



### CASE STUDY

## Unilever brings complete visibility to supply chain & finance processes, cutting cycle times in half



**Company name :**

Unilever International

**Industry:**

Manufacturing & Retail

**Location:**

Singapore

Unilever International required a process automation platform to map out and simplify some of their more complex processes, which were not properly integrated with their key systems. Providing clear, integrated, and automated workflows would provide better visibility, especially for supply chain and finance processes. This would also reduce time employees spent chasing colleagues for approvals and manually updating data to ensure compliance with international shipping and pricing processes.

Working with Bizagi implementation partner, Nividous, Unilever International used Bizagi's low-code platform as a user-friendly interface to manage large data sets. Integrations with key applications, such as SAP and DocuSign, provided an easy and reliable way to ensure data was up-to-date and decisions were approved on-time by the correct people. Visibility of workflows including customer shipping information maintenance and customer pricing frameworks improved accountability and accuracy of information across the business while automation contributed to halving pricing approval times.

### Objectives

- ❊ Provide visibility and transparency of business processes
- ❊ Integrate disparate applications
- ❊ Close gaps in processes to minimize risk and ensure governance
- ❊ Eliminate manual chasing for approvals to speed up process
- ❊ Save time and increase efficiency of key processes
- ❊ Re-design and automate customer shipping information process to ensure data is always up-to-date
- ❊ Automate customer pricing framework to save time and adhere to multiple parameters
- ❊ Centralize marketing budgets to eliminate inconsistencies

### Achievements

- ✔ Established workflows and clear user interfaces provide complete visibility of process status
- ✔ Integration with SAP, DocuSign and Excel for speed and accuracy of data
- ✔ Full audit trail of processes with accountability for task ownership
- ✔ Automated approval reminders to meet deadlines
- ✔ Customer shipping information data updates automated with approval flows to meet company policies
- ✔ Customer pricing framework reengineered to intuitive user interface with 3x faster creation
- ✔ Customer pricing framework cycle time reduced by 50%
- ✔ Centralized marketing budget system with tracker of actual vs planned spend

- 3x** faster pricing framework creation
- 50%** reduced pricing approval cycle time
- 1900+** customer shipping cases submitted in 7 months
- Complete visibility across workflows

*"We couldn't be happier with the rollout... Users now have visibility of the status of every single request and can follow up with team members to close the action. If we don't have the right approvals, it leads to leakage in profits, so the controls in Bizagi have really helped the business."*

**Cynthia Tan**

Digital Transformation & Capability Lead

## Overview

Unilever International, part of one of the world's leading consumer goods companies, provides more than 10,000 products and materials across food, personal care and home care to thousands of customers globally.

They embarked on a digital transformation initiative to establish workflows and automate processes across the business, with a focus on supply chain and finance operations, to deliver a more transparent and reliable way of working.

## Challenge

Globally, Unilever uses a vast array of technologies, some of which did not serve Unilever International's business model of "Unilever International". They required a process automation platform to simplify some of their more complex processes. Providing clear, integrated, and automated workflows would provide better visibility, particularly for supply chain and finance processes, as well as ensuring better governance and controls by closing gaps to eliminate room for human error and providing schedules for auditors.

Additionally, as the business grew, it was important for senior management to allow staff to maintain a work-life balance without expanding headcount. They wanted to make processes more efficient and allow employees to focus on value-adding work, removing repetitive manual tasks. In particular, they could eliminate time spent chasing colleagues for information and approvals. The following processes posed significant challenges:

**Customer Shipping Information Maintenance:** Complex shipping documents were completed and shared over email, meaning there was no visibility or control over the process. They wanted to automate the process to ensure customer shipping information is properly maintained and required approvals are always completed.

**Customer Pricing Framework Maintenance:** Unilever International previously managed product portfolios in Excel. Creating a pricing framework to manage requests and proposals was very cumbersome due to various parameters involved. The process required official approvals to ensure correct pricing and reduce the risk of revenue loss.

**Central Marketing Spend Management:** There was no visibility on marketers' individual budget planning or reviews, across Unilever Asia and Unilever Korea with inconsistencies between planning documents and entries in the purchase system, SAP, making it difficult to plan and track marketing spend.

## Solution

Working with Bizagi implementation partner, Nividous, Unilever International were able to map out some of their key business processes to address bottlenecks and inefficiencies and increase control.

Bizagi's low-code platform provided a user-friendly interface to manage large data sets, without having to rely on manually completing spreadsheets and sharing them over email. Integrations with key applications, such as SAP and DocuSign, and automated Excel uploads, provided an easy and reliable way to ensure data was up-to-date and decisions were approved on time by the correct people.

*"We see great potential in Bizagi. The users are so comfortable, they know how to use the tool to build exactly what they want."*

**Cynthia Tan, Digital Transformation & Capability Lead**

## Results

Using Bizagi's low-code process automation platform, Unilever International have been able to automate multiple processes, with 14 processes live in the first two and a half years of use.

Bizagi has provided visibility control of Unilever International's business process by establishing an agreed workflow with the right governance, controls and approvals. The intuitive platform interface provides complete transparency on the status of processes, so it is clear who a task is sitting with. Additionally, the workflows provide audit trails which are easy to produce.

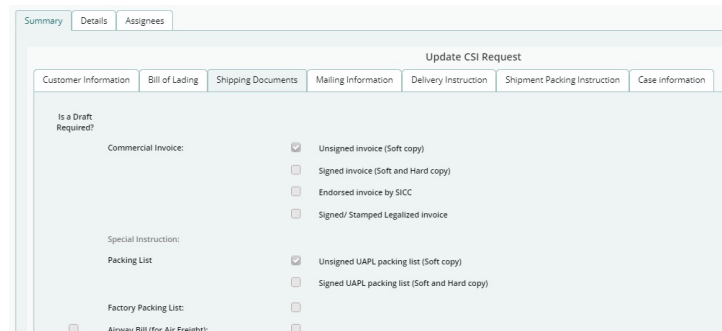
*"We couldn't be happier with the rollout... Users now have visibility of the status of every single request and can follow up with team members to close the action. If we don't have the right approvals, it leads to leakage in profits, so the controls in Bizagi have really helped the business."*

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Within the primary processes, the following results have been seen:

**Customer Shipping Information Maintenance:** Unilever International can now maintain complex shipping information and documents on a single platform for full visibility and control, rather than relying on Excel sheets shared over email. Over 170 fields are imported from Excel and displayed in an easy-to-use tabbed format in Bizagi.

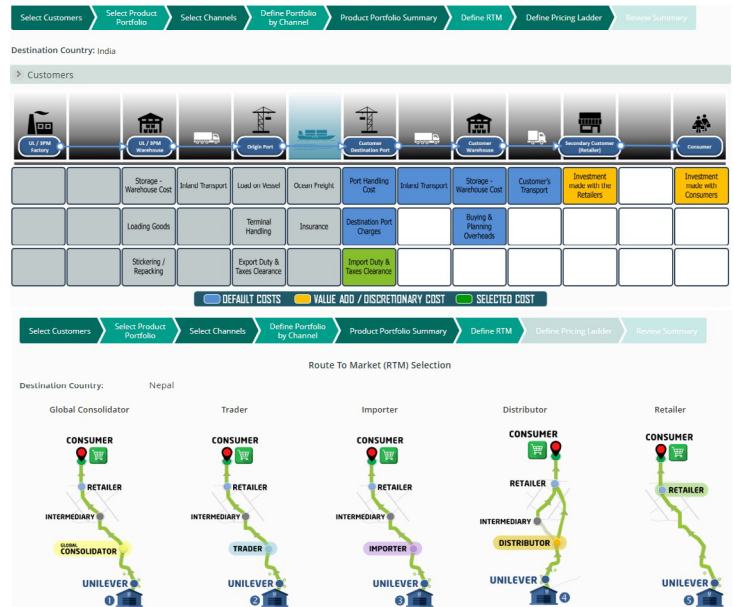
The platform also offers the flexibility to amend documents in response to any changes in shipping policies for various countries. The established processes mean that required approvals are made, with adherence to shipping policies automated within the workflow. Over 1,900 cases were submitted in the first seven months of use, with 87% of cases completed within a month of submission. Previously, cases would have taken up to two months to complete. Automated follow-up reminders have been put in place to avoid manual chasing.



Customer Shipping Information Dashboard

**Customer Pricing Framework Maintenance:** Custom Bizagi widgets were created to show a 3D view of information for an intelligent and visual UI of the customer pricing framework. This enabled users to specify multiple categories and easily configure margins and other pricing details such as freight and custom duties in a visual manner. A customized Master Data Sync with SAP enables a daily refresh of millions of materials and associated data to ensure information is always up to date.

Adherence to the pricing framework is now enforced for each customer, which ensures that no revenue is lost unnecessarily. Approvals are automated and all audits have gone smoothly since the process was implemented. The customer development team is can now create the pricing framework for a customer in 15 minutes, 3x faster than before, with 77% of case being submitted within 20 minutes. The average turnaround time for pricing approval is 1.4 days, a process cycle reduction of 50%.



Pricing Framework dashboard views

**Central Marketing Spend Management:** A workflow was established and agreed upon for the international marketing teams, which provided the basis for the Central Marketing Spend process. Through a single Bizagi portal, all accruals can be entered on time and accurately, with Excel sheets automatically generated and uploaded to SAP for ease of use.

There is now a single point of reference for marketing spends and budgets, integrated with an approval matrix to ensure reviews from senior management and automated reminders to ensure monthly planning is completed on time. Tracking of actuals vs plan are displayed on screen for full visibility and monthly reconciliation reports are generated to check all accounts are in order.

