Savings 'Beyond Comprehension' at Kärkkäinen

Kärkkäinen Oy was founded in 1988 by Juha Kärkkäinen. In the beginning, the company was solely focusing on retail sales of buses driving around the countryside. In 1991, the first physical store was established. After that, the company has grown enormously over the years and now their product range consists of over 400,000 "non-food" products.

Kärkkäinen offers its clients a huge selection of goods and is well-known for great special offers in its department stores, as well as in its online shop. Today, the company has more than 500 employees and a turnover of 338,5 million EUR.

Challenge

Hannu-Pekka Niskanen arrived at Kärkkäinen Oy in 2006, around the same time that SAP was being implemented in the company. A year later, Niskanen started working as an assistant in the company's purchasing department. At the time, the main problem for the purchasing department was material creation.

On average, the department handles about 10,000 new articles per month that need to be created in SAP. Overall, there are approximately 1O 000 active products in the company's product selection. Managing this amount of material data on a daily basis using only SAP GUI, and transactions such as MM41, MM42, and LSMW was extremely error-prone, time-consuming, and far from user-friendly.

The Solution

A buyer from Kärkkäinen downloaded a trial version of Automate Studio (previously Winshuttle) and Niskanen got the opportunity to explore the product:

> "Playing around with Automate Studio, it pretty soon became obvious that it would not only solve the problems I was experiencing with LSMW, but also offer new possibilities of material management."

After testing the trial version, Niskanen came up with a simple solution for material creation and updating using Automate Studio and Excel. Therefore, it was easy for him to convince the decision-makers in the purchasing department to take this route:

> "So I was handed a developer's license and the very first process we used Automate Studio for was material creation using MM41. MM42 followed pretty soon and it was used for any updating that was required for the materials: updating names, prices, purchasing, groups, etc. I created Excel templates for both transactions, which the purchasing assistants (about 8-10 assistants) then filled in and sent to me for creation/updates."

Industry
Retail

Challenge
Very time consuming material creation with 10 000 new articles per month

Solution
Automate Studio

Results
Significant reduction in time used for material creation

SAP Version
SAP ECC 6.0

SAP Modules
FI, CO, MM, SD

SAP Transactions /Types
MM41, MM42, ME21 N, VK11, VK12, SE16, MB51, MB52

This was the process at Kärkkäinen until late 2010 to early 2011, but ultimately the amount of material creating was getting too massive for only one person to handle. So, RUNNER licenses were purchased for the assistants to speed up the process, allowing them to do the updating and creating themselves.

Current Usage

Today, several transactions are now automated with Automate Studio Solution at Kärkkäinen. The typical tasks are all kinds of material management using MM41/MM42, product pricing with VK11/VK12, creating purchase orders with ME21N, and different types of reports of stocks and sales with MB52, MB51, and SE16 among others.

Expectations exceeded

Over the many years that Kärkkäinen has been using Automate Studio (previously Winshuttle), Niskanen points out that the greatest advantage of using Automate Studio has definitely been with the everyday operations of MM41 and MM42.

"The amount of time saved has been beyond comprehension. The time needed to create a single material manually is somewhere between 2 and 4 minutes and with Automate Studio that time is reduced to a few seconds. We have also used and continue to use Automate Studio for different types of 'one-off' jobs, in which we use Automate Studio to update a certain field value to a large number of articles, customers, vendors, etc. Another example of Automate Studio usage is to get a complete list of our vendors with necessary fields included from several different tables/transactions. There are dozens and dozens of examples of these types of needs that Automate Studio has answered over the years."

To say the least, Niskanen is satisfied with Automate Studio and the many different use cases for Automate Studio that have been found beyond the initial expectations. In the future, the company will expand the usage of Automate Studio and explore different use cases in financial accounting.

Niskanen has also been pleased with the support ADSOTECH has provided to Kärkkäinen:

"I have been very satisfied with the way ADSOTECH has been involved with any problems or questions we may have had over the years regarding Automate products. The response time has been very quick and our issues have been dealt with efficiently and with care."