



Rabobank

The Rabobank Group is a full-range financial services provider that operates on cooperative principles and offers retail banking, wholesale banking, asset management, leasing and real estate services. The group is made up of independent local Rabobanks plus Rabobank Nederland, their umbrella organisation, and a number of specialist subsidiaries. Rabobank provides financial services in 48 countries where it has more than 60,000 employees serving about 9.5 million clients. In terms of tier 1 capital, Rabobank Group is among the world's 25 largest financial institutions.

Standalone Access

Rabobank Nederland implements Standalone Access for its middleware integration capability and effective message management facilities

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“The decision to implement Standalone Access was primarily driven by the need to improve our existing solution and have all SWIFT messages comply with domestic and international regulations related to anti-money laundering. Standalone Access allows manually created messages to follow the same treatment as the other back-office messages and be screened in our intermediate middleware before being sent to SWIFT. As we are using Alliance Access for SWIFT connectivity, opting for Standalone Access was a logical decision, supported by minimal deployment effort and cost.”
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Helga Vigh, Manager SWIFT Operations, Rabobank Nederland

Benefits

- Middleware processing of manually created SWIFT messages
- Effective message reconciliation mechanism
- Reduced manual interventions
- Improved resiliency

Business challenges

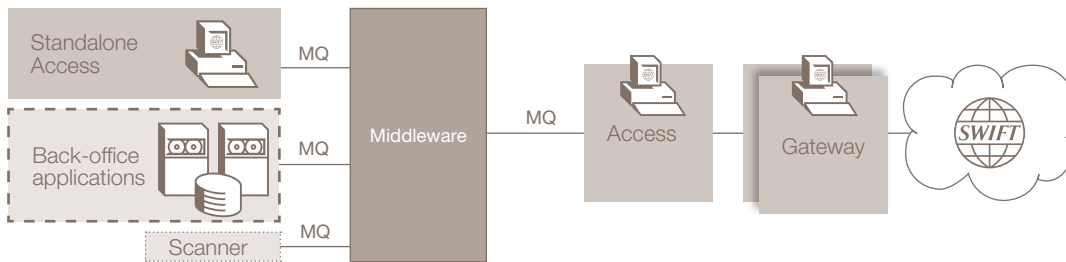
Following the new anti-money laundering regulations, Rabobank, like many other financial institutions, is required to conduct ongoing monitoring of business relationships and transaction flows, and to report any suspicious activity to the relevant authorities.

Rabobank uses a messaging middleware which centralises the traffic and provides value added services on messages, such as internal routing, archiving, validation, and anti-money laundering detection. Messages provided by back-office applications are therefore intercepted and processed by their middleware before they are passed to Alliance Access, ensuring that they are screened before being sent to SWIFT.

The main challenge for Rabobank was to ensure that messages created manually on the Alliance Access connected to SWIFT also pass through the middleware and mandatory screening process.

The second challenge was to deploy a solution that is transparent to the users, and with minimal effort and cost involved.





Configuration at Rabobank

“Two years ago, Rabobank built an in-house solution, which responded to some of our needs, but proved difficult to manage. The solution was not able to reconcile the network acknowledgements, and many manual interventions were required. Moving to Standalone Access allows us to manage and monitor messages more effectively. We can now benefit from a fully functional Access system, with all the message management capabilities of a standard Alliance Access.”

Frans Schekkerman, Sr. Process Manager SWIFT, Rabobank Nederland

Benefits

Streamlined middleware processing for manually created messages and STP flows

Standalone Access, which supports the manual creation of messages, including the reconciliation of network acknowledgments, behaves like any back-office application. It integrates with the bank’s middleware, using the MQ technology. Manually created messages no longer bypass the central middleware, which makes alternative procedures obsolete.

Transparent message management for users

Operators, who before created and corrected messages on the main Alliance Access, now do exactly the same message processing on Standalone Access. Thanks to a key feature of the product, that is, the capability to reconcile the network acknowledgement (ack/nack) received from the Access server with the original message, any manual creation or modification of a message rejected by SWIFT is processed on the Standalone Access system.

“The reconciliation feature of Standalone allows us to concentrate all message management activities on this system, and removes the need for users to access the central Access system.”

Frans Schekkerman, Sr. Process Manager SWIFT, Rabobank Nederland

Improved resiliency

High availability is a top priority at Rabobank. Using Standalone Access enables the bank to maintain a separate STP processing infrastructure for the main MT/MX flow, whilst providing a tool for manual entry. In case of a loss of the Access database, the recovery of the main Access system, which is solely used for processing STP traffic, can be handled by back-office applications resending the messages lost, and by Standalone Access re-initiating the transmission of the messages waiting acknowledgement.

Project overview

Rabobank implemented Standalone Access in two phases.

The first phase consisted in changing the middleware to support the new XMLv2 format which is used by Standalone Access for sending and receiving messages. When done, the full functionality of Standalone Access, including message reconciliation, was ready to be used.

Rabobank is now in the phase of migrating all users involved in the manual message processing from the central Alliance Access system to Standalone Access. The export functionality of Alliance Access 7.0, which allows exporting and importing selected configuration data, such as profiles and routing rules, greatly facilitates the transfer of such information from one system to the other.

“Opting for Standalone Access was a logical choice, given the benefits it brings in terms of integration and message management. It is easy to implement and the migration is transparent to the users who were already familiar with the messaging functionality of Alliance Access.”

Anne Hielke Lemstra, IT Support SWIFT, Rabobank Nederland

Next steps

The next plan of Rabobank is to implement the database recovery option, available as of Alliance Access 6.3, to optimise their resiliency setup. This option enables the recovery of the whole database content, including live messages waiting to be sent or processed, ensuring continuity in their operations without any loss of operational data.

For more information, please contact your SWIFT account manager or visit www.swift.com