

Case Study

Automic® Workload Automation CA Automation Proves Ideal Fit for Thomas Pink Automation Demands



Client Profile

Organization: Thomas Pink

Industry: Retail

Business

Pink was founded in 1984 by three brothers: Peter, James, and John Mullen, who had the desire to challenge the traditional world of Jermyn Street shirtmakers.

Challenge

- Mitigate impact of missing business SLAs
- Automate manual checking and validation tasks
- Eliminate human delays processing file transfers
- Reduce delivery time for management reports

Solution

- Integrated managed file transfer
- Event-driven processing
- Common UI and API set for all automation use cases
- Automatic error detection and notifications

Results

- Reduced SLA breaches and penalty payments
- Better informed decision making based on latest business reports
- Faster turnaround times processing sales order data

Business

Challenging the Traditional World of Jermyn Street Shirtmakers

Part of the Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy group, Thomas Pink is a modern British luxury retailer available in flagship stores as well as through franchises and concessions. In addition to shirts, Thomas Pink customers can also choose from a wealth of luxurious silk ties, tailoring, knitwear, and accessories.

Technology is used in all parts of Thomas Pink's business operations from the creation of articles, POS activities, sales orders, stock replenishment and deliveries through to management reporting and BI analytics. It uses a financial audit system to capture and consolidate sales transaction data along with an ERP system for retail and merchandising and its e-commerce platform.

Challenge

Eliminate Human Delays Processing File Transfers

Thomas Pink's business operations are driven by a continual flow of EDI files coming in from concessions and POS files, containing transactional data, between head office and its international store network. Problems and delays would occur when files arriving in specific locations failed to get picked up or failed to be checked prior to being processed by the ERP system.

Mario Reni, Business Analyst, Thomas Pink articulated, "Managing files coming into our systems was a manual process. If someone forgot to pick these up, especially, at the weekend, we would have Finance banging on our door saying, 'Why is the data in our weekend sales reports incorrect? Why am I missing these concession sales which should have been processed?' This would happen regularly and could leave us lacking visibility on our closing position for the week in all of our stores."

Files that did get picked up which contained invalid data could result in the ERP system occasionally generating and sending out delivery notes without corresponding advanced shipping notices (ASNs) or invoices. This would leave Thomas Pink's franchise partners with documents that couldn't be matched to products received and ultimately penalty charges for the shirt-maker as it failed to comply with agreed business SLAs.

Solution

Reduced SLA Breaches and Penalty Payments

Thomas Pink realized they needed to run their systems with minimal human touch. They were already using an automation tool that didn't provide any means of performing checks. Turnaround times on order processing could be reduced if files were picked up as soon as they arrived. Automic® Workload Automation from CA Technologies, A Broadcom Company, was selected. Automic Workload Automation provided a unified platform that would support Thomas Pink's current and future automation demands including event driven processing and integrated managed file transfer.

"Soon after we went live, Finance could see that files arriving were getting processed and their reports were delivered on time," said Reni. "Now we can leave Automic Workload Automation to do its job and know files are going to be picked up without any intervention. We trust it. If there is an issue, we will get notified immediately. Any problems—and these are now few and far between—get fixed immediately. With CA Technologies we get back time which allows us to focus on more pressing issues. We can do more of the interesting stuff. Bring value rather than deal with mundane things."

Automic Workload Automation is being used to initiate process flows that span financial audit and ERP systems and will be extended to automate and replace the message engine between the ERP system and the web platform workload as part of Thomas Pink's plan to upgrade their website platform. EDI files coming in from European and UK based system at 05:45 are processed by 05:50 while US files arriving at 08:50 are dealt with by 09:00, before Finance is asking about them. "As a business analyst I like seeing flows that show me visually what is go in; how things are mapping out," said Reni. "The Automic UI allows me to sit down with the IT team and work with the same view when analyzing our workflows."

Benefits

Faster Turnaround Times Processing Sales Order Data

“With Automic Workload Automation we are picking up information coming from our concession owners along with EDI files in one place,” said Reni. “The data is automatically checked verifying that it adheres to our standards, contains the right dates, correctly formatted and properly sequenced, prior to it being picked up by the ERP system. This manual process previously took 15 to 20 minutes to do all of our concessions. Now it is done in seconds and we no longer need to worry about looking at it.”

“In the future, we see CA Technologies as driving a lot more of our business processes and it will be so beneficial to us in the long term”

– Mario Reni, Business Analyst at Thomas Pink

The technology team at Thomas Pink have ambitious plans to bring greater value to the business, and automation is set to perform an integral role in this process. They want to increase the speed the development team delivers new functionality to their users and will use Automic® Continuous Delivery Automation to manage application releases through to their live environment. Another opportunity they have identified for automation relates to sending their concessions product price information and changes in formats they can accept.

“In the future, we see CA Technologies as driving a lot more of our business processes and it will be so beneficial to us in the long term,” said Reni. “Every time we get requirements for a new project, we ask what parts can we automate? It's a good way of going forward, making our lives easier.”

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