

3 Ways to Profit by Automating Manual Supply Chain Processes

Manual updates to supplier portals and partner website are no longer a cost of doing business. Automation can save time and money and eliminate errors.

Overview

Features

- Integrates with any application—on-premise, SaaS, in the cloud—even when no API is available
- Captures data from any website and delivers it to business systems, databases, business systems, and BI tools
- Integrates transportation management systems with external portals, shippers, carriers, payment processors, web information provider web sites.
- Complies with your existing IT standards and security framework

Benefits

- Eliminate manual repetitive information driven tasks, and accelerate business processes
 - Bring data directly to the front-office worker to increase productivity, enhance analysis, and decision-making
 - Enable IT and end-users to focus on innovation, not manual activities
 - Gain a competitive advantage through greater agility and focus on self-service integration
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Overview

No matter where in supply chain or logistics you happen to work, it's likely you're using one or more of the web portals that retailers, shippers, carriers, and payment processors provide. Your team spends hours a day—each—on manual updates. You may have tried to automate, only to hear it isn't possible.

But worker automation is very possible, and organizations across the supply chain and around the world are saving significant time and money with Kapow's integration and work automation platform. Information from systems and web portals that were previously difficult to integrate can now be easily integrated using Kapow.

We examine three areas in the supply chain and logistics process where integration has significantly helped transportation and 3PLs to streamline their processes by automating work activities that used to be done manually.

Handling Payment (Credit, Collections, Payment Processors)

Getting paid isn't easy. Suppliers are required to submit invoices on multiple retailer-provided portals—at their own expense. Transportation companies and 3PLs must manually login to multiple payment processor portals—also at their own expense. The usual response is to build a team that makes the required updates—at the company's expense.

Payment itself is challenging enough, but if you're also required to provide supporting documents—say, a Proof of Delivery (POD)—your added cost and delays can grow to impact a key financial measure: Days Sales Outstanding (DSO).

What you can do: Assess your own organization by organizing a review of your receivables process. If you need to provide multiple documents prior to payment, include those steps in your review. Make note whenever a manual update is essential to your process.

Responding to Email

Not every email needs the human touch. One 3PL created a premium service for select shippers that includes email submission of service requests. The emails were originally printed, filed, and managed in a paper-based system that tracked website updates, inside and outside the company. Each premium customer needed 1 FTE to support them—a situation that could not scale.

Solution Data Sheet

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“We’re seeing a 95% reduction in manual effort from our Customer Service Representatives. Kapow handles what our users were doing, automatically, more consistently and more accurately.”

— Darren Klaum, Director of Business Systems, PITT OHIO



“We expect to save hundreds of hours/month of manual work to process special quotes and invoices—with shorter cycle times, data accuracy and increased customer and employee satisfaction.”

— Wolfgang Fischer, Senior Division Manager eCommerce, Arrow Central Europe Components



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For one customer, Kapow has completely transformed this part of the business process. Emails are scanned and categorized automatically. Kapow then logs in to each of the websites, automatically enters the transactions the staff used to perform, extracts additional data from each website, and uses it on the next website. Even complex transactions require no manual assistance.

Through integration and worker automation, the customer has eliminated 100% of the routine manual effort needed to handle service requests, allowing their service team to manage the few exceptions that arise—and handle 20 shippers each, not just one.

What you can do: Review your customer-facing service organizations and seek cost containment opportunities from automatically processing email—but cost containment isn’t the only possibility. Consider whether you could increase the level of service you can offer by processing inbound or outbound emails.

Automate Procurement Processes and Increase Sales through Supplier Portals

Many retailers provide supplier portals such as Walmart’s Retail Link, and although each works differently, they’re an important aspect of maximizing sales. However, they all require the same kind of manual updates—updates that are first made in your internal IT systems of record, and then manually reflected back in the portals.

Quote requests from suppliers can be a manual, repetitive process where the same information is provided to each supplier. Likewise handling suppliers invoices can be a manually intensive and repetitive data entry process even when you already have technologies implemented such as EDI, RosettaNet or web services. Kapow can quickly integrate and automate the remaining manual processes by tying up these loose ends which get delegated to employees. Kapow automation results in faster quote responses from suppliers, eliminates cut-and-paste errors and achieves faster invoice payments which yields special discounts.

What you can do: Examine high-volume manual updates to partner web portals and evaluate replacing those updates with a direct integration using Kapow automation. This approach is effective for any website or application across your supply chain or partner ecosystem.

Take it another step with analytics. Use Kapow to login to any supply chain partner portal, run any portal-supplied reports, capture the results and bring them in-house. Run your analysis, make your decisions then reflect those business decisions back into web portals and web applications—all with the Kapow integration and automation platform.

About Kapow Software

Kapow Software, a Kofax company, harnesses the power of legacy data and big data, making it actionable and accessible across organizations. Hundreds of large global enterprises including Audi, Intel, Fiserv, Deutsche Telekom, and more than a dozen federal agencies rely on our agile big data integration platform to make smarter decisions, automate processes, and drive better outcomes faster. They leverage our platform to give business consumers a flexible 360-degree view of information across any internal and external source, providing organizations with a data-driven advantage. For more information, please visit: www.kapowsoftware.com.

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