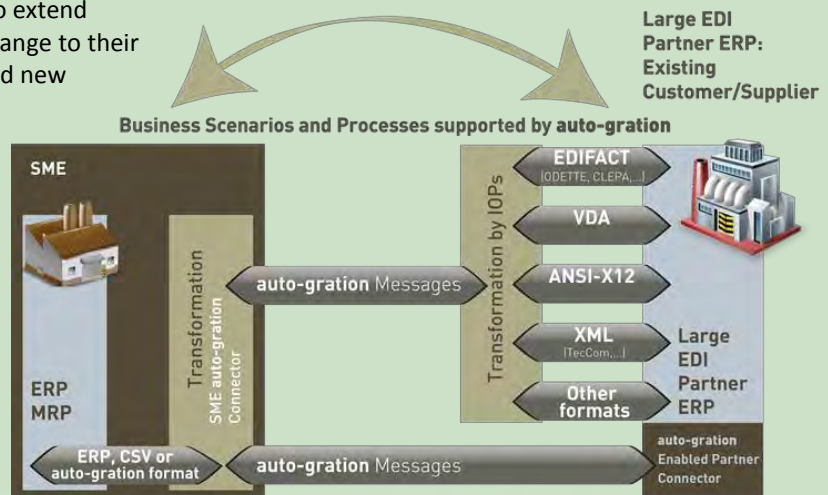
On 27<sup>th</sup> July in Berlin, the VDA hosted a meeting where ERP vendors were invited to receive an update about the forthcoming VDA recommendation for e-invoicing with SMEs, based on auto-gration. ERP vendors support for the auto-gration Architecture is essential if SME suppliers are going to be able to participate in these paperless e-invoicing scenarios soon after the recommendation is published (Dec. 2011). The relevance of the work carried out by the auto-gration team is confirmed by the number of large automotive companies in Germany who wish to adopt the auto-gration solution for their e-invoicing with SMEs and this initiative to promote direct dialogue with the ERP software vendors will undoubtedly help to speed up implementation.

For a SME, the auto-gration Architecture represents the opportunity to run data exchange processes directly from their management system, ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) or MRP (Material Requirement Planning), without the complexity and the costs involved by the EDI approach or the manual intervention required by existing WebEDI systems. Various business processes can become seamless by using electronic messages exchanged between the information systems of the SME and its larger business partner.

On the other side, larger, EDI capable companies will be able to extend those business processes to their SME partners without any change to their existing EDI infrastructure. SMEs reactivity will be improved and new business processes such as e-invoicing can be implemented.

Nº	auto-gration Messages
1	DeliveryInstruction
2	JITDeliveryInstruction
3	DespatchAdvice
4	Invoice
5	Order
6	OrderResponse
7	AvailabilityRequest
8	AvailabilityResponse
9	GeneralMessage

*We strongly encourage you to visit the project website and to join our Early Adopter Programme to find out about more benefits that the auto-gration Architecture can offer to your company!*



### THE CONSORTIUM MEMBERS



### SUB-CONTRACTORS

