

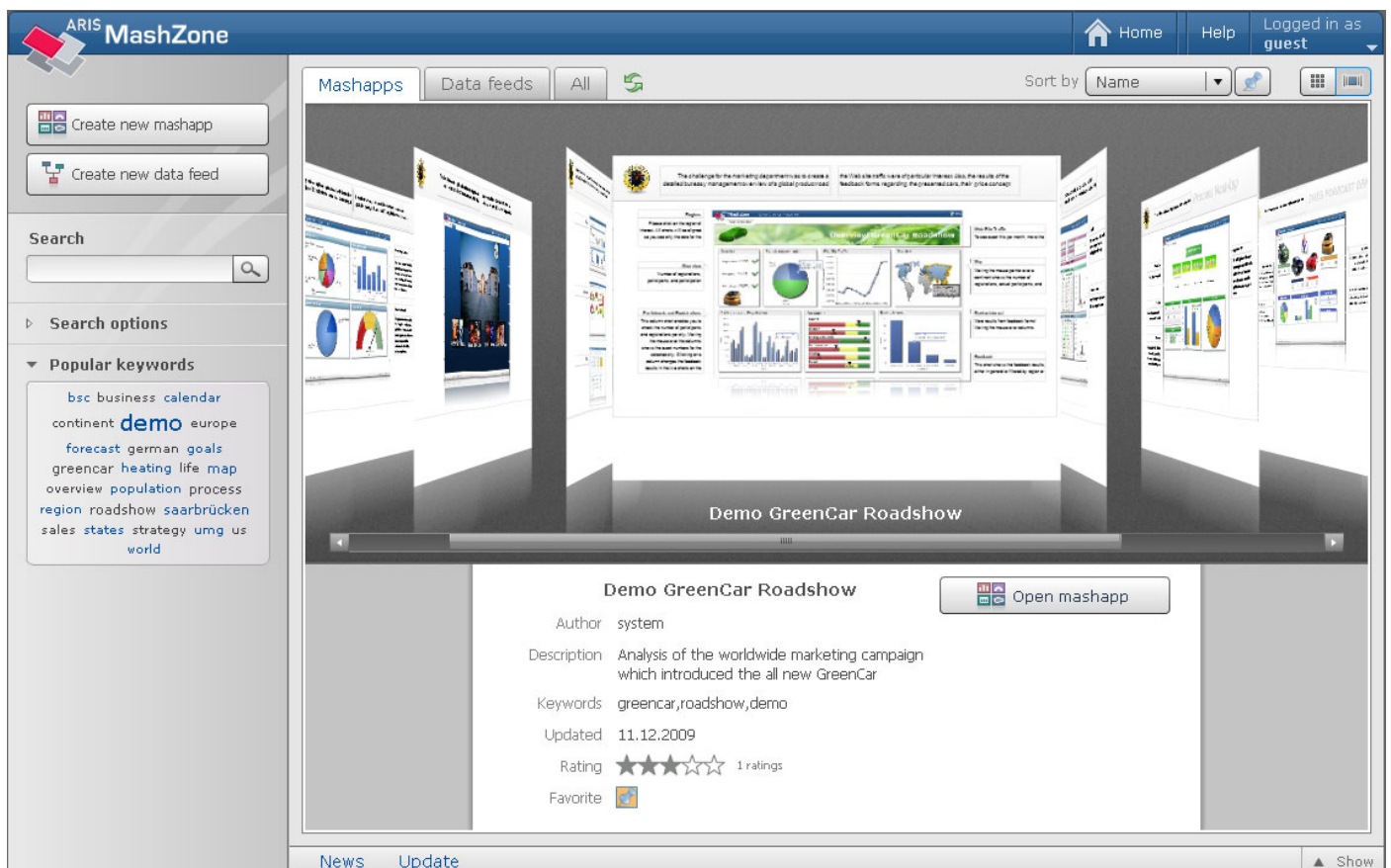
Mashups from Germany: IDS Scheer ARIS Mashzone

One of the few leading German players in the global software industry, Saarbrücken-based IDS Scheer is the third largest business software vendor after SAP and Software AG. Its entire product line is based on ARIS Platform, a system used to map business processes for customers worldwide.

IDS Scheer focuses on business customers and does not offer products for home users. But a little while ago, the company launched ARIS Mashzone, a free program that can also be used in the private sphere and enables creation of so-called mashups.

Mashup: locating content from multiple sources

A mashup is essentially an application that combines information from external sources, rather than generating its own data. Mashups are primarily a Web 2.0 concept, whereby data of the user's choosing is extracted from external services via RSS feeds and other services and combined to create new content—for example, mixing information from news websites with stock market tickers and a map. This can be accomplished quickly and easily via a mashup.



The screenshot shows the ARIS MashZone interface. On the left, there are buttons for 'Create new mashapp' and 'Create new data feed', along with a search bar and a list of popular keywords including 'bsc', 'business', 'calendar', 'continent', 'demo', 'europe', 'forecast', 'german', 'goals', 'greencar', 'heating', 'life', 'map', 'overview', 'population', 'process', 'region', 'roadshow', 'saarbrücken', 'sales', 'states', 'strategy', 'umg', 'us', and 'world'. The main area displays a 3D view of mashup cards. The selected card, 'Demo GreenCar Roadshow', has the following details:

- Author: system
- Description: Analysis of the worldwide marketing campaign which introduced the all new GreenCar
- Keywords: greencar, roadshow, demo
- Updated: 11.12.2009
- Rating: 1 star (out of 5)
- Favorite: [button]

At the bottom of the card, there is an 'Open mashapp' button and a 'Show' button.

ARIS MashZone: data collection made easy (picture: IDS Scheer)

ARIS Mashzone is tailor-made for this relatively young technology. This free program is currently available for 32-bit and 64-bit versions of Windows and is quickly installed (160 MB download). Users must have Java Runtime Environment to run the software.

Mashzone: new mashup apps in just ten minutes

Mashzone operates as a client application that launches its own server on the computer in the background, after which the existing MashApps are displayed in Cover Flow. There is a wide range of preconfigured mashups on offer, including one for collecting RSS news feeds. MashApps that are already in Mashzone can be evaluated or adapted to user requirements. Apps residing on the local computer are automatically updated when they are opened. If access to content is to be restricted, ARIS Mashzone protects the MashApps with a PIN.

A completely new MashApp can be created in less than ten minutes. The user clicks the type of display (e.g., a pie chart) required for the data on a virtual whiteboard. After integration of the relevant data sources, the new MashApp is ready for use. ARIS Mashzone recognizes numerous data sources, including all established feed standards.

All in all, ARIS Mashzone probably rates as currently the best mashup program in the world. There is no comparable solution available at this time from Microsoft, IBM, or Oracle.

Source: netzwelt (<http://www.netzwelt.de>)