

JD Edwards Solution for the MuleSoft Anypoint Platform Contributes to 7-figure ROI for Top Producing Paper Company

As the primary provider of private label tissue products in the United States, this paper and pulp manufacturer sees \$2 billion in annual revenue. From its warehouses and production facilities across the U.S., they provide more than half the grocery stores in the country with their store brand paper products, such as napkins, paper towels, and bathroom and facial tissue. In addition, the company manufactures bleached white paperboard.

The Challenge

Remaining a leader in the paper and pulp industry requires a drive to stay ahead of the competition. In today's industry, warehouse efficiencies and leveraging technology to improve productivity are critical pieces to success. Looking to realize the advantages that warehouse automation offers, including the use of robotics, increased reliability, reduced running costs, and safer operations, one of the leading paper and pulp companies in the United States began an initiative to implement an automation solution.

It was evident that to truly gain the wide range of benefits warehouse automation offers, the company would need to develop a real-time, automated connection between their new systems and their deeply ingrained ERP, JD Edwards. While required for success, this piece of the warehouse automation initiative presented two significant challenges.

First, as experience had shown, the ERP was difficult to integrate with other solutions. The system itself was robust enough to run the core of the company's business, but was less mature when offering connections to other systems. As a result, all existing integrations to JD Edwards were batch processes. The new integration needed to be both real-time and automated.

The second problem centered on the fact that there was no standard integrations playbook for the IT team to follow. "All of our integrations that we'd ever built between various internal systems, or even external customers and vendors," describes one of the senior members of their IT leadership, "were all point-to-point, and they were all built with whatever technology the person that built the interface was familiar with." With a lean IT organization, this wide-ranging use of technology presented significant risk to business continuity.

Ideally, any solution would bring not only the advantages of real-time automation, but also lay the foundation for building out standardized integrations across the enterprise ecosystem in the future.

The Solution

As the company reviewed its options, the potential solutions fell into two categories. One

Challenge overview

- A new warehouse automation implementation required real-time integration with the company's existing ERP, JD Edwards
- Legacy integrations were brittle point-to-point connections, built on a myriad of technologies

Solution

- The MuleSoft Anypoint Platform was implemented as the company's integration platform of choice
- ModusBox provided the JD Edwards Solution for the MuleSoft Anypoint Platform, enabling the company to create real-time, automated integrations between their established ERP and their new warehouse automation system

Results

- The JD Edwards solution, in conjunction with the MuleSoft Anypoint Platform, became the foundational keystone to the warehouse automation project's success
- The ROI for the entire project has been estimated in the millions of dollars
- The solution has empowered the company to build out additional integrations with significant benefits to the business. In addition, they plan to use MuleSoft and the Anypoint platform to replace existing integrations that are outdated, non-standard, and brittle

was to adopt a system that was proven to work with JD Edwards, but only JD Edwards. The other was to deploy an ESB without existing connections to the ERP, but with a proven track record and an extensive catalog of connection options. The long-ranging benefits that MuleSoft's Anypoint Platform presented made it worth a deeper investigation.

The risks associated with choosing MuleSoft's platform were significantly reduced when the company was introduced to ModusBox as a trusted MuleSoft partner. To verify that the ESB was the right solution, ModusBox developed a proof-of-concept, meeting the restrictive timeline of the project.

"(ModusBox) showed a willingness, on pretty short notice, to go find a JD Edwards resource that happened to know MuleSoft, get them on-site, and walk through a proof-of-concept with us. We did that in 10 days," stated their Senior Director of Enterprise Systems.

The POC proved the feasibility of the ESB as a solution for both the immediate warehouse automation initiative as well as an answer to the institutional challenges around standardization of technology for integrations going forward. Additionally, the JD Edwards solution opened opportunities for integrations that were previously unavailable without significant effort.

"I now have a JD Edwards connector that provides automated access to thousands of JD Edwards business functions. If you can show me something you can do in JD Edwards, I can now do it from an automated perspective."

-IT Director

The Results

Thanks to the warehouse automation project, using ModusBox's JD Edwards solution and the MuleSoft Anypoint Platform as foundational keystones, the organization experienced 1.5% increase in yield and a decrease in per case handling cost of 45% leading to an overall estimated ROI in the millions.

Throughout the organization, the IT team responsible for the implementation has been recognized for the value they brought to the project.

"Whether it was the solution design of the automation solution itself," the IT Director explains, "to the integration itself, to the way the JD Edwards data is populated, we've not missed any deadlines, we've been ahead of time, we've been the most stable component of that entire project."

Beyond the automation project, MuleSoft has become the platform of choice for integrations within the organization. By standardizing on a single platform, the organization has reduced the risk associated with tribal knowledge around integrations. With a team now coming up to speed on the technology, the organization has bandwidth and coverage to maintain business continuity and limit outages due to resource availability.

"I can get multiple people all learning that one technology, they can support each other, I've got bandwidth for when one is on vacation, someone else can handle it. From an integration perspective, I haven't had that luxury before," said their Director of IT. "Those are the kinds of soft benefits that we'll continue to see over the next few years."

The JD Edwards solution has also created opportunities for integrations that would have been prohibitive, previously. One such solution was the creation of an integration between the company's cloud-based onboarding provider and the ERP. This new integration replaced an existing, manual, nightly batch process with an automated, hourly one.

Speaking of new initiatives that are possible thanks to MuleSoft's Anypoint Platform and the JD Edwards solution, their IT Director concludes, "We're going to get more accurate data, we're going to get more timely data, and we're going to remove manual transactions. All of that is only facilitated because of the MuleSoft platform that we have."