

Automic® Automation

CA Relieves Growing Pains for NHS Shared Business Services

Business

NHS Shared Business Service (SBS) provides services to the U.K. National Health Service (NHS). It has developed a shared services business model that enables huge economies of scale to be achieved, as well as innovation and best practice solutions to improve services for the NHS.

Challenge

- Establish highly scalable platform to support 12x business growth
- Accelerate delivery of reports to end user clients
- Improve performance meeting client KPIs

Solution

- Automated execution of applications using advanced business rules
- Out-of-the-box finance and accounting process templates
- Centralised monitoring of end-to-end business processes

Results

- Scalable business operation that has grown to support over 300 NHS Trusts
- 96% improvement in staff productivity
- 80% reduction in penalties incurred missing client KPIs



Client Profile

Organization: National Health Service Shared Business Service

Industry: Health Service

Business

The Market Leaders in Business Support Services

NHS Shared Business Service (SBS) provides services to the U.K. National Health Service (NHS). It has developed a shared services business model that enables huge economies of scale to be achieved, as well as innovation and best-practice solutions to improve services for the NHS. Delivered by a team of business professionals, NHS SBS offerings include Finance & Accounting, Employment Services, Procurement, and Primary Care Services.

Central to NHS Shared Business Services finance and accounting services is an Oracle E-Business Suite IT platform where each healthcare organization is managed as a separate operating unit. Integral to the success of NHS SBS is the ability to scale its operations to provide maximum service quality and value to its clients. However, with each new client comes increased demand on financial transactional processing, in turn leading to an increased IT workload.

Business (cont.)

Period-end close and month-end reporting are recurring peaks in accounting calendars that have to be completed by all healthcare entities to fixed timetables. At NHS SBS, a real advantage to managing the transaction processing during these peak times was to automate systems where possible.

Challenge

Automate or Else

Manual interaction between people and systems needs to be automated wherever possible. The processing workload has to make optimal use of available IT resources if client SLAs are going to be met. The impact of files not being available for processing, decisions not being taken and other operating delays have to be minimised. Addressing these issues has allowed NHS SBS to establish a scalable platform that supports the delivery of its shared service offering to its NHS clients.

The F&A Service Delivery Manager, NHS SBS, picks up the story, “At NHS SBS we have grown from supporting 24 to more than 300 separate NHS entities. Our objective has been to deal with increasing volumes while maintaining efficiencies and delivering value to our clients. At the outset, we looked at the pinch points in our finance processes—notably around month-end—and figured that if we could automate these we could succeed.

“CA offers out-of-the-box templates that could automate finance and accounting procedures. It also has certified interfaces into Oracle and there are no other products doing this”.

Solution

Accelerating Month End Close

NHS SBS uses Automatic Automation to ensure all financial accounting rules and validations are performed throughout the month-end close process. Thorough checks ensure that payment runs and journal imports are complete. Once the books have been closed and end users have logged out, the period-end reconciliation and reporting jobs that need to run are initiated automatically.

There are over 80 individual steps that need to be executed in a precise sequence on behalf of each NHS organisation. CA manages the exchange of data between steps, checks job outcomes and report content before deciding what to do next. If figures don't reconcile, NHS SBS staff are immediately alerted to investigate and resolve discrepancies.

“Automating month-end close was key,” continues the F&A Service Delivery Manager. “If we could run sub-ledger close manually, and that's a big if, we'd need over 150 staff today. Automation has allowed us to reduce this to having just five staff on standby to deal with any issues. Also, it's taken a lot of the stress out of our financial close processing. We can make considered business decisions when resolving issues.

“Automatic Automation provides us with other potential benefits. Reconciliation reports go straight to the General Ledger teams – they don't need to be manually requested. We've been able to offshore our financial close processing to run on any of our four global locations. This enhances our business continuity.

“After month-end had been a success with our financial processing teams, we realized we'd uncovered the tip of an iceberg. We have automated our accounting AR/AP processing and run daily accounting reconciliations for our clients' sub-ledgers. We've also automated our payment batches. We continue to look for areas where we can improve process and provide users with the tools and information they need to do their jobs.”

– F&A Service Delivery Manager, NHS SBS

The F&A Service Delivery Manager adds, “I am impressed by the depth of functionality available with Automatic Automation product. The commitment from the CA team is very positive and they are responsive when working with us and our partners resolving issues”.

Results

Scaling New Heights

Having found an automated solution to the month-end close challenge, NHS SBS has extended its use of Automatic to tackle other issues.

Results (cont.)

Each day, NHS SBS receives 25,000 invoices that need to be imported into the Oracle environment. With a separate Oracle SRS (Standard Report Submission) job defined for each of its 300 operating units, a slight change to a process would

become a major headache. With object-based, reusable process definitions being managed centrally maintenance has become much easier for NHS SBS. In addition, Automic Automation ensures that invoice processing completes on time every day.

For more information, please visit ca.com/automation.