



Arnott's recipe for automation success, baking accuracy and efficiency into its operations

Client: Arnott's

Industry: Manufacturing

Region: Asia Pacific & Japan

Client overview

The Arnott's Group is the custodian of some of Australia's most recognized food brands. It employs over 4,000 people and has manufacturing operations across Asia Pacific.

Partner

 **ASHLING**

75%

manual customer orders
now processed digitally

> 99%

Sustained week-on-week
robot success rate

10

average months to ROI



The Arnott's Group has embraced a structured approach to enterprise automation which is helping the group optimize operations and unlock new capacity for growth. Its approach includes focused planning and prioritization of automation opportunities to ensure ROI.

Founded in 1865, The Arnott's Group is best known for its biscuits, including the Tim Tam—Australia's most loved and most iconic chocolate biscuit. Over the years, the group has evolved, and it now makes more than 1,045 products across Australia, New Zealand, and Asia.

With ambitions for further local and international growth, The Arnott's Group set out on an efficiency drive. It wanted to make the most of its resources and turned to automation as it provided a logical way to increase efficiency and free up time for high value work.

The Arnott's Group had experimented with various automation platforms before and had realistic expectations about both the possibilities and limitations of automation. The key learning was that, rather than viewing automation as a technology challenge, it needs to be approached as a program that can deliver long-term, sustained value to the business.



Jari Laurikainen, IT Director, Enterprise Applications at The Arnott's Group was tasked to lead this initiative with his team and they engaged Ashling Partners for support.

Global experts in intelligent automation, Ashling Partners offered a mature and structured approach to automation with strong governance built in. They also used UiPath which was well suited for end-to-end automations spanning the group's multiple systems, including SAP.



Jari Laurikainen
IT Director, Enterprise
Applications, The
Arnott's Group

“What we were missing in the past was a structured way to build, deploy, and sustain automation and that’s what Ashling Partners brought to the table. The fact that UiPath was their preferred platform reinforced it was the right solution.”



Shaping Success: Early Wins Free Up 60 Hours Every Week

Embarking on its automation program, the Enterprise Applications team sought to demonstrate value quickly. They established a program office, led by Patrick Massad, IT Manager of Planning & Automation, to coordinate the initiative. Working closely with Ashling Partners, they held deep discovery sessions with the business to understand their pain points and identify high impact use cases. One of these was the daily processing of sales orders.

“We switched on UiPath and essentially automated processing 75% of our manual orders overnight. Whereas, using traditional digitization methods like EDI, this would have required a customer-by-customer approach, taking a lot of time and resources.”

Jari Laurikainen
IT Director, Enterprise Applications,
The Arnott's Group

While many larger customers of The Arnott's Group place orders via an electronic data interchange (EDI), the group has many other customers who send in orders by email.

Ashling Partners has helped the group transform and digitize this process using UiPath Document Understanding. So now, when an order form comes in via email, Document Understanding extracts data from the PDF and creates an order in SAP. As different customers use different order forms, Document Understanding standardizes the data before inputting it into SAP. From there, SAP checks the availability of inventory before sending the order to the warehouse.

Now, 75% of previously manual orders have been automated which has saved as much as 60 hours per week of work. It has also eliminated the stress of processing orders received late in the afternoon.

“Depending on the complexity of an order, it would take 15 to 30 minutes to process manually, and it was a rush every afternoon to get the orders into our systems and ready for the warehouse to dispatch in time,” said Laurikainen.



Amongst the dozen or so automated processes to date, The Arnott's Group has also **automated invoice processing with UiPath Document Understanding. Combining robotic process automation (RPA) and artificial intelligence (AI)**, the solution reads incoming invoices, facilitates three-way matching, and posts the invoices in SAP. **The UiPath robot now processes the majority of incoming invoices.**

This also allowed The Arnott's Group to bring invoice processing from a large, outsourced team back in-house. The small in-house team handles exceptions and supplier communication while the robot does the heavy lifting of data entry.



“UiPath delivers significant strategic value across our supply chain, finance, and commercial operations. By automating repetitive, high-volume tasks that were previously prone to error, we were able to realize and demonstrate that value quickly.”

Sean McLintock

Chief Digital and Technology Officer, The Arnott's Group

Scaling automation across the enterprise

On average, The Arnott's Group has achieved an **average return on investment from its automation projects within 10 months**. It has also built a solid foundation to scale the benefits of automation. This foundation includes a Centre of Excellence led by the Enterprise Applications team and a Modern Robotic Operating Center (mROC).



“Automation isn’t just about efficiency—it’s about unlocking new value, empowering employees, and driving strategic growth. The governance model provided by Ashling Partners has been instrumental in enabling these outcomes.”

Sean McLintock
Chief Digital and Technology Officer,
The Arnott's Group

The mROC, managed by Ashling Partners, provides ongoing support, maintenance, and enhancements. For example, with UiPath Insights, the mROC monitors automations already in production to ensure they’re delivering value. If they’re not, Insights helps to identify blockers and where to improve.

The Arnott's Group has also established a backlog of automation opportunities which are already qualified and ready to be executed.

“One of the things that is unique about our approach and working with Ashling Partners is the way we have planned and built out our roadmap. As an output from the initial discovery sessions with Ashling and business stakeholders, we now have a well-documented and prioritized backlog of automation opportunities including projected business benefits, technical feasibility and high-level effort,” said Laurikainen.

This planning has helped with prioritization and also engagement with the wider group. For instance, the Enterprise Applications team is able to clearly communicate timelines and what’s required from business teams to deliver projects in their area.

Laurikainen and his team are committed to identifying new opportunities to help the business solve problems and create efficiencies with automation, and they have a process in place to drive this lifecycle. They also hope to make their own lives easier with automation.

“The biggest benefits of automation come from solving key business challenges and automating high-volume tasks. However, there are a lot of mundane tasks within every department that can be automated to make our lives easier. These shouldn’t be overlooked,” said Laurikainen.



“Through our collaboration with The Arnott's Group and UiPath, we’ve seen incredible momentum in the group’s success with automation. Most importantly, they now have a process and support structure in place to identify and realize value from automation on an ongoing basis.”

Benjamin Lingard
Country Head - Australia, Ashling Partners

