

Data Quality - Not a Dice Game



**Interview about this issue with
Roland Pfeiffer, CEO of Uniserv**

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ADDRESS DATA QUALITY

Data warehousing, CRM and ERP - what these three projects have in common is an integrated approach. The aim is to optimize data quality on an enterprise-wide basis in order to ensure and strengthen decision-making, business processes and operations in companies.

• *Despite many negative examples - especially involving customer and prospect data - problem awareness concerning data quality still leaves much to be desired. What do you see as the reasons for this?*

Pfeiffer: Quality really plays a crucial role in customer data. In contrast to most other kinds of data, customer data has its own intrinsic value. Unfortunately, it must be observed that the data quality is often extremely poor in many applications.

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Roland Pfeiffer,
CEO of Uniserv GmbH

The data material worked with is unreliable, because the data records are frequently inconsistent, false, outdated, incomplete, or redundant. These defects are inevitably a source of trouble and damage all processes in which they are integrated.

• *Why is data quality actually more important today than it has ever been?*

Pfeiffer: Data quality is not a dice game or a buzz word but rather an absolute necessity. While data quality awareness in traditional applications such as direct marketing, dialog marketing or one-to-one-marketing - here usually incorporated in the term 'address management' - has become more and more accepted, the importance of the issue of address and customer data for DW, CRM and ERP initiatives is regrettably still too often unrecognized or given step-motherly treatment. Particularly within the applications mentioned above where the data records come from many different sources - including incompatible

systems or from the Internet - data quality is faced with many new challenges and higher expectations.

• *What application scenarios are supported by Uniserv's portfolio of solutions?*

Pfeiffer: Data quality can be measured by its economic benefit. Here our software solutions demonstrate their strengths. Independently of the application, Uniserv software can be utilized practically everywhere data quality is important - in online operations, within web applications or in batch processing. The advantage for the user is obvious - for every application and for every individual case he can select the suitable programs without having to forgo performance or quality features. Another advantage should not remain unmentioned: for fast and easy integration of the Uniserv components into the respective IT environment and customer processes we offer a multitude of integration solutions.

• *What other features distinguish Uniserv's solution portfolio?*

Pfeiffer: Most of the systems offered by Uniserv are so-called expert systems. Our entire know-how regarding the quality of customer and prospect address data of a particular country is integrated into them. Along with the program systems, they also include the corresponding content in the form of country- and language-dependent reference data. In many cases, business processes and operations can differ quite a lot depending on whether our customers are in the B2C or B2B sector. As a consequence, this also requires different approaches to ensuring data quality. Uniserv is one of the few providers to take this into account and to presently offer different products for B2B and B2C. All this, combined with the technological leadership of Uniserv, enables our customers to achieve fast ROI.

• *How do you assess the positioning of Uniserv's software offering in the field of enterprise-wide solutions?*



Pfeiffer: Especially as far as enterprise-wide considerations are concerned, data quality solutions often need to be integrated into the most diverse systems - on different platforms and in both new and existing systems. Since our solutions are available on all system platforms ranging from PC, UNIX, iSeries to mainframe, Uniserv systems are extraordinarily well suited for enterprise-wide solutions. Apart from this, we also provide tailored solutions for SAP®, Oracle® and Siebel®. Incidentally, Uniserv was the first company to be certified by SAP® for its international data quality offering.

• *You just mentioned Uniserv's international orientation!*

Pfeiffer: Yes, we see ourselves well positioned at Uniserv for the international and global orientation of many companies. Almost all of our systems are designed for multinational use. For companies whose customers are not predominantly located in one country there is - apart from the option of locally installing different systems per country - the option of using the services via ASP. Uniserv itself is likewise internationally oriented. We have an extensive international partner network both in Europe and the U.S.

• *Do you see a differentiation in your offering between the solutions you mentioned at the begin-*

ning for address management and the enterprise-wide solutions?

Pfeiffer: Yes, while the issue of address engagement in the projects is primarily driven by purely operational considerations, with an enterprise-wide approach mainly strategic considerations move into the foreground. Here the objective is to create the technical basis for a single view of the customer with processes such as data quality, data enhancement, and data clustering.

• *Where do you see the main points of focus for your customers in the near future?*

Pfeiffer: The issue of data quality will take on an even greater significance. In new projects, measures to combat poor data quality are increasingly already part of the standard process to exclude certain project risks from the very beginning. But even in existing systems such measures are very often identified as improvement potential and are implemented. The focus here is on solutions which not only implement measures on an ad-hoc basis but which - like the solutions from Uniserv - establish the assurance of data quality as a closed loop process.

Mr. Pfeiffer, thank you very much for this interview!

