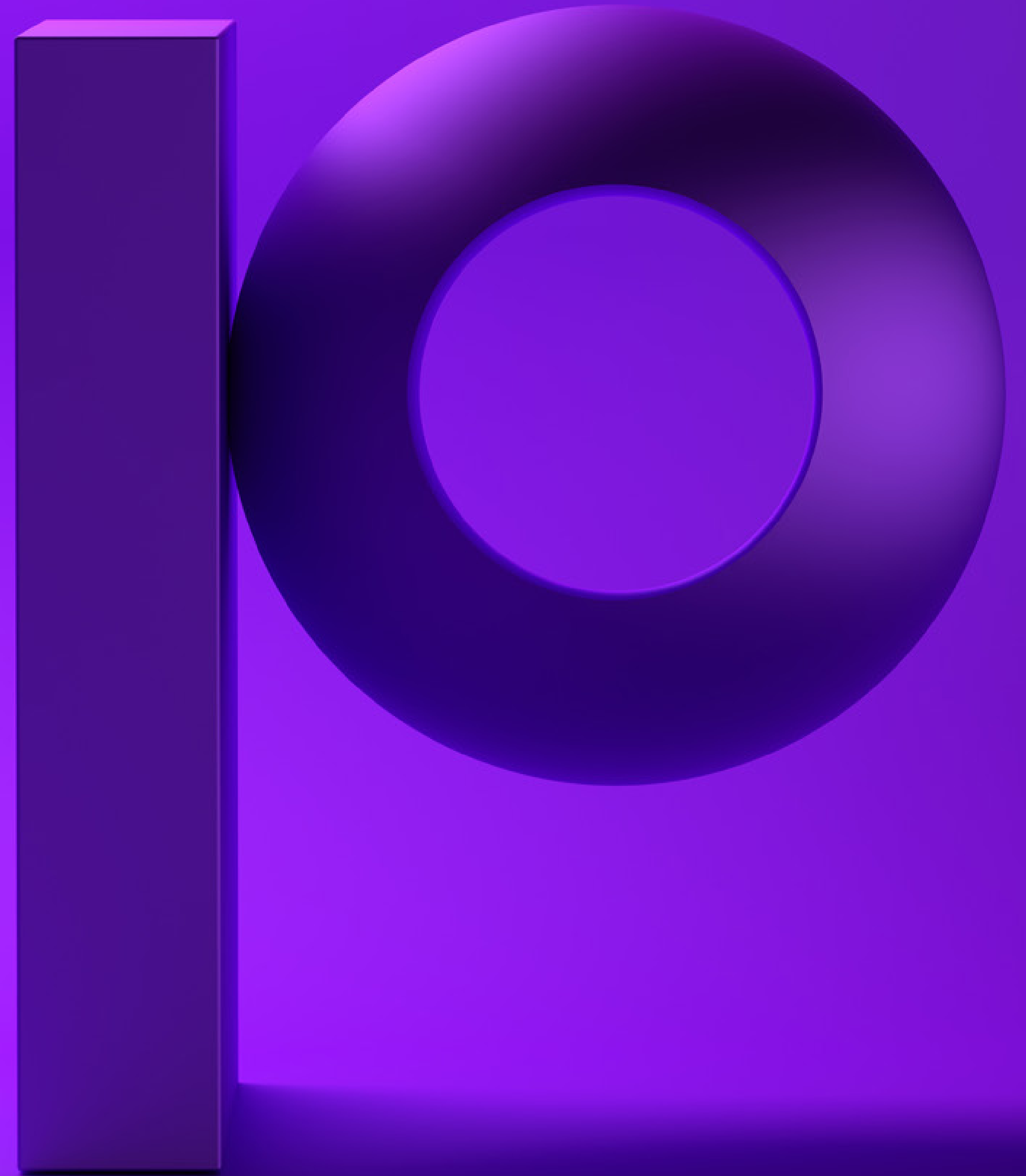


precisely

Insights From SAP® Master Data Professionals

What it takes to digitize your material master processes and make an impact



Introduction

To thrive in today's competitive and increasingly digital economy and effectively launch new products, your materials master data processes must be fast and efficient. If you're responsible for improving SAP master data processes, this eBook is for you. You'll learn which strategies you need to implement to speed up your materials and other master data processes while improving data quality and compliance.

Throughout this eBook, you'll learn about the benefits your peers are experiencing using Precisely's industry-leading SAP ERP automation and data management platforms—and get tips to help you uncover your own wins in the area of materials master data.



Philips Lighting simplifies SAP materials master data creation

Philips Lighting, a global leader in lighting and LED technologies dedicated to innovation and continued growth, has been managing its product lines with SAP software since 2011. Mass data changes in SAP ERP were a resource-intensive and time-consuming task for its off-shore IT support team—with over 40 people managing requests for up to 500 materials. The process became unmanageable very quickly, according to Sylvain Darve, SAP Data Manager at Philips Lighting.

“Using Precisely Automate has now become second nature for business users — it changed our life. Since its adoption, we have acquired a great deal of autonomy, with less need for support and above all a high degree of responsiveness.”

Sylvain Darve,
SAP Data Manager, Philips Lighting





Business benefits

Philips Lighting implemented Precisely Automate to simplify and streamline these processes and to synchronize documents created in their SAP system. According to Darve, the company saw significant results very quickly after implementing Precisely Automate solutions.

- What previously required 13 manual transactions to create a material in SAP ERP is now automated as soon as the material creation sheet is made. After using Precisely Automate for ten months, the business saved 1,600 hours (or the equivalent of one full-time employee) a year.
- The data management team can now focus on maintaining high-quality data in their SAP system and provide departments with detailed reports and analysis in real-time.
- With Precisely Automate, business users can change, add, or delete data with ease and flexibility, without needing to call on IT—resulting in significant savings in cost and time.

“With Precisely Automate, our business users can change, add or delete data with ease and flexibility.”

**Sylvain Darve,
SAP Data Manager, Philips Lighting**

Energy drink company transforms product launch process

A major beverage corporation uses Automate Evolve to improve supply chain operations and speed up its product launch processes. Where life before had been a sort of “organized chaos” with a manual data gathering exercise and a lot of effort in chasing people, according to the Director of IT, SAP, the company moved to a “cohesive digitized solution” with Precisely Automate.

The previous manual process to collect materials and other SAP master data involved collecting data on a spreadsheet with multiple tabs to capture data from various groups. That spreadsheet would be emailed around to the different groups to collect their data points and then sent to the master data team to key the data into the SAP system. This error-prone process was challenging to track, trace, and audit and there were version control issues when updates would happen.

When business organization changes led to an increase in the number of product launches, the company realized it needed to transform its workflow process for new products. According to the Director of IT, SAP, the business was able to significantly reduce launch cycle times to complete projects, scale-up capacity, and get more visibility as to where projects were in the pipeline.





Business benefits

The following process improvements were cited as a result of using Automate Evolve's New Product Introduction (NPI) solution:

- The automated workflow helped reduce data-entry errors and created a quicker way to validate materials master data.
- The project managers now have the visibility they needed to effectively manage their product launches.
- Launch cycle times were significantly reduced thanks to the automated workflow and the ability to run some steps in parallel.
- The master data team now has the governance in place to allow the business users to have true ownership of the data—with the added ability to embed business rules that are easy to modify.

“The ease of use of the Automate Evolve platform gave me and my team the ability to self-create our own process solution. The controls in place easily allow repeatable processes to collect the right data at the right time from the right people.”

Director of IT, SAP
Energy Drink Company

CPG manufacturer streamlines new product workflow

The master data governance team at a major CPG manufacturer created a new product workflow using Precisely Automate to streamline its processes for getting materials created in its SAP system. Improving data integrity was a key motivator for creating the workflow, according to the company's project manager, who said that previously, the master files team had to perform all the work manually and rely on memory and guesswork that the correct data was entered.

The company's Precisely Automate Platform Manager added that other motivators for the project were to create efficiencies in the product launch process and save time. They shared that launch innovation managers previously wasted a lot of manual hours checking multiple tabs in spreadsheets every day to see when each team (including strategy, marketing, launch innovation, finance, labeling, packaging, quality, and data integrity teams) had finished their portion of the process.



“With Precisely Automate, we didn’t have to go to our IT group (which we knew was strapped for time) to request changes, and we didn’t need a programming degree to use it; it’s easy to update the workflow to make it better and more efficient for your business.”

**Project Manager,
Master Data Governance, CPG manufacturer**



Business benefits

The company's master data team touted several benefits of the new product workflow, including:

- Users don't have to know programming; they can perform a few basic data checks and press a button to run scripts behind the scenes automatically.
- With all the business rules and knowledge in the system itself, users don't have to waste brainpower knowing that part and companies don't lose all that information when an employee moves on to another job.
- There is governance of the materials master data being put into the SAP system, as the product workflow automatically runs the process past all teams to enter or approve data. And some tasks can happen in parallel without waiting for a spreadsheet to go from one person to the next.

“Precisely Automate is very user-friendly as it's essentially drag and drop for creating the workflow forms. With it, you can pull in data from different sources – writing rules behind every field and putting in custom fields with very little effort.”

Precisely Automate Platform Manager

Pharmascience, Inc. streamlines complex manual processes

Canada's 10th-largest pharmaceutical company Pharmascience Inc., which exports products to 60 countries around the world, had been challenged by a complex, manual, and repetitive process for plant maintenance requests, according to John Nickerson, SAP Professional at the company. Other SAP processes were just as time-consuming and error-prone, with some involving an inefficient and cumbersome loading tool and others requiring weeks' worth of ABAP development and testing to handle master data conversion and business transactions.

After receiving a mandate from leadership to find technology to help reduce mundane tasks by 10%, Nickerson's team discovered that Precisely Automate could help on many fronts. The company built solutions to accelerate master data loading and streamline the process for plant maintenance requests—automating manual processes via forms and workflows and providing visibility into usage bottlenecks to identify areas for improvement in maintenance practices.

Pharmascience estimated that they saved at least 1,900 person-hours in processing time after deploying Precisely Automate for a year, according to Jean-Francois Naggar, Director of Business Applications at Pharmascience—time which is being reinvested into more value-added tasks, such as pursuing innovation and enhancing the customer experience.



“Precisely Automate is a major enabler of innovation because it helps us eliminate so many of the administrative tasks that would otherwise bog us down.”

**SAP Professional,
Pharmascience, Inc.**



Business benefits

According to John and Jean-Francois, the business has experienced the following benefits by using Precisely Automate:

- Because Precisely Automate is easy to use, business analysts can perform tasks previously reserved for SAP specialists. It saves time, achieves greater accuracy, and helps users add value to the business, which increases job satisfaction.
- Some time-consuming and mundane tasks have been eliminated altogether, and the burden on data stewards has been lessened. Instead of people spending hours copying data from spreadsheets into the SAP system, a background scheduling job does all of that automatically, with fewer errors and no human intervention required.

“Materials master creation used to take about 75 days — to collect the necessary information, send it to the various departments, and so forth. With Precisely Automate, we can accomplish the same task much more rapidly. That means getting to market faster — and that’s a massive benefit for us.”

Jean-Francois Naggar,
Director of Business Applications, Pharmascience

Carhartt improves productivity by automating materials data processes

Carhartt, a leading global manufacturer of apparel, had been working with a legacy ERP system that was reaching the end of life, and its data was migrating to SAP ERP. The master data team had been manually entering materials master data in the SAP system and looked to Precisely Automate to speed up the process of moving of thousands of materials for its initial migration load of creating materials in SAP ERP. Once the master data team was up to speed, it began bringing in different business teams to get their processes up and running.

Master Data Analyst Jill Edge of Carhartt found the different team members to be very responsive after seeing a demo, saying that it was enlightening to see how much easier it could be to load data with Automate Studio rather than manual creation in SAP ERP.



“The biggest thing for us is preventing data errors in the first place. We like that in the workflow forms, we can put in a lot of validation upfront to stop people from accidentally pushing through bad data. We love having different checks and balances in those systems.”

Jill Edge,
Master Data Analyst, Carhartt



Business benefits

According to Edge, Carhartt reaped the following benefits with Precisely Automate:

- People saw a definite improvement in the processes— with reduced cycle time and improved productivity.
- Automating SAP materials master data processes empowered business teams to make an impact with other value-added activities, and implementing proactive data stewardship capabilities helped to get data right the first time.
- The master data team no longer had to act as a “middle-man” because the new workflow sent out automatic reminders.

“We’re very, very happy with our decision to use Precisely Automate.”

**Jill Edge,
Master Data Analyst, Carhartt**

Ascend fulfills requests for sample materials faster with automated

The master data governance team at Ascend Performance Materials—a company that produces chemicals, fibers, and plastics—recently identified a number of processes that were ripe for improvement, including the process for fulfilling requests for sample materials. The existing process required could take anywhere from a minimum of 14 days up to 45 days, according to LaMona Jones, Senior Master Data Specialist at Ascend, and was manual and complex, involving many handoffs and multiple approvers.

Ascend streamlined the process using Automate Evolve, reducing the number of handoffs and optimizing the entire flow and communication to key stakeholders—from stock-keeping unit (SKU) creation to sales order creation. The wish-list for the new workflow included better visibility, more clear requirements to the requester, and shorter lead times for the order fulfillment process.



“Automate Evolve automates the data entry into the SAP system, and then the workflow is either routed to another department for compliance review or becomes operational. That communication is all channeled automatically through the Precisely solution, allowing us to be more agile.”

LaMona Jones,
Senior Master Data Specialist, Ascend Performance Materials



Business benefits

According to Rod Johnson, who manages the company's global master data governance team, the Precisely Automate solution has yielded a number of benefits:

- The automated solution has substantially decreased the time required for fulfilling the order requests for sample materials—from a minimum of 14 days to one day.
- The new workflow notifies critical process stakeholders and individuals about the status of requests.
- There has been a significant improvement in data quality (an increase to 99.9% accuracy) due to embedding business rules into the form used to collect and approve the data.
- The master data governance team is saving time by not having to focus on data cleansing.

“We streamlined the number of handoffs and approvers in addition to reducing the SKU cycle time from a minimum of 14 days to one day.”

**LaMona Jones,
Senior Master Data Specialist, Ascend Performance Materials**

Advice from SAP master data professionals

Here is a collection of lessons learned, recommendations, and sage advice provided from master data professionals on how best to succeed in your own materials master data initiatives.



Don't make assumptions about the end-to-end process

Give yourself time to get through all the connected business processes and fully understand them.



Choose the initial business area wisely

Start with a business unit with enough volume of requests to test your automation solution in the first few weeks after rollout.



Question & document thoroughly

Make sure to verify with each business group what they actually do, and document that well before you start. Look at every field in the SAP system and question who will be responsible for entering or approving that data.



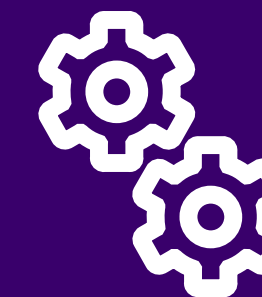
Find the right people to talk to

Ensure someone from each business group is engaged with your process from the start and throughout the automation process to minimize rework.



Build in ample time for testing

Bring in the business to test early and often, and ensure you have enough people on board to do the testing.



Map out the manual process flow

Get the process right first by planning for flexibility in the map. Using an agile methodology is recommended.

Learn more about these success stories and the products behind them

We hope you enjoyed learning from the master data professionals featured in this eBook. The software they used to achieve the benefits they discussed was Automate Evolve, or its predecessor, Precisely Foundation. Both platforms include a unique combination of enterprise-grade automation, data stewardship, and deep SAP integration capabilities, enabling your business to go faster and be more agile—while improving data quality and compliance.

Although our Automate Evolve platform can automate any SAP business process, it's ideally suited at digitizing the complex master data processes that underly your business-critical manufacturing, supply chain, sales, and finance operations.

[Learn how Automate Evolve enables you to speed up master data processes while improving data quality, compliance, and visibility.](#)





About Precisely

Precisely is the global leader in data integrity, providing accuracy and consistency in data for 12,000 customers in more than 100 countries, including 99 of the Fortune 100. Precisely's data integration, data quality, data governance, location intelligence, and data enrichment products power better business decisions to create better outcomes. Learn more at www.precisely.com.

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