



BOTS POWER MILLIONS OF SAVINGS ON ONLINE SALES

Summary

The new ecommerce operations head of a global FMCG company faced a major master data issue that caused errors on ecommerce platforms. She realized that the best solution is implementing robotic process automation (RPA) to automate largely manual activities. By doing so, she managed to save over \$15 million.



An alarming data issue

In early 2019, Ashley Carter joined a global FMCG major as their ecommerce operations head. Her responsibilities included overall management of ecommerce platforms across Europe, management of master data, and ROI realization from ecommerce operations.

Soon after joining the organization, Ashley spotted a major process flaw. The ecommerce operation was largely manual, leading to content errors and thereby missteps in product shipments. The issue was slowing down their revenue realization strategy. And the larger issue was customer reproach.

Envisioning a major change

Ashley took her time to work out a suitable solution to the problem. With her experience, she knew that the lack of automation was the major reason behind the goof-up. She envisaged setting up a single, tamper-proof database with all information on the company's brands and products. She needed to find a solution partner who might be able to implement such a solution, and possibly provide even more augmented benefits.

Ashley was quite anxious to find the right

The company's ecommerce operation was a major initiative worth over \$15 million dollars. At the backbone of the ecommerce platform was the organization's master data, which contains all details of their customers, sub-brands, and products. So, when the master data is at stake, sales is hit hard. Ashley found that over 35% of products on the ecommerce websites contained erroneous or missed information.

She realized that automation was only half-way done, and most of the data was being uploaded to the ecommerce platform manually, leading to errors. The

technology partner. As she was new with the company, she took advice from other senior leaders about the technology partner ecosystem. Based on their advice, Ashley contacted Jean Rodriguez, the automation operations manager from Infosys BPM. Her company had a long-standing relationship with Infosys BPM.

She contacted Jean and gave the issue in detail. Jean concurred with her that the major reason for the error was the high people-dependency and geographically

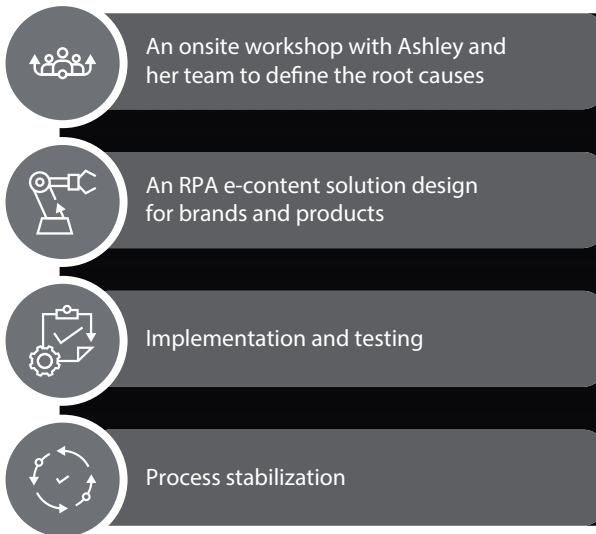
process itself wasn't standardized, resulting inconsistent and erroneous data uploaded on multi-geography ecommerce platforms. The teams in different geographies had different priorities which did not align. For instance, if cost was the driver in North America, flexibility and scalability was desired in LATAM, and standardization was the driver in EMEA. This presented a major disconnect.

She realized that the problem at hand was quite damaging.

spread-out master data. Ashley gave the mandate of developing a solution with automation at its center. Her mandates were: Focus on data quality and a 1-touch master database; centralized product portfolio management; standardized processes; progressive automation; cultural transformation through a user education program. Jean listened intently and promised to help Ash with the solution.

Within days, Jean was able to develop an action plan:

Approach summary



One key issue with Ashley's organization was their expansive sub-brands and product catalog. Manually developing product-related information for such a big catalog was very difficult and inefficient. Hence, Jean set forth the idea of "e-content". E-content stood for various information artifacts of each sub-brand and product, including product descriptions, designs, ingredient information, regulatory information, labels, among others.

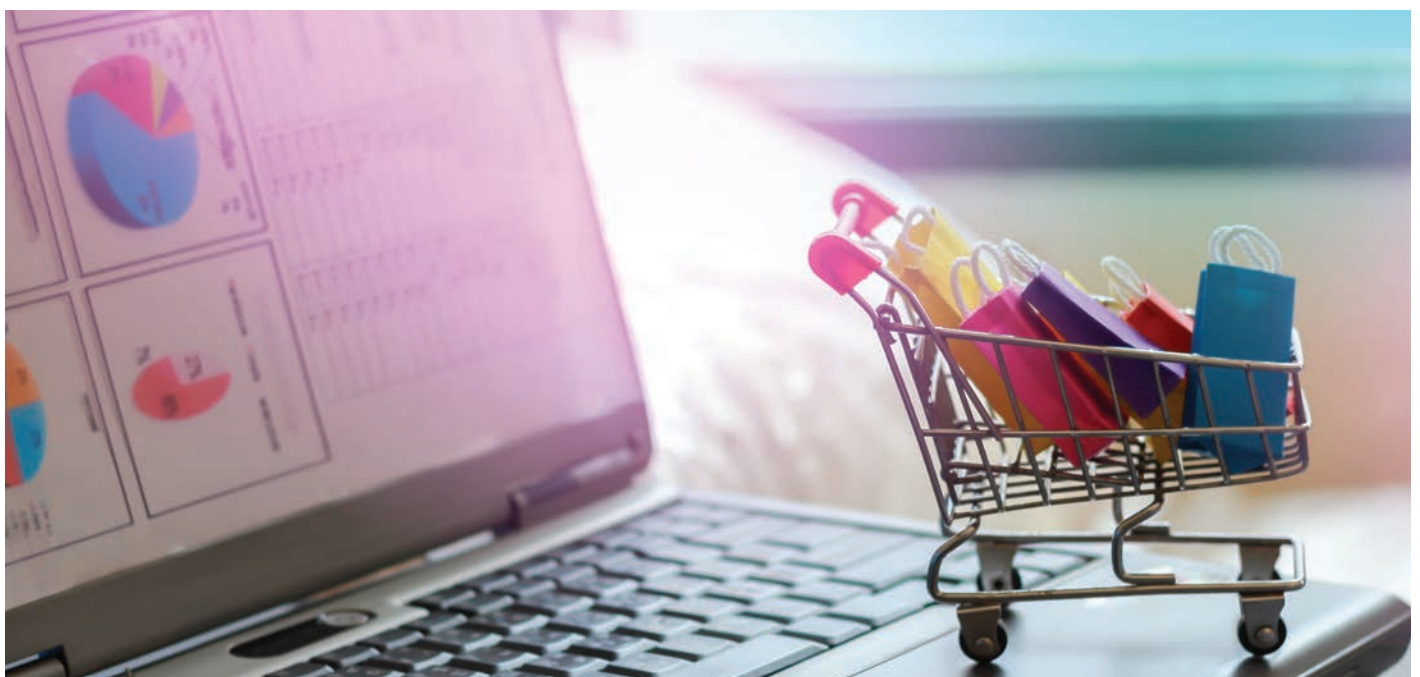
Jean assured that e-content would be enabled for up to 90-95% of products

within a span of two years. He projected that the major benefits of the project would be realized in two years' time frame. The project would make use of RPA, AI/ML, and smart chatbots to standardize the entire ecommerce master data process.

Ashley pondered over the plan given by Jean. Her major concerns were on the complexity of the solution, considering it had to bring together operations from a great number of geographies. She also raised a question on the computing infrastructure to implement a

stabilized process. Jean, who had already considered these aspects, mentioned the standardization of processes would significantly reduce the number of steps within the process, thereby making them "lean". He assured that the solution would bring down the complexity of the process itself, so computational infrastructure would not be an issue.

Satisfied with the blueprint, Ashley gave a go-ahead for the proposed solution and knew that it was the most logical solution to her issue.



The bot delivers

It took a few months for Jean's team to develop the single, tamper-proof master data database that Ashley wanted. The journey wasn't devoid of hurdles. Ashley's organization was a matured leader in the

FMCG space, so they had product launches happening quite frequently. This gave rise to the major problem of ecommerce scale-up and caused unanticipated delays in moving the solution to production. But

Ashley kept watch over Jean and his team and secured the necessary approvals for them and gave all possible support for the project.

Key benefits



\$15 million worth of savings



30% increase in data accuracy



90% automation level achieved



By early 2020, the first milestone of single tamper-proof database was ready. By the close of 2020, the manual process was 90% automated. Data across ecommerce platforms was being updated

automatically. Almost 95% of products were now e-content ready, which meant the information within the ecommerce platform was uniform and error-proof. The products were showing the correct

designs, ingredient information, regulatory and safety information, hazardous usage details, and price labels.

Ashley, who was checking on a periodic basis on the progress, was delighted to see the accuracy growing from 63% back in the day to over 93% now. That meant savings worth almost \$15 million. In addition, the organization achieved six times reduction in new product launch times on ecommerce.

** Names have been altered to preserve the privacy of the people involved*

For more information, contact infosysbpm@infosys.com



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