Implementing a Federated Portal Network Frequently Asked Questions

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Answers

General: Federated Portal Network

1. Since when is FPN available? Can I integrate SAP NetWeaver 2004 portals or older releases into the federation?

The content sharing mode Remote Role Assignment is available since SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS09, Remote Delta Links are offered since SPS10. Content from previous releases or SPS cannot be integrated into a federation – thus content from SAP NetWeaver 2004 portals or lower releases is not accessible in a Federated Portal Network.

For older releases like SAP NetWeaver 2004 integration, a similar functionality could be achieved in custom projects by implementing a URL redirect from the leading portal to the content residing in the producing portal. But there are no standard tools available from SAP to implement this scenario.

2. Can I perform transitive content sharing? For example: 1. Producer - 2. Consumer/Producer - 3. Consumer

No, transitive content sharing is currently not supported - only direct relationships producer → consumer are working.

3. Can a portal be producer and consumer at the same time?

Yes, a portal can produce and consume content.

4. Which portal / version dependencies are foreseeable in a federation? What about version interoperability?

In order to use Remote Role Assignment all portals in the federation have to be on SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS09. For Remote Delta Links SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS10 is necessary. From this release the portals in your federation can run on different releases and SPS. However, some specific restrictions will apply depending on the release that have to be interoperable and the applications that will run on them – more details will be published soon.

5. I want to set up a federated portal network in the context of BI Java. Where can I find BI Java specific information and recommendations for this use case?

Have a look at BIFAQ and Note 969040 (http://service.sap.com/notes).

6. Is there a necessary one-to-one relationship between producers and consumers? Can you have multiple consumers of the same federated portlet or iView?

No, a one-to-one relationship is not required. You can have multiple producer portals and / or multiple consumer portals in your federation.

7. What are the tasks of the consumer and producer?

In a federated portal network, the producers hold and run the applications. The consumer manages the redirect to the producer portals. This means, when using Remote Role Assignment (RRA), the consumer creates the navigation structure (top level navigation and detailed navigation) and contains references to the remote content. For Remote Delta Links, the consumer owns the portal content (e.g. iViews, pages) including consumer-specific properties and contains a reference to the remote portal content and application. Both producer and consumer portals are required in order to run the portal content including the applications properly.

8. Does the producer have to be up and running in a federated portal network?

Yes, the producer supplies the content and the runtime for the applications. In order to display the content on the consumer, the producer has to be available as well.

9. If I am using WebDAV to integrate KM documents from a producer portal into the consumer – will the KM permissions be available on both portals?

If you are accessing from a producer portal via the WebDAV Repository Manager (RM) a repository on the consumer portal, the permissions in the consumer repository are changed (the repository manager is only a proxy, the physical repository is located somewhere else). The other direction will work similarly (WebDAV Repository Manager of the consumer accesses the repository of the producer).

For more details on WebDAV, have a look at SAP Help: http://help.sap.com/saphelp_nw70/helpdata/en/56/60abeb28028d4fa84c2a81b730a498/frameset.htm or the official WebDAV site: http://www.webdav.org/

10. What are client-side and server-side events in the context of the SAP NetWeaver portal?

Most events that are triggered from content running within an SAP NetWeaver portal are server-side events. There are some client-side events existing which are JavaScripts that are loaded and executed in the end-users browser. An example for client-side events is Object-Based Navigation (OBN) – for a full list you can have a look at SAP Help: http://help.sap.com/saphelp_nw70/helpdata/en/ce/3e98408d953154e10000000a1550b0/content.htm.

11. Is it possible to connect two portals (using the federation features) while the user IDs are different?

It is currently not supported to set up a federated portal network with consumer portal and producer portal users not using the same user id. FPN relies on SAP Logon Tickets for authentication between consumer and producer portal thus the IDs have to match. Moreover, when performing a remote role assignment, the role assignment will happen automatically on the producer portal too (with the same user id as on the consumer portal).

12. Is it possible to set up a federated portal network if producer and consumer portals are running in different subdomains?

It is strongly recommended to run both portals (consumer and producer) in the same subdomain so that one Logon Ticket can authenticate all portals in the federation. Usually, you have the option to configure your Domain Name System (DNS) to address the same

portal with different domain names (some more details always depend on the specific DNS, general information could be found for example here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name_system).

If this does not work, there are options to configure the portal to have logon tickets for several domains sent to the portal user's browser (more information available on SAP Help: http://help.sap.com/saphelp_nw70/helpdata/en/a0/88a340fa432b54e10000000a1550b0/frameset.htm).

13. Which communication protocols are used within a federated portal network?

FPN uses HTTP and RMI-P4 communication protocols (SAP Help on P4 Communication Service: http://help.sap.com/saphelp_nw70/helpdata/en/5f/61b2e64f18fd44a15f631fb9c8095f/frameset.htm)
In detail, the following protocols are used for these functions:

- Producer creation and registration: HTTP & SOAP running over HTTP
- Remote Role Assignment: SOAP running over HTTP
- Remote Delta Links: RMI-P4 protocol

Remote Role Assignment

14. Which steps are executed when I assign a remote role to a user on the consumer portal?

You use the standard role assignment tools on the consumer portal to assign a remote role to a user or group. This role assignment will take place automatically on the producer portal as well – this is necessary in order to render the content during runtime correctly and take into consideration all settings and permission on the producer portal. Thus, if you log on after a remote role assignment to the producer portal, you will see there that the user has this role in his content offering there too.

15. Can I modify remote roles on the consumer?

Generally you should use Remote Role Assignment when you want to reuse a role "as-is". The only modification you can perform in this content sharing mode is to merge roles (remote roles and / or local roles).

16. What happens to user assignment on consumer portal if I delete the remote role on the producer portal?

As of SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS11 when a role is deleted on the producer portal it gets unassigned on the consumer portal automatically. In order to use this feature setting up a two way trust relationship (i.e. producer trusts consumer and consumer trusts producer) is necessary.

17. Are there any restrictions on assigning remote roles to users and groups on my consumer portal?

This depends on your specific implementation. If all your consumer and producer portals are connected to the same user repository (e.g. LDAP or CUA), then the users and groups are consistently available in the federated portal network and you can assign remote roles to them. However, if you have different types of user stores assigned to the portals (e.g. consumer uses central LDAP and producer an ABAP user store), it cannot be ensured that

the groups available are consistent in your network regarding the availability of these groups and the included users. Thus you can only assign remote roles to individual users.

18. Where should I set permissions for Remote Role Assignments?

With Remote Role Assignment, you perform the user-role assignment on the consumer portal – thus you can grant the users access to a role itself. Permissions to individual portal content directory (pcd) objects and system access are maintained only on the producer portal. Same applies for security zones (= which portal components and portal services a portal user can launch) – they are maintained on the producer portal only.

19. Can I transport Remote Role Assignments?

Yes, starting in SAP NetWeaver 7.0 SPS 13 the UME transport (see documentation http://help.sap.com/saphelp_nw70/helpdata/en/52/96f03eae11e16be10000000a114084/frameset.htm) supports transporting Remote Role Assignments as well.

Remote Delta Links

20. Which content can I share with Remote Delta Links?

Since SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS 10 you can integrate iViews and pages from the Portal Content Directory (pcd) of a producer into your local pcd by using Remote Delta Links. Remote Delta Links are available for worksets and roles with SAP NetWeaver 7.0 SPS 11 and later versions. With Remote Delta Links you can modify some properties of the objects in your consumer and add those objects to your local content offering. The RDL-content will behave similar to common delta-link objects.

21. I want to transport content which contains Remote Delta Links. Can I use the portal transport mechanism?

Yes, the transport mechanism will reconnect your Remote Delta Links to their sources on the producer portal. In order to do so, you should proceed as follows:

1. transport the content of the producer to the target environment (e.g. test or production)
2. You should make sure that in the target consumer portal you have defined the producer portal with the same alias as in the source consumer portal.
3. Transport the consumer's content to the target environment and the Remote Delta Links will automatically connect to their producer sources.

22. Where do I set permissions for Remote Delta Link objects?

With Remote Delta Links, you set the security zones (= which portal components and portal services a portal user can launch) on the producer portal. Permissions to individual portal content directory objects, like iViews, can be set on the producer portal, but you can change and adjust them on the consumer portal as an administrator. The role assignment which then adds permissions and content to the portal for individual end users or groups is done solely on the consumer portal.

Remote Application Integration

23. How/Where can we create the Remote Application Integrator iViews on consumer portal?

Remote Application Integration is an infrastructure component which is currently only available for integrating BI Java 7.0 iViews. The Remote Application Integration is extending the classical Application Integrator for integrating portal-based applications more efficiently.

You use the BI 7.x Web Application iView and there you can choose the System Alias: whether the BI Java installation and thus the reports are running locally or on any producer portal in the federation.

24. From which release and SPS on can I use Remote Application Integration?

Both portals (consumer portal and BI Java producer) have to be on SAP NetWeaver 7.0 SPS 13 and above, it is recommended to install the latest patch available.

25. For which types of content is Remote Application Integration available?

Currently only BI Java 7.0 reports can be integrated into an SAP NetWeaver 7.0 consumer portal. It is planned for the future to extend the scope of RAI.

WSRP content sharing and related standards

26. Which standard of WSRP is supported in the SAP NetWeaver Portal? (WSRP 1.0 or WSRP 2.0)

SAP NetWeaver Portal can serve as a consumer of WSRP 1.0 compliant content since SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS06. It can serve as a producer of WSRP 1.0 content for Non-SAP portals since SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (2004s) SPS09. The standard WSRP 2.0 is currently in the definition phase, thus an implementation of it is not yet planned.

27. Which kind of content can I produce from my SAP NetWeaver Portal to other Non-SAP portals?

Today the WSRP 1.0 standard supports sharing portlets / iViews, thus no pages, worksets, roles ... can be shared. The portal of SAP NetWeaver 7.0 can expose portlets to Non-SAP portals via WSRP, but the included applications have to comply with the standard as well. If you would like to develop WSRP compliant applications, you can find more information on SAP Help

Since the standard WSRP is quite basic, only standard-compliant iViews like Java applications or Java Server pages can be exposed over it. SAP-specific content like Web Dynpro Java / ABAP applications or applications leveraging SAP-specific portal APIs cannot be shared, because they are unique to SAP and provide additional functionality which cannot be exposed through a standard. The unique functionality includes Object-Based Navigation, Client-Side Eventing, Session Management ...

28. Can I expose Business Packages from SAP NetWeaver Portal into Non-SAP portals?

No, SAP Business Packages cannot be consumed by Non-SAP portals using WSRP. This is due to the incompliancy of these applications with the WSRP standard. Business Packages typically provide SAP-specific functionality and application logic, which provides additional value for users, however does not comply with the standard.

29. If I expose content via WSRP to the SAP NetWeaver Portal, do I still need to run the producing portal?

Yes, the runtime execution of the content which is shared still remains on the producer portal – so both portals (consumer and producer, SAP and Non-SAP) will continue to coexist. This applies for the other use case SAP NetWeaver Portal as the producing portal as well.

30. Is the standard JSR 168 supported in SAP NetWeaver?

Yes, JSR 168 is supported starting in SAP NetWeaver 7.1. Thus, in SAP NetWeaver 7.1 Composition Environment you can already integrate JSR 168 compliant portlets into your local content offering. It provides a container that allows deploying JSR 168 compliant portlets and generating iViews based on them – you can integrate a compliant portlet from any other vendor into the SAP NetWeaver portal.