

Eliminating duplicated data entry across multiple departments with Robotic Process Automation



As part of its programme to eliminate duplicated data entry, Stratford-on-Avon District Council selected SX, NDL's RPA Platform. It has now successfully implemented integration projects in departments throughout the District Council including HR, planning and parking. As a result, it has achieved significant efficiencies, including one new process which saves approximately 70 days a year. The District Council continues to identify labour-intensive data entry processes which could be streamlined through the use of RPA.

The Challenge

Stratford-on-Avon District Council has a strong in-house development team. As a result, it has written its own applications and carried out a programme of integration without relying on expensive external resource. At first, this integration relied on third party connectors. As time went on, however, the number of back-office applications which would benefit from integration grew to such an extent that it would be prohibitively expensive if it exclusively used thirdparty connectors. It therefore needed to find a flexible and cost-effective alternative.

The Solution

After a review of the market, it identified SX from NDL's Digital Transformation Suite as the solution it needed. This proven integration technology takes the place of disparate APIs, saving the time and expense of acquiring multiple adaptors. It links to and from the front office, or joins back-office applications together, thus dramatically improving business processes and workflows.

Key Benefits

- Cost-effective in-house integration
- Multiple implementations
- Substantial time savings
- Re-deployment of valuable resource

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SX removes waste from processes and makes them more streamlined. The development time involved in any new integration is very quickly counter-balanced by the volume of administrative work it saves. As a result, the person who was doing that data entry can then be more effectively deployed on more valuable work.



Jason Lorenz, Development Manager
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

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The Solution (continued) ↓

SX was a proven product and, after seeing a simple demonstration of how it could work for us, we were convinced it was what we needed to support our integration programme.



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The Benefits

Stratford-on-Avon District Council launched a programme to automate labour-intensive existing manual data-entry processes, using SX to automatically transfer information between applications:

- ICT help desk:** previously, support requests were made over the phone and helpdesk technicians would then log these into the central Track It system. Stratford-on-Avon District Council realised it was a waste to use this valuable resource for mundane data entry. It therefore introduced a simple online request form: SX then took this information and transferred it automatically into the Track It system. As a result, "it meant the helpdesk staff do what they are employed to do – solve IT problems - rather than wasting time on data entry."
- Leave requests:** Stratford-on-Avon District Council has its own in-house time recording system, with modules for sickness management, expense claims, and annual leave management. Used by all staff, the District Council is looking to market this product commercially. The annual leave module allows the facility for requesting and recording annual, flexi and time-in-lieu leave, however each of these leave requests then had to be manually re-entered into the central Snowdrop HR system. Using SX, this information is now transferred automatically into Snowdrop. In **three years of operation, 12,000 leave requests** have been entered into Snowdrop via SX, representing a substantial saving of resource, allowing this time to be diverted into more valuable work.
- Parking fine payments:** if drivers receive a parking ticket, they then have to pay a fine either online, over the telephone or in person at the District Council offices. The online system was already integrated with the central ICES parking application; however any payments received by phone or in person had to be manually reconciled with ICES. This included checking if the correct payment had been made: fines paid within 14 days are subject to a 50 per cent reduction. It was taking at least two hours a day to carry out this reconciliation. Using SX, the process has now been automated: RPA picks up the transaction from the cash receipting system, interrogates ICES and matches the payment to the amount required; if the correct amount has not been paid, it produces an exception report. Approximately **8,500 transactions have been carried out over a period of six months** and, with two hours per day of manual processing eliminated, this amounts **over a year to 70 person days saved.**
- Planning:** any interested party is able to browse planning applications online and then make comments. When the planning application is of major local interest, this can generate a huge amount of feedback. These comments were being submitted to the District Council as individual emails which then had to be manually entered into the central Idox Uniform planning system. Using SX, the identities of responders and dates of submission are now automatically entered into the system. Stratford-on-Avon District Council will now move on to developing a process through which the comments themselves will be recorded without any manual intervention: it has been estimated that this will **save 11 hours a week.**

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SX has enabled us to reduce a number of manual processes across the authority, without the expense of buying a whole host of third party connectors. We are continuing to try to identify any other processes which involve significant data entry and re-engineer them using awi to reduce waste: it's one tool which can do many different jobs for us.



Jason Lorenz, Development Manager
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

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What's Next?

Stratford-on-Avon District Council continues to look at its processes to see where savings can be made through the use of SX.

For more information about NDL's Digital Transformation Suite;

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