

Recurring delays and errors mean unhappy customers.

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Executive Summary

Challenge

You've made a major investment in SAP software to run your critical enterprise processes. But like in most organizations, these processes stretch beyond SAP and also rely on a mix of custom and packaged applications.

Management of your critical enterprise processes has become a pressing challenge. Too many staff are tied up managing processes, as well as finding and diagnosing process errors. SLAs are frequently missed, and customers perceive poor quality of service due to the recurring errors and delays now impacting your critical processes, such as financial period end close, invoicing, payroll and production.

Opportunity

You've figured out that the primary causes are limited visibility and poor coordination across your SAP and non-SAP systems. So, you are now considering automating your enterprise processes. You should consider an end-to-end solution in order to regain control, dramatically shorten processing times, reduce costs and make all of those last-minute scrambles to meet deadlines a thing of the past.

Benefits

So, what are the key benefits an end-to-end automation solution can bring? We've collated the top requirements from global enterprises during the past 10 years, all of which have successfully automated their enterprise processes running across SAP and non-SAP systems. By doing so, they were able to reduce processing time by 70 percent, eliminate 90 percent of business process errors and reduce manual effort by 90 percent. Now you can do this too. Here's what you can gain.

SECTION 1

End-to-End Visibility and Control of Enterprise Processes

Enterprise processes span multiple people, departments and applications that go beyond SAP systems. Your processes run on a mix of SAP, custom and packaged applications too. These applications usually reside on multiple servers on premises or in the cloud and form a complex and heterogeneous IT landscape.

Visibility is typically limited to application silos, which means you don't have control over the entire enterprise process. This results in delays and errors that reveal themselves unexpectedly or when it's too late.

A solution is needed that provides complete visibility across the entire enterprise process.

This allows both IT and the business to better manage and monitor the enterprise process from one single point of control in order to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved as expected, on time, every time.

For example, service levels can be set with real-time monitoring of enterprise processes and predictive capabilities identifying potential SLA violations as and before they occur. It's necessary not just to identify when service levels are at risk, but also to have the ability to act on it, notifying recipients and key stakeholders in a timely manner.

Automating SAP and non-SAP processes end-to-end ensures you have 100% control over enterprise processes

SECTION 2

Coordination Between SAP and Non-SAP Systems

Every chain is as strong as its weakest link, and this is also true for enterprise processes. In this case the links are the manual handoffs and functional automation tools that provide the coordination between the SAP and non-SAP systems.

Surprisingly, there still remains a high degree of manual coordination between people and departments. This means that steps in the process are often performed late, are missed or are executed at the wrong time, resulting in delays, errors and inaccuracies.

In addition to this problem, the various SAP and non-SAP systems that support enterprise processes each have their own schedulers that manage workloads within that specific system. These schedulers are often unable to coordinate with other schedulers. For example, SAP SM36 can only manage SAP jobs. It is not aware of other systems and their dependencies.

Most functional automation tools like SM36 use time-based scheduling, which is not only inefficient—as you have to estimate how long each step will take and leave buffers as a contingency for when problems occur—but it also creates unpredictable results in cases when the buffer isn't long enough. For example, if an Informatica extract is initiated before SAP finishes processing all the orders, incorrect or incomplete data is extracted into SAP BW, which can result business decisions being made based on inaccurate data. We call these disjointed systems "islands of automation."

Automating SAP and non-SAP processes end-to-end can eliminate 90% of business process errors

An automation solution is required that enhances the flow and the quality of data across multiple enterprise platforms, providing consistent and reliable straight-through processing. The islands of automation now become coordinated, so that each system is dynamically aware of its process dependencies. This ensures that steps that have dependencies on other processes aren't initiated until the prerequisite one is completed.

Lastly, in order to make this kind of implementation practical, it is important that the automation solution supports a rich set of platforms and applications that cover SAP and non-SAP system scenarios without requiring custom scripts or code.

SECTION 3

File Transfers Integrated Into the Process

Whether it's moving data between remote locations, external business partners or simply between internal systems, most enterprise processes will rely on secure and fast file transfers.

A separate, non-integrated and uncoordinated file transfer is an "unmanaged" file transfer approach, which introduces yet another disjointed island of automation and another weak link into the enterprise process.

Management of file transfers typically relies on manual coordination or time-based scheduling, which is not only inefficient, but also introduces inaccurate and incomplete data into the process.

An automation solution is required that has integrated managed file transfer capabilities so that it will enhance the flow and the quality of data across enterprise processes. Having a full automated managed file transfer that is coordinated provides consistent and reliable straight-through processing, making enterprises more predictable and causing fewer errors.

Integrated data transfer automation ensures zero latency and data errors

SECTION 4

Parallel Data Processing

Companies with a large number of customers need to be able to accurately and efficiently perform invoicing and dunning at scale.

If you are from one of these companies, you will likely be using one of the SAP industry solutions such as utilities, insurance, public sector, telecommunications or media.

Mass data processing in SAP is always performed according to a standard procedure. Jobs have to be manually scheduled every time. Due to the large amount of data that typically needs to be processed, parameters need to be manually set to split the job into multiple child jobs that are run in parallel. Due to the manual nature of this process, numerous errors and failures are often introduced. Since there is no monitoring available, the resulting runtime errors are regularly missed. To add to the situation, restrictions on running processes in parallel cause jobs to overrun. This creates delays and missed deadlines.

Automating SAP and non-SAP processes end-to-end can reduce processing time by up to 70%

To address these issues, an automation solution is needed, which:

- Integrates mass processing with enterprise business processes and other non-SAP systems.
- Automates the scheduling of mass data runs, making them repeatable with no manual intervention required.
- Optimizes processing by automatically splitting up the total processing volume into child jobs based on parameters.
- Automatically monitors child jobs and identifies logical errors.
- Automatically takes action such as distributing results by email, starting a follow-on activity or blocking further processing.

The result is cost and time savings for key users in the accounting departments, because they are no longer required to manually process invoicing and dunning runs. Fewer errors occur, as manual intervention is eliminated, and jobs complete faster due to optimized parallel processing.

SECTION 5

Certified by the SAP® Integration and Certification Center

SAP applications run your most critical and complex enterprise processes. The deep level of integration needed to automate processes of this complexity should only be entrusted to solutions certified by a SAP® Integration and Certification Center (SAP ICC).

SAP recognizes that partners play a critical role in helping customers create the ideal solution to address their unique business needs. As a result, SAP has established SAP ICCs around the globe to support services around third-party software integration into SAP systems.

SAP recommends customers purchasing third party value added solutions look for the SAP Certified logo. Usage of the logo indicates successful integration testing and certification by SAP.

Benefits to SAP customers purchasing third-party solutions that have been certified by the SAP ICC include:

Shorter implementation time and lower integration costs

Since solutions that have been certified for integration have been pre-tested, customers may benefit from accelerated integration projects that can be up and running out of the box.

Supportability

Usage of solutions that are certified for integration with SAP solutions, which follow SAP standards for technical integration and which are re-certified on a regular basis can allow for upgrades with minimal interruptions.

Added functionality

SAP customers gain choice of a broad range of solutions that either extend SAP functionality and/or run on SAP solutions, including the SAP NetWeaver technology platform.

SECTION 6

Conclusion

Your critical business processes stretch beyond SAP and rely on a mix of custom and packaged applications as well. To maximize your investment in SAP software, you need to automate your SAP and non-SAP systems end-to-end. In doing so, you will regain control, dramatically shorten processing times, reduce costs and make all of those last-minute scrambles to meet deadlines a thing of the past.

The key capabilities to achieve these benefits are:

- Visibility and control of the end-to-end process
- Full coordination of every step of the process across both SAP and non-SAP systems
- Integration of file transfers into the process
- Processing of data in parallel
- Only trusting your most critical processes to a solution that has been certified by SAP

Whilst there are many other factors that are also important to consider, only by ensuring that your solution encompasses the above key capabilities as a foundation can you be certain that you will be able to meet the ever-increasing demands of the business.

For more information, please visit ca.com/automation

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