

# Employment agencies tap on cloud service to enhance business operations

**A sector-wide service called INTEGRA enables employment agencies to leverage on cloud computing to address operational, productivity and business control issues, without having to grapple with the costs and expertise required of a traditional ICT deployment.**

## The Challenge

While the employment industry is experiencing good growth, many agencies face challenges in managing their business operations. According to Ms Shirley Ng, President of the Association of Employment Agencies (Singapore) (AEAS), these challenges include inefficient operations with manual administrative tasks such as form filling and application submission; a lack of technology solutions to help improve service turnaround time; the lack of a centralised database management system and the lack of marketing avenues to promote their business and services. “These challenges have hampered the growth of our local employment agencies and restricted their business growth potential,” said Ms Ng.

### ORGANISATION

Association of Employment Agencies Singapore (AEAS)

### INDUSTRY

Human Resource

### CHALLENGE

Employment agencies face barriers such as cost constraints and lack of expertise when it comes to investing in ICT solutions that will help them address business challenges such as lack of business control, low productivity

### SOLUTION

AEAS worked with software vendor Ordixa and the AkSaaS Incubation Centre to develop INTEGRA, an Employment Agency Sales Order Management System that is delivered using the Software-as-a-Service model. This allows employment agencies to use ICT to address their business challenges without having to deal with the issues associated with traditional ICT deployment.

### BENEFITS OF CLOUD SERVICES

- Significant cost savings
- Maintenance-free
- Highly flexible and scalable

## The Solution

To address these challenges, AEAS stepped up to the plate in 2008 as industry sponsor of a sector-wide initiative to develop a cloud service called INTEGRA. Delivered using the Software-as-a-Service model, INTEGRA is an Employment Agency Portal that enables the agencies to reap the benefits of ICT adoption without having to invest a hefty sum in deploying their own ICT systems. Instead, agencies can subscribe to the service, and scale their subscription depending on their business needs.

To develop INTEGRA, AEAS worked with software vendor Ordixa and 10 pilot employment agencies, with the support of SPRING Singapore, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore and the Ministry of Manpower.

INTEGRA automates the entire sales fulfilment cycle within the typical 24-month service agreement. The service is delivered over a cloud infrastructure provided by Alatum. After a successful pilot involving JPB International Pte Ltd, Jack Focus Pte Ltd, Nostra Manpower Services Pte Ltd, Cobb Douglas Pte Ltd, Hung Chau Pte Ltd, Telstar Pte Ltd, SPNA Pte Ltd, Advance Link Pte Ltd, People’s Employment Agency Pte Ltd and Aeranda Pte Ltd, INTEGRA

was made available in July 2010 to more than 700 agencies in Singapore.

INTEGRA solves many of the business challenges faced by employment agencies by standardising and enforcing business processes and making reports available in real-time over the Internet. “The EA Portal is able to record the recruitment process from the selection of the foreign domestic worker (FDW) till after the arrival of the FDW in Singapore. For example, we can check whether the passport of the FDW is ready and the results of medical examination,” said Ms Winnie Wang, Overseas Recruitment Senior Advisor with Advance Link International Pte Ltd, one of the pilot agencies involved. The solution also incorporates best practices and enables FDW and sales administration tasks to be handled centrally, allowing these operations to be replicated quickly across branches and ensuring better business control.

## The Benefits

INTEGRA delivers business benefits without saddling the employment agencies with the issues often associated with a traditional on-premise ICT deployment. As a cloud service, its advantages include:

### Significant cost savings

Subscription to a cloud service enables the agencies to enjoy the benefits of ICT at just 40 per cent the total cost of ownership (TCO) of implementing their own ICT system.

AEAS estimated that for an in-house system, the up-front costs involved in system development and enhancement as well as hosting and maintenance costs over three years could add up to about \$104,000. In comparison, subscription to the INTEGRA cloud service, for a typical large-sized agency with four branches and 20 users, will work out to about \$40,320. “For smaller employment agencies with no branches and two to 10 users each, we reckon that this segment will not consider the hefty investment outlay of \$100,000 under normal circumstances. As such their TCO savings would be substantial,” said Ms Ng.

### Maintenance-free

By subscribing to a cloud service, an agency does not have to worry about recruiting ICT expertise to maintain the software. All software updates are managed by Ordixa, and there are no patches for customers to download and install. This enables employment agencies to focus on their core business instead of having to address ICT issues.

### Highly flexible and scalable

INTEGRA taps on a cloud infrastructure to ensure that ICT resources can scale easily and quickly to meet fluctuating business demands. This eliminates the need for the employment agencies to go through the traditional ICT procurement and deployment process to add hardware, software or bandwidth as the user base grows, and makes ICT resources available “on tap” to meet growing business needs.

## About the National Grid

The National Grid is a national effort that draws together commercial cloud service providers to offer pay-per-use access to compute, storage and software facilities. The three consortia who have been appointed National Cloud Service Providers are Alatum led by Singapore Computer Systems Ltd (now part of SingTel), nGrid led by New Media Express Pte Ltd and PTC System (S) Pte Ltd.

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