Detmold establishes sustainable automation program to drive future growth

CLIENT OVERVIEW:
Established in 1948, the Detmold Group is an Australian family-owned and operated business, supplying some of the world's largest and most iconic food and retail brands. The business's global operations span 17 countries and encompass multiple brands, including Detpak and Detmold Medical.

70% Higher employee productivity

50% Reduction in time vs previous automation solution

12 months Return on investment in cost savings

UiPath

Detmold Group has renewed its commitment to automation, pivoting to a more robust and sustainable approach that supports the company's growth and innovation.

Founded in Adelaide, South Australia, Detmold Group now operates in 17 countries with seven global manufacturing facilities and 2,800 employees. The company aspires to be an innovative global partner, creating packaging for a better tomorrow and making a positive impact for its people, its partners, and the planet.

Detmold Group's automation initiatives support these aspirations by freeing people from complex, manual processes and data entry, so they can focus on activities that add value to the business and its customers.

"Our goals with automation are to help our people move up the value chain to focus on higher value work and to support growth across the business."

Darren Wilksch
Group General Manager - Transformation, Detmold Group

Prior to partnering with UiPath and Ashling, Detmold Group had attempted to use another automation solution. However, it failed to deliver the desired results and the IT team had to frequently step in to resolve issues and drive improvements.

Darren Wilksch, Group General Manager - Transformation, Detmold Group, wanted the business to be more self-sustaining and able to manage and optimize automations without heavy reliance on IT. This led to a strategic reset and engagement with Ashling to implement UiPath Orchestrator and software robots.

In addition to its expertise in UiPath and establishing intelligent automation programs, Ashling offered ongoing support, maintenance, and enhancements through its Modern Robotic Operating Center (mROC).

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> "We've had a great experience working with Ashling. They took the time to understand our business, were flexible to our needs, and worked exceptionally with our supply chain team to deliver the automations within a tight timeframe."

Darren Wilksch
Group General Manager - Transformation, Detmold Group

New approach to automation yields 50% reduction in processing time

Detmold Group's immediate priority was to move off its previous automation platform before the end of its licensing agreement. Ashling rose to the challenge, working through the holiday season to move the company's two existing automations onto UiPath in under two months.

The first of these automations generates purchase orders for suppliers based on sales orders, replacing a highly manual, error-prone process. The automation not only eliminates manual re-keying of data but enforces consistent business rules before purchase order completion. The second automation reconciles data from disparate systems to provide an accurate, up-to-date picture of in-flight and completed orders.

Both of these processes are key to ensuring efficient order fulfillment, and with the automations now running on UiPath, Detmold Group has increased visibility and confidence in their performance.

The combination of UiPath and the improved architecture and design delivered by Ashling has reduced processing time by 50%, effectively doubling Detmold Group's capacity. The new processes have also boosted employee productivity by 70%.

Thanks to these efficiencies, Detmold Group achieved a full return on its investment in automating these processes within 12 months.

> "The reliability and robustness of the UiPath platform ensures consistent performance. We also now have much greater visibility into the automations, so we can optimize performance where needed."

Darren Wilksch
Group General Manager - Transformation, Detmold Group

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"Detmold Group's move to UiPath shows what a robust platform and the right operating model can deliver with faster cycle times, fewer exceptions, and capacity back to the business. We're excited to help scale these wins across the value chain."

Benjamin Lingard
Country Head Australia, Ashling Partners

Business takes the lead in managing and driving automation

With the intuitive nature of UiPath Orchestrator, Detmold Group's business teams can monitor, measure, and track robot activity and performance in real-time, shifting operational responsibility from IT back into the business. Supported by Ashling and the mROC, business teams can also enhance and make changes to automations, such as updating financial cost codes used for reconciliation. This ability to self-serve is key to Detmold Group's objective to build a more sustainable automation program.

"What stands out at Detmold Group is the team's ownership of automation. With UiPath and Ashling's mROC support, the business is in the driver's seat, optimizing continuously and setting a strong foundation for agentic AI use cases."

Benjamin Lingard
Country Head Australia, Ashling Partners

Detmold Group and Ashling are now scaling automation across the business with two new processes in-flight. The first extracts line-level data from supplier purchase orders and automates accurate creation of corresponding sales orders in the ERP using UiPath Document Understanding capabilities such as classification, machine-learning extraction, and human-in-the-loop validation validation. This will result in fewer errors and less re-work.

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The second new automation, international freight invoicing, handles the reconciliation and coding of international freight and customs charges. Detmold Group has already identified an additional six processes that would benefit from automation. It is also exploring the use of UiPath Process Mining to better understand and optimize other processes across the business.

Looking ahead, Detmold Group is exploring the application of agentic AI to further reduce manual intervention, using autonomous agents to detect, interpret, and resolve common exceptions across its order-to-cash and freight invoicing processes.

Combining Document Understanding, Communications Mining, and Maestro, these agents will be able to retrieve context, propose fixes, and execute routine actions, reserving only edge cases for human review.

The company anticipates working alongside Ashling to build business cases for these processes and scale up its automation program.

For others just starting out with automation, Wilksch recommended taking an end-to-end approach and seeking partnership and support rather than a standalone solution.

"The monitoring and support we've had from Ashling and the mROC have been core to our success, which is why I would say choosing the right partner for your automation journey is critical."

Darren Wilksch
Group General Manager - Transformation, Detmold Group

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