

icon Suite connectivity to SAP



What is icon/SAPconnect?

Icon Suite connects to the SAP Spool System to allow document authors access to the original input data in SAP formats. In addition, the status of print jobs can be reported to the SAP spool system by acting as an output management system (OMS).

The icon Suite, a leading enterprise document creation, content integration and output management product set, has capabilities that allow seamless connectivity with SAP installations. The specific functionality that provides this ease of connectivity is contained in the “icon/SAPconnect” modules.

The powerful icon functionality means more efficient operations, as costs and time can be saved by avoiding the CPU intensive SAP integrated document design and creation feature.

Icon/SAPconnect modules:

SAP connectivity is delivered by two icon modules, “icon/XOM-Connect” and “icon/RFC-Connect” (also known jointly as “icon/SAPconnect”):

➤ icon/XOM-Connect

Certified interface to connect the icon Suite to SAP via the official BC-XOM protocol, including also RFC server and client functionality. Output data is transferred to the icon Suite system in RDI or XSF net data format. It makes it possible to make direct calls into the icon Suite document creation process from the SAP system.

➤ icon/RFC-Connect

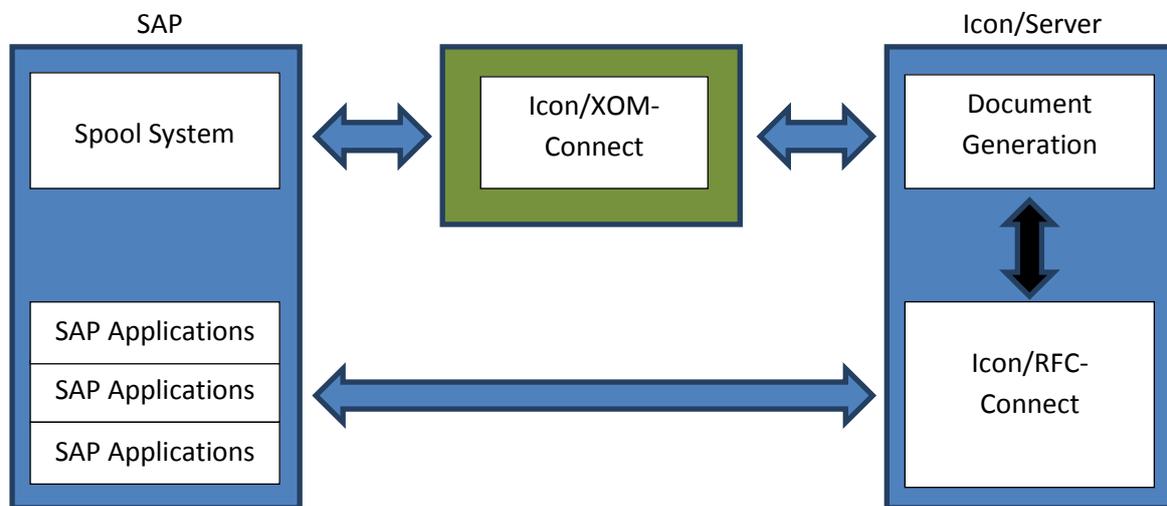
Programmable input interface to transform and aggregate input data. By installing the plug-in icon/RFC-Connect and providing an appropriate configuration, the instance of icon/Server becomes an RFC server (also known as RFC connector). It can accept incoming requests for document preparation and document creation, based on a SAP system, forward and answer.

A feature of icon/XOM-Connect is obtaining **current data** from the SAP system. This data retrieval is independent of how or what created the document in the first place, whether created by the SAP spool system, an RFC call or icon Suite. The connections are completely or mostly implemented using Java Connector (“JCo”), a SAP interface based on TCP/IP technology. It is a high performance connection that enables a tight coupling of the communication partners involved and is suitable for SAP Netweaver as well as for older R/3 systems.

Typical use example

Generally business applications with modern interfaces can call the icon interactive client via an XML structure which includes the application data necessary for document creation.

If the calling application is SAP, for example, then icon/XOM-Connect can provide a certified standard interface to receive the application data for output and give feedback about the output process to SAP. The appropriate SAP interfaces that icon/XOM-Connect can use are BC-XOM, RFC client and RFC server. In this case SAP only needs to produce net data formats like RDI or XSF, as the layout and formatting is done by icon/XOM-Connect. The SAP integrated document design and creation feature is thus not needed anymore.



Advantages of icon/SAPconnect

The icon Suite connection to the SAP Spool System enables documents based on data generated and held in SAP to be created by icon Suite. By integrating SAP and icon Suite, companies can take advantage of the advanced document creation features of icon (such as multi-channel output formatting whether to paper, or electronic media, or interactive content), as well as ensuring SAP output is consistent with other icon generated documents.

A further advantage of this SAP integration is that icon Suite can act as a document output management system for SAP applications allowing better control of documents whilst ensuring that SAP always knows the status of documents generated. Network traffic is optimised through efficient template data population, format and rendering, archive and print management.

Thus clients benefit from the best of both worlds – the extensive capabilities of SAP and the specialist document and content communications management capabilities of icon in a tightly integrated manner. The combination gives enterprise wide quality, document cost savings and industrial scale performance.

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