



SPAR ICS automates more than 100,000 processes per day in a heterogeneous IT environment

SPAR ICS (Information & Communication Services) is SPAR's own IT company. It provides strategic applications and infrastructure systems, which are largely developed in-house, to more than 70,000 employees at 2500 sites in eight countries. ICS has its headquarters in Salzburg, Austria. From there, it runs international projects that cover the entire group of companies. SPAR ICS has a total of 380 IT employees, with 250 people working in Austria and 185 of these in the ICS office in Salzburg. They make up an effective and efficient team that has achieved a great deal.

Many systems, little monitoring

The size and complexity of the group's varied IT environment represent a major challenge for SPAR ICS. Each day 100,000 processes run on the main SAP Retail and SAP BW systems, plus several thousand on SAP FI/CO/HR, together with Unix, Linux, and Windows applications and databases. What the company lacked was a central control system, because many of the processes are made up of individual steps that run on different systems and are not coordinated with one another. The maintenance intervals had to be set up manually and it was not possible to restart processing steps or processes automatically. Delays in workflows and the scheduled production of reports covering sales figures, stock levels, campaigns, and sales planning had a negative impact on the agreed service level. The members of the IT team spent a large amount of time restarting processes and process steps manually after errors had occurred and monitoring their progress.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Complex IT environment
- Lots of systems, little control
- Many manual steps
- SLAs must be met

AUTOMIC SOLUTION

- Overall solution with centralized management and automation across system boundaries
- Internationally established, future-proof platform
- Migration of current processes to Automic's platform
- Good support

CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Central management and automation of a heterogeneous IT environment
- Automated handling of more than 100,000 processes each day using an Automic solution
- Reduction in process start-ups in SAP Retail of 3500 per day
- Reduced risk of shutdown and faster processes

"With Automic's help, we can now manage our process chains centrally, which means that we can significantly reduce the manual work involved and also the ongoing maintenance costs."

Dr. Thomas Thalhammer
Verantwortlicher Enterprise Architect,
SPAR ICS Österreich

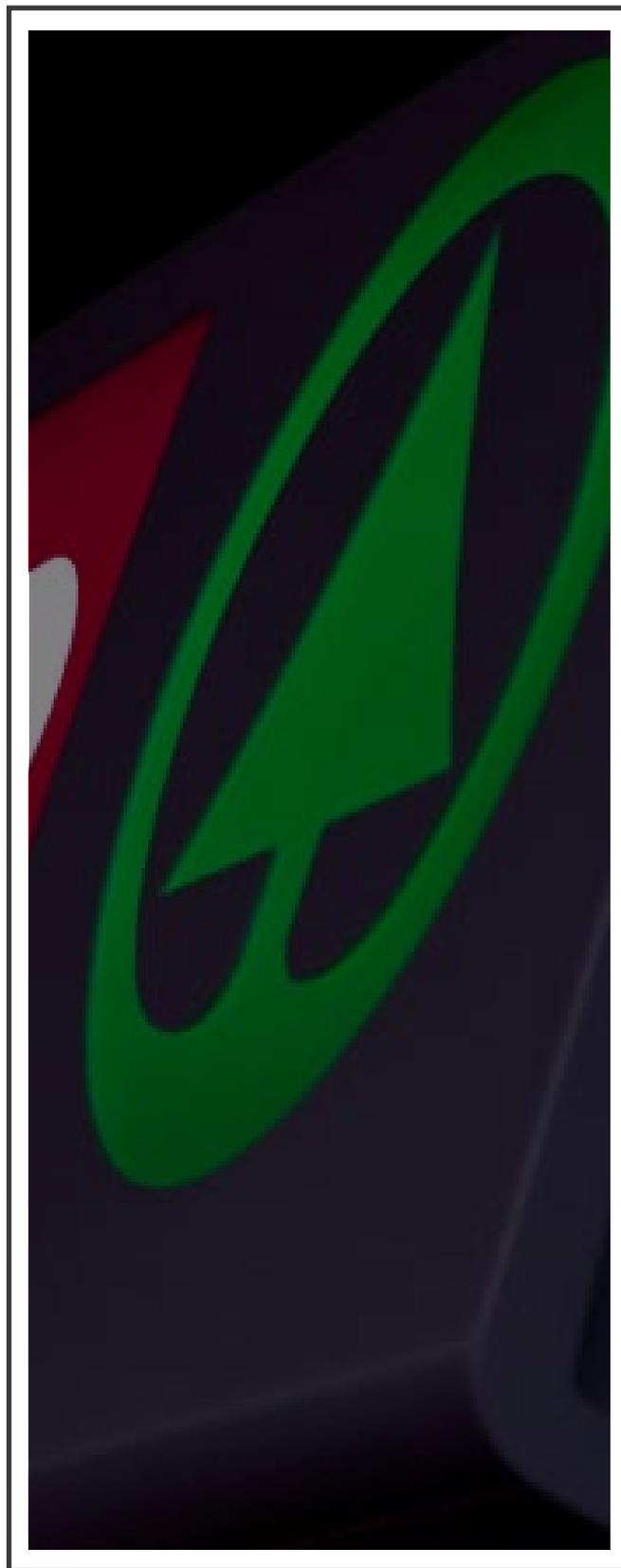
"We run 2400 process chains with around 35,000 individual steps every day just for our two SAP BW systems on a HANA infrastructure," explains Hannes Leobacher, Head of SPAR ICS Österreich. "Although the SAP processes were automated, as soon as other systems were involved, the processing and monitoring became highly complex and time-consuming. Because automated processes are generally also much more reliable, we were looking for a solution that covers all our platforms, is future-proof, and comes with good support from the supplier. I particularly liked the fact that the Automic platform has become very widely used on the international market in recent years and is also under ongoing development. From our perspective, this ensures that the solution will meet our constantly increasing requirements in future."

Automation across varied systems with central management

The implementation of Automic's product and the migration of its existing processes gave SPAR ICS an overall solution with centralized management and automation across system boundaries. Now the software starts up and monitors all the processes automatically. In addition, process steps on different systems have been coordinated with one another and their workflows have been automated, so that downstream steps only start when the previous step has been completed. In SAP Retail, the number of daily process starts has been reduced by 3500 using file events and the weekly transport window has also been automated. In addition, the processes are automatically managed on a load-dependent basis and critical recurring processes are monitored and automatically re-started if a problem occurs. This has made the order processes more reliable and ensures that they run in a predefined time window, so that downstream logistics processes can be completed without delays even in the event of errors.

The automation platform has proved its worth in the SAP Business Warehouse in particular. If errors occur in the processes and process chains, they are automatically restarted outside operating hours. This allows the company to comply with its service level agreements and provide reports on schedule.

"With Automic's help, we can now manage our process chains centrally, which means that we can significantly reduce the manual work involved and also the ongoing maintenance costs," explains Dr. Thomas Thalhammer, Enterprise Architect. "That represents a major improvement in quality for us and also hugely increases the fail-safety of our systems. We are also constantly identifying new opportunities for automating processes using the Automic software, which means that in the years to come, we are likely to increase our use of the solution considerably."



For more information or product demonstration please visit www.automic.com