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SIEBEL OPEN UI

THE NEW "USER FRIENDLY" SIEBEL CRM

NOVEMBER 2012 - LUÍS MELO

Oracle Siebel CRM is still without a doubt the most comprehensive CRM solution on the market, despite the rise of new CRM products like Salesforce.com or Microsoft Dynamics. However, it can't be denied that Siebel has been losing advocacy amongst its users due to the current expectations and standards in terms of what we call User Experience (or UX).

Whilst clearly the most powerful CRM tool in the market, Siebel is not the most user friendly, mainly because it was designed with business processes in mind rather than user-adoption, and the key complaints from Siebel users have been that navigation is both complex and sluggish, while the User Interface (or UI) is non-intuitive, and this inevitably impacts on employee productivity and ultimately the business.
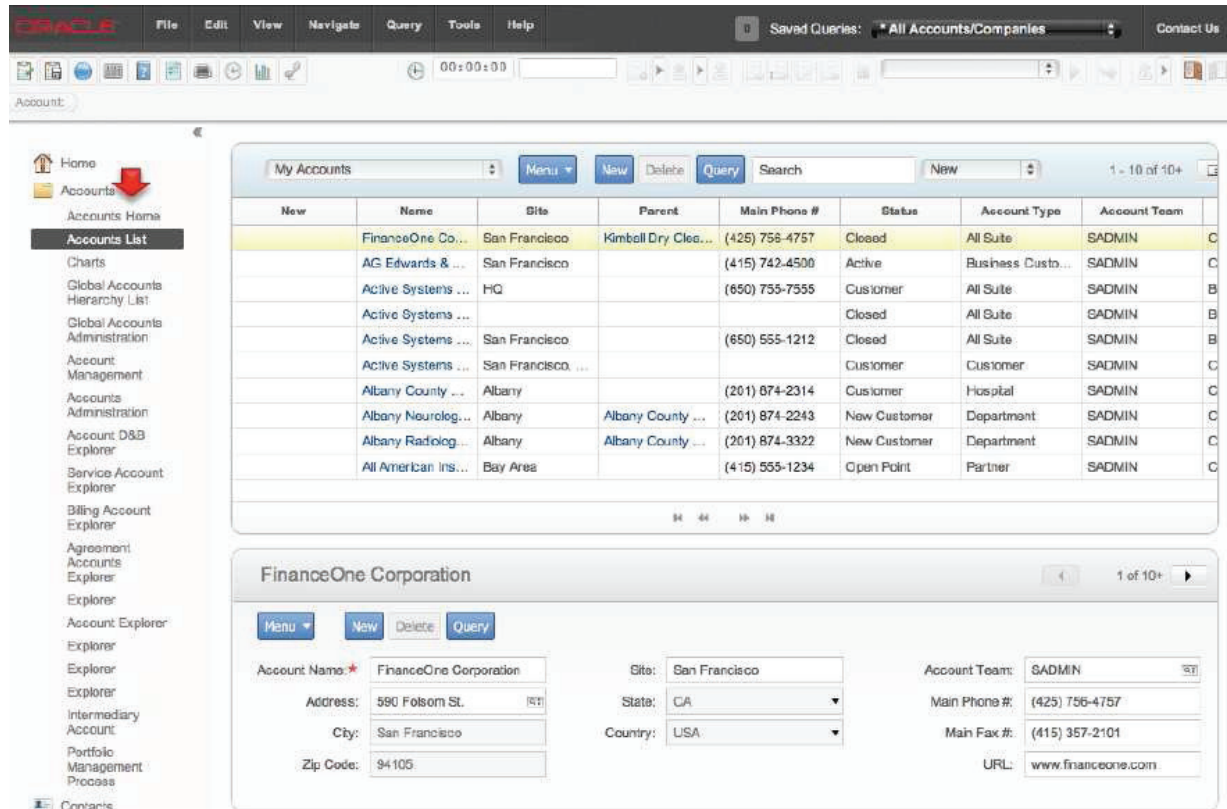
The state of the art today is software that is not only powerful but also:

- Simple
- Easy to use
- Intuitive
- Interactive
- Productive
- Accessible

"Oracle addresses the issue"

Concerned about its customers' needs, Oracle addressed this issue and created a new Innovation Pack for Siebel. This was announced in 2012 and has many new features, one of these being Siebel Open UI which addresses the UI problem, and provides an alternative to the existing Siebel High Interactivity and Standard Interactivity User Interfaces.

NOTE: *Innovation Packs are patches that allow companies to stay on their current Siebel version avoiding lengthy and costly upgrades or product changes. Siebel Open UI requires Siebel SIA version 8.1 or higher.*
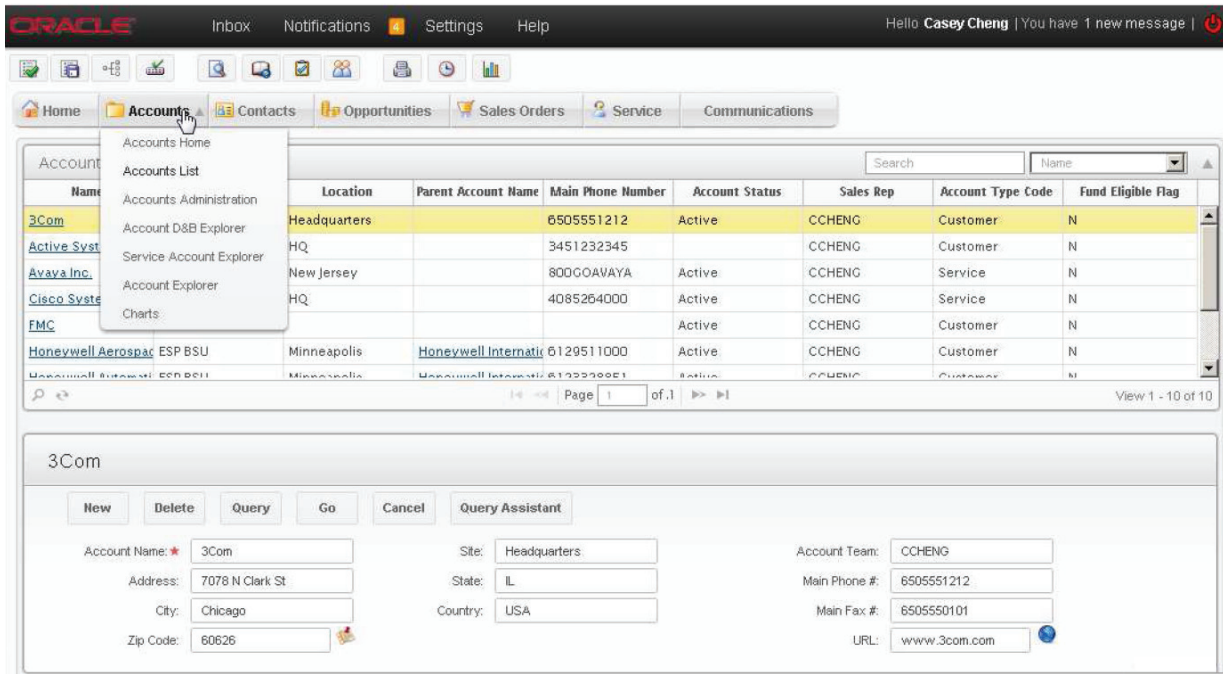
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Figure 1 - Siebel Open UI: Accounts List View

"A new paradigm"

Siebel Open UI is a new paradigm for enabling a rich and versatile standards-based UI for Siebel.
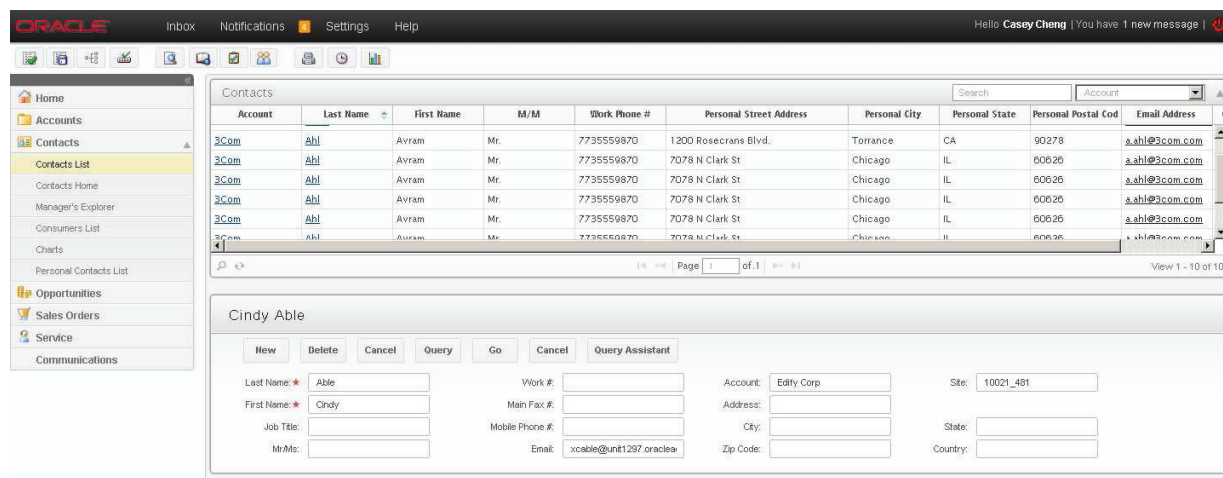
Amongst other things, the advantages include:

- Supports all modern browsers (IE, Firefox, Chrome, Safari, etc.)
- Supports native browser features such as zoom, bookmark, tabbed browsing, or spell check

- Support connected and disconnected mode
- Adapts to the device dynamically (desktop, tablet, smartphone)
- Supports open standards like HTML, CSS and Javascript (HTML 4/5, CSS 2.1/3.0, JavaScript1.5)

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Figure 2 - Siebel Open UI: Accounts Screen

Other features of Siebel Open UI are as follows:

- Native "app" look and feel
- Data preview and auto fill
- Efficient navigation and keyboard shortcuts

- Screen reader support
- Data Execution Prevention (DEP) support
- Portal / Portlet friendly

Figure 3 - Siebel Open UI: Contacts List View

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"Effortless deployment"

All specialized consultants and project managers know how challenging it can be to implement and deploy changes in Siebel when compared to the more recent cloud based CRM solutions, but this is no more the case with Siebel Open UI. After applying the Innovation Pack and setting up a separate object manager with the "Open UI" parameter, Open UI builds on top of all existing applet and view definitions and web templates, meaning that existing repository metadata, web template files or browser script remain unchanged.

Siebel Open UI can co-exist with other UI options (High Interactivity and Standard Interactivity) on the same server, and is very similar to existing Siebel UI as far as the concept of lists, form and explorer applets are concerned.
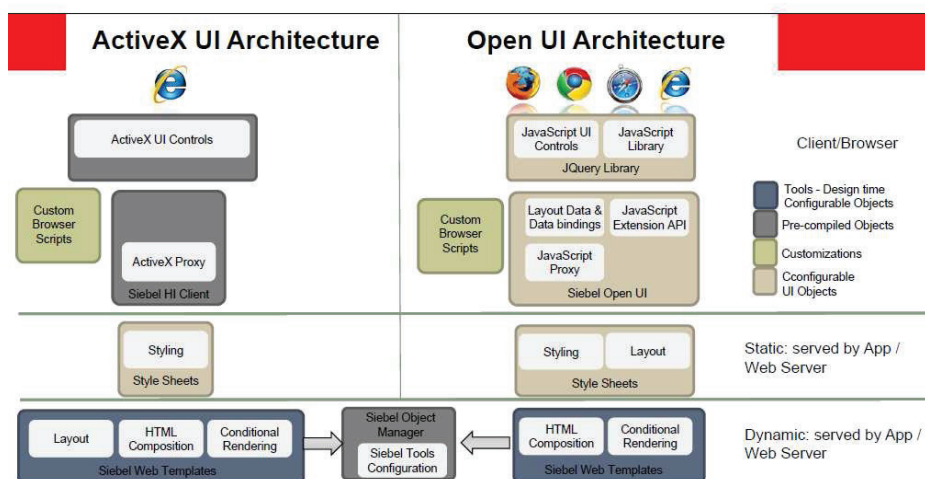

Figure 4 - Siebel Open UI architecture

About the Author

Luís is a CRM Solutions Consultant with particular expertise in developing Siebel applications to meet client needs. Before joining Enigen, Luís worked for the largest IT Consulting Company in Portugal where he had the opportunity to be involved in a number of significant Siebel projects across many different industries.

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