



Automating processes

with Eko Integrations

Company

profile

Charoen Pokphand Foods Public Company Limited (CPF), a subsidiary of CP Group, is the leading agro-industrial and food conglomerate in the Asia-Pacific region. With over 100,000 employees, the greater part of the company's production base is in Thailand with many operations overseas.



Challenges

CPF operates a huge distribution network for its products and services. It not only sells agricultural goods to other businesses, it also directly sells ready-to-eat products to consumers in its own retail stores. Managing this ever increasingly complex distribution network has posed a tremendous challenge to CPF, whose profit margins are increasingly dependent on extreme operational efficiency. At the same time, CPF's large and mobile workforce lack a meaningful tool to help them efficiently disseminate information in a timely manner.

Solution

CPF approached Eko because they needed a flexible communication solution that can handle the ever changing demands of a complex distribution network. Together with Eko, CPF launched an IT modernization project designed to increase operational efficiency as part of their search for a new internal communication system. In order to minimize communication friction, CPF needed to automate all existing communication processes, from employee to employee communication at the distribution centers, to the final sales reports to company executives.

Because of this, it is essential that the new system be capable of integrating into a variety of CPF's existing IT systems. A key enabler of CPF's new communication system is Eko's integration API. The integration API allows CPF's internal IT systems to control all of Eko's features via simple RESTful HTTP calls. This gives CPF flexibility to integrate any system into Eko, as well as add their own business logic to control how communication flows within Eko. Additionally, Eko's secure infrastructure provide CPF staff peace of mind in the security of their communication, given the amount of sensitive internal data that is sent over their communication system.

Automating analytics reports

At CPF's headquarters in Bangkok, executives in the sales department depend on a variety of channels in order to receive the latest sales data. These channels include traditional communication methods like email, or mobile friendly consumer messaging apps. However, the lack of an official channel for sales reports along with prevalent usage of consumer apps creates a huge efficiency and security concern within CPF. Additionally, because all sales data are stored in legacy in-house on-premise systems, it often takes staff hours every day collecting and building the sales reports for each sales team.

In order to alleviate this, CPF developed an API connector on top of their on-premise analytics system to retrieve the necessary data, automatically build the correct sales reports, and send the right report to the right people via Eko's integration API. This means, at the beginning of every day, each sales team will receive a copy of the latest sales data pulled directly from CPF's analytics system. If an employee needs to have updated data throughout the day, he can easily query CPF's analytics system right from Eko, all without going through a complicated process to connect to their on-premise network.

As a result, the entire sales report process is now automated. CPF executives and the entire sales department can receive and analyze sales reports right on their phone, without needing to access legacy on-premise systems.

Facilitating employee to employee communication

Throughout Thailand, CPF has built a complex distribution network that consists of many regional headquarters and distribution centers, supplied by 98 factories, and managing billions of dollars worth of livestock, feeds, and other agricultural goods every day. The coordination of inventory varies season by season, leading to a very elastic workforce that moves between different regions multiple times a year.

CPF needs a flexible solution that can handle the ever changing demands of a complex distribution network. Using the integration API, CPF developed a system to automatically create and manage regional Group chats — a discussion forum for all employees in a region for managing company operations. As employees join & leave a region, they are instantly added to the correct Group chat. Because Eko stores all data in Group chats permanently, as new employees join a region, they can read the conversations from previous regional employees and pick up right where they left off. In addition to this, employees can start collaborating with their co-workers instantly, without needing to remember phone numbers or emails, a common hassle for regional workers who often forced to relocate offices on the fly.

Preparing for workflow of the future

As Eko is deployed throughout CPF's offices, factories, and distribution centers, CPF will have a communication system where all employees are connected to the company via their Eko account. Corporate culture is in the middle of a fundamental shift to a more open and collaborative culture. In order to embrace this, CPF sees Eko as a key tool to enable more dialog between employees and the company. CPF's goal is to have all employees use Eko. The ideas generated and problems solved with the help of Eko will be the key to a more efficient organization and increase CPF's overall competitiveness within their industry.

Results

As a business, CPF needs to remain agile in order to readily cope with changing circumstances across their markets. With a secure and integration friendly Eko solution, CPF greatly reduced management burden for regional managers and created a much more optimal distribution network.