



Hydro Refines and Accelerates SAP Processes with Automate Studio

Norsk Hydro ASA is a Fortune Global 500 supplier of aluminum and the fourth-largest integrated aluminum company worldwide. Founded in 1905 and headquartered in Norway, the company employs approximately 23,000 people in 40 countries and maintains a presence on every continent. Hydro went live with SAP in 1998.

Challenge

With a huge number of assets around the globe, Hydro maintains an extraordinarily complex SAP system that requires constant updating across a large number of mass transactions. Until 2006, the company relied on external consultants in addition to manual data entry to perform those transactions, spending a great deal of time and expense on mass data entry. “We didn’t think there was any other way to do it,” says Thomas Holte, a system consultant for the master data organization at Hydro. “We saw manual data entry as an unavoidable necessity when dealing with SAP. We didn’t think of it as a challenge because we didn’t realize there was a solution like Automate Studio (formerly Winshuttle).”

The Solution

When a colleague discovered Automate Studio at an SAP seminar in 2006, he instantly saw its potential for streamlining processes at Hydro. “When I stumbled upon it, I didn’t hesitate,” he says. “I just thought, ‘Yes, this is obviously a good idea.’ We were spending a lot of time and money performing manual uploads to SAP, and Automate Studio seemed like a simple way to automate and eliminate manual data entry.”

Holte first began using Automate Studio in the FI/CO module, and he quickly started pushing for the solution to be implemented in other modules across Hydro’s SAP environment. “The basic features of Automate Studio are very easy to use, and the advanced features can be learned with just a bit of training,” says Holte. “We’re using it more and more every day—we keep discovering new opportunities for time savings in every module.”

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Industry

Aluminium and Aluminium products

Challenge

- Hiring external consultants to perform mass data transfers manually
- Investing too much time and expense keeping SAP records up-to-date
- Spending more time on data entry and less time on quality assurance

Solution

Automate Studio

Results

- Implement major organizational changes with unprecedented accuracy and speed
- Greatly reduce the time associated with regularly scheduled uploads
- With time saved, invest more hours in performing quality assurance

SAP Version

SAP ECC 6.0

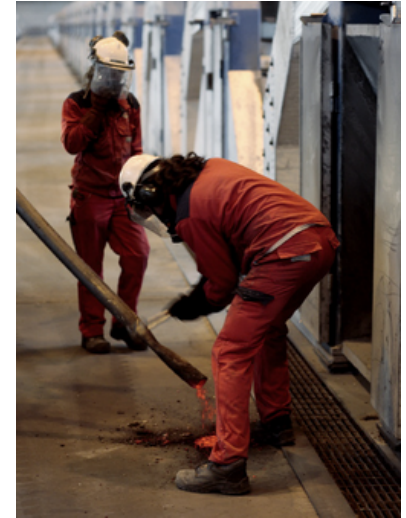
SAP Modules

FI/CO, FI-AA, MM, SD, PS

SAP Transactions /Types

AS01, KO01, FK01, MM01, IW31, CJ01, KS01, · KE51, KP26, KL01, AS91, FD01, XK01, CJ01, FSS0, FSP0, KB11N, KB14N, KB21N, FB50, FB41





Results

Automate Studio enables Hydro to implement major organizational changes with unprecedented accuracy and speed. In 2007, for example, Holte's team needed to integrate two new departments into its SAP system. That meant creating 5,000 new orders, 6,500 new materials, and 300 new cost centers, along with entering new vendors, customers, projects, and assets. "With the help of Automate Studio Solution, a colleague and I were able to perform all of that work in about 500 hours over the course of six months," says Holte. "I can't even imagine how many hours it would have taken—and how many external consultants it would have required—to perform the same number of tasks manually and with the same level of accuracy."

Automate Studio also helps reduce the time associated with regularly scheduled tasks. For instance, Holte's team sends out periodic requests for all controllers to update cost center information, and they return their input in Excel spreadsheets. Holte then uploads the updated information into SAP. "Before Automate Studio, we would need three or four people to help upload all of those spreadsheets over the course of two weeks," he says. "Now I can do it by myself in just five hours."

With the time he's saving by using Automate Studio, Holte is able to spend more time performing quality assurance. "By devoting fewer hours to manual data entry, my department can focus more of its attention on more important tasks," he says. "When we invest more of our resources in quality assurance, we absolutely see improvements in the overall accuracy of our data. Automate Studio helps us become not just more efficient, but more effective as well."

Future plans

Automate Studio has already taken on a major role in the master data department at Hydro, and Holte is sure that trend will continue. "We have three major accounting centers, and so far only one is using Automate Studio," he says. "As far as I'm concerned, it's only a matter of time before the entire organization takes full advantage of this technology. I can't imagine doing my job without it."



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