

Reduce the human effort in your data chains

Every business is under pressure to automate its manual processes, to better integrate its internal systems and to share data with external parties. Many companies have business processes that are chained together by a mishmash of computer interfaces and human effort – negatively affecting operating costs, employee productivity and business relationships. It's not uncommon that the chains that connect trading partners increase in length with each new connection and every extension can introduce additional manual steps that compromise the process flow.

Automating these data chains with LANSA Composer lowers data processing costs and improves data accuracy by reducing the amount of paper, email, fax and human effort required for everyday repetitive tasks.

LANSA Composer is an application integration solution for automating the exchange of data and documents between systems and trading partners. It is compatible with ERP systems and common interfaces, such as EDI, FTP, Web services and email. New smart processes will handle unexpected events and restart interrupted sequences from the point of failure, which then run to completion without loss of data or transaction integrity. LANSA Composer's robot-like automation can execute a multi-step process with a single instruction and will run natively on IBM i or Microsoft Windows servers.

The newly released Version 3 of LANSA Composer adds support for robust transaction workflows that streamline the electronic interactions between internal departments

and organizations, saving time, reducing costs and improving customer service. Highlights of LANSA Composer Version 3 include:

- Improved visibility and tracking of files and business documents, via an extensible dashboard equipped with drill-down charts and statistics depicting cost of doing business, ROI and KPIs.
- Standard and sample business process orchestration templates that are modular, customizable and provide out-of-the-box compatibility with common EDI transactions.
- Visual data mapper support for XBRL, HL7, EDI X12 and EDIFACT standards, with data transformations all designed and executed using drag-and-drop techniques.



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LANSA Review Editor

- Substantial increase in the out-of-the-box process orchestration functionality and supported activities, including seamless integration with Java applications and foreign LANSA systems.

LANSA Composer Usage Examples

LANSA Composer is ideal for automating repetitive processes of any kind, as it supports multiple interfaces, document formats, transport protocols and data transformations. Below is an overview of the wide range of real-life integration projects for which LANSA Composer is being used.

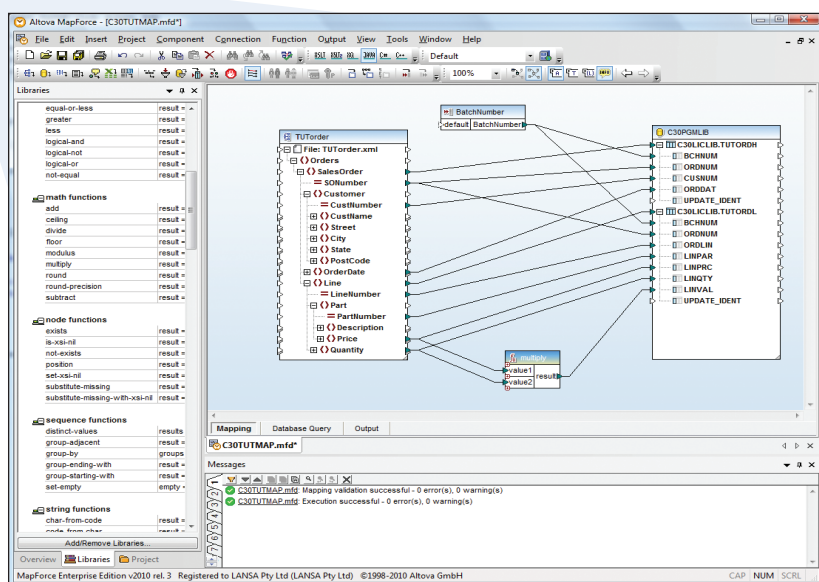
American Health Care Software Enterprises Inc. (AHC), an IBM business partner located in South Burlington, Vermont, USA, is a solution provider to the American healthcare industry. Customers include nursing facilities, assisted living and retirement homes, outpatient clinics and other healthcare providers. AHC's Harmony Health Care Management System offers fully integrated software suites that can be used standalone or with other solutions. Harmony, originally consisting of 20 million lines of Synon Cool/2E and RPG code, is in the process of being redeveloped and extended with Visual LANSA. Several of these extensions are portable point-of-care touch screen applications running on tablet PCs with data access to IBM i and Windows servers, helping nursing staff to provide timely, accurate quality patient care. AHC uses LANSA Composer for the exchange of Health Level Seven (HL7) secure medical information documents between their nursing home users and pharmacies, supporting the newly released XML-based HL7 standard, as well as the HL7 legacy EDI format. HL7 is also used between local hospitals and labs for the transfer of medical information, orders and test results. In addition, LANSA Composer plays a role in the constant exchange of information with medical trading partners, such as pharmacies, laboratories, referring institutions and the American EHR (Electronic Health Records) applications. →

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Visually map data transformations using a drag-and-drop interface to transform data between different formats.

Balitrond SA, based in Cannes, is one of France's leading hardline retailers, with over 20 stores spread over the south of France. The information for Balitrond's product catalogue comes from many suppliers, who send their files in various formats, such as CSV, XLS and XML, by email or FTP.

Until recently, supplier product and pricing updates were applied manually to the catalogue. This was a time consuming task occupying a full time resource from Balitrond's sales team. Balitrond has started a project using LANSA Composer, to fully integrate and automate the process. Steps include:

- Extracting the updates from the FTP server or SMTP email messages
- Converting the files to DB2/400 format
- Running a 3GL program to parse the updates into Balitrond's catalogue
- Sending a confirmation message with status update to the supplier
- Sending a confirmation to the catalogue manager about pricing and product updates

Casa International NV, headquartered in Belgium, is a specialist retailer of interior decorations, gifts, tableware, garden furniture and small furniture. With over 500 Casa shops across Belgium, Luxemburg, France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Italy, Casa is Europe's largest retailer in cozy living items. Casa carries about 6,000 items in its catalogue, a large part of which is also presented online at www.casashops.com, a site maintained and hosted by an external marketing company. Casa's core ERP system is IBM i-based and consists of a mixture of RPG and LANSA programs.

Casa and its marketing partner are implementing a new digital assets management system with product information management, using the FLO-suite in an Adobe InDesign environment. Generated content includes artwork for published leaflets, PDF files for in-store communication material, dynamically generated online content and more.

The solution uses LANSA Composer to automate the process of transmitting real-time updated item information to the digital asset management database. The information is exchanged in XML format and includes item specifications, special promotions and so on. Leo de Ridder, ICT Manager at CASA, explains, "The solution was selected to improve the uniformity of our corporate communications, reduce administrative preparation and allow for a database driven layout. Key factors were reducing costs, improving time-to-market and optimizing resources. We already used LANSA Integrator for other projects, but the benefit of using LANSA Composer is that business analysts can develop the mappings and transport



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processes. Complexity is reduced. The audit trail of the transmissions provides total end-to-end visibility to ensure close integration with the back-end ERP system."

Eagle Systems, Inc. (ESI) is part of the Eagle Group based in Wenatchee, Washington, USA, a leader in intermodal transportation and container repair with locations throughout the USA and Canada. Eagle Systems' core logistics system is Synon2E-based, while most recent development is with Visual LANSA Framework.

LANSA Composer projects that are currently being implemented at Eagle involve partner communications. These include outbound communication of invoices in CSV format over secure FTP with a van leasing partner. For another partner, Eagle is using LANSA Composer to replace Gentran EDI for mappings and transmission of various transactions.

An upcoming project involves the streamlining of transacting with container maintenance customers. While the trucking business uses mostly standard EDI format, the container business has fewer standards and consequently every new container customer is unique and may involve a lot of IT effort in setting up individual file layouts, FTP processing and programming. In a successful pilot test, Eagle has managed to considerably decrease the set up time for new container customers. Moreover, Eagle now has a clear audit trail of its transmissions. The immediate confirmation on the success or failure of transmissions is expected to significantly decrease late fees and lost revenue.

Other planned projects that involve LANSA Composer include a system to manage billing disputes, where LANSA Composer will receive email messages related to billing disputes, unpack the information and feed the information into the billing disputes system. There is a narrow timeframe to handle disputes and LANSA Composer is expected to significantly reduce the handling time.

Groupama AC is a subsidiary of Groupama Assurance, the 5th largest insurance company in France. As the second biggest multi-line insurer and the leading mutual insurer in France, Groupama has a broad spectrum of business lines - life and non-life insurance, savings, and now also a range of banking services.

In the process of rating their potential future clients, Groupama AC uses several risk assessment criteria. Agents, responsible for customer management, are using the services of specialized companies to collect the required information. Access is through Web portals, by manually querying a database, or by using third party software to the back-end systems of the service provider.

Groupama AC uses LANSA Composer to help increase agents' productivity in collecting the information by providing a fully automated data collection process using the Web services request/response capability of the underlying LANSA Integrator technology, eliminating the need for manual query and navigation to a Web portal. The application triggers a LANSA Composer process which sends the data to the rating server, for direct integration into the back-end system. →

INDUSTRY SHOWCASE

Response time has improved through the ability to post rating requests before the evening and having an answer the next morning. This integration project is part of a larger modernization plan that also includes using LANSA RAMP.

Port Autonome of Dunkerque, is the leading French maritime port of the North Sea, the third most important port in France, and the seventh largest port in Northern Europe. Situated at the very north of France and at the centre of the Brussels/London/Paris triangle, Dunkerque holds a key position as an international hub for bulking freight and shipping it all over Europe.

The port's IT infrastructure, managed by GIE GECOM, is IBM i-centric with a core bespoke ERP system developed in RPG. LANSA Composer is used for a solution that serves as a hub to collect tax related data from the shipping companies that make use of the port's facilities.

The data is converted to XML format and sent to the French customs authorities in a secure Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) protocol. Customs sends back the statements of the taxes these shipping companies have to pay and the taxes are collected by the port authorities. LANSA Composer's auditing facilities log the email transmission and receipt acknowledgements of every email message, ensuring that all the checkpoints are met.

Promese, short for Professionals in Media Services, delivers a variety of services, based on a one-stop strategy. With a daily capacity of 400,000 optical discs, Promese is the largest manufacturer of CDs and DVDs in the Benelux region. From its modern distribution center in Breda in the Netherlands, Promese

serves 3,500 retailers, and their consumer customers, for the delivery of games, game accessories, DVDs, CDs and books. Promese's tailor-made LISA system handles the order intake, credit control and invoicing.

Promese offers each of its customers their own individual Web site, built with Magento open source and hosted on a Windows server, where consumers can order products. Promese takes care of the administrative and logistic fulfillment of the consumer orders. Retailers can view their shop's sales results, orders and invoices through Promese's LANSA WAM-based Web portal.

The integration between the Magento Web shop application and Promese's back office IBM i-based core distribution system is handled with LANSA Composer using XML transactions, both for the outbound updates to the Web shop and the inbound orders. LANSA Composer also integrates the LISA and SAP systems using CSV transactions. Integration with the fulfillment and logistic area is based on the Web services of LANSA Composer.

Jac Meeren, IT Manager, explains, "LANSA Composer has become our integration tool of choice in a very short period of time. The graphical mapping facility offers our developers a modern way of working. The use of variables in a processing sequence allows an integration process to be defined once and then used for a variety of cases, such as different trading partners. Good training and support are essential for a quality implementation."

Robinson Manufacturing Company, based in Dayton, Tennessee in the USA, is a supplier of basic and fashion boxer

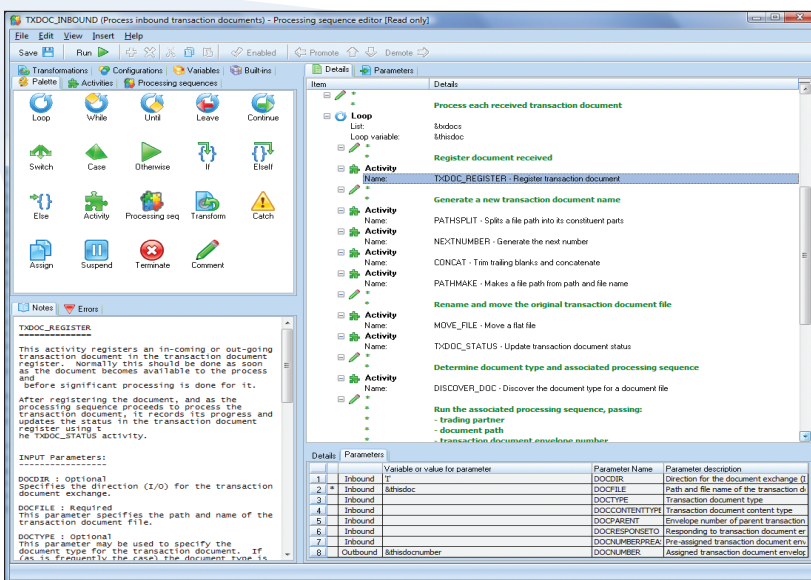
underwear, loungewear and activewear to both the retail and wholesale markets. Robinson is using Visual LANSA to redevelop its core applications (from a UNIX Filepro system) and also to offer a Web portal to its vendors. Robinson uses LANSA Composer for a wide variety of integration projects, several of them are listed below:

- UPS address validation, where LANSA Composer validates the address and classification with UPS via a SOAP HTTP/XML Request and Response. Robinson distributes items manufactured at its premises on behalf of a big-name sportswear brand. As a result of LANSA Composer validating the addresses, additional UPS charges are now less than 20% of what they were previously, saving over US\$6,000 per month. Robinson also uses LANSA Composer to communicate inventory levels with the same big-name customer using FTP and flat files.
- Inbound EDI transactions. This is an ongoing project and will eventually include all inbound and outbound EDI transactions between Gentran and the ERP system.
- For the processing of PC backup logs, where LANSA Composer processes the results of PC backups by Veritas Exec and sends users an email notification in the case of a missed or failed backup.
- Report distribution, including scheduling, creating, printing and emailing of reports. This also involves converting spool files to CSV and PDF formats and converting SQL files to CSV for one-time report requests by Excel users.
- Processing Web visit logs into a database for reporting.

Fred Coulter, Director of IT at Robinson, summarizes the benefits, "Using Composer, our EDI co-ordinator was able to create and manipulate Processing Sequences with minimal training and without the need for programming skills. The visibility of background business processes has greatly improved with LANSA Composer's logging, reporting and error notification. Plus our developers can make use of these built-in logging and event notification features with custom activities."

R&R Marketing LLC is one of New Jersey's largest distributors of wines and spirits. R&R Marketing is a part of the Charmer Sunbelt Group, one of America's leading distributors of fine wines and spirits, operating in 17 states.

R&R Marketing's core system is RPG-based, extended using LANSA, for Windows functionality to internal users and Web access



Using the Processing Sequence Editor you can easily define business activities without coding.

to customers and sales staff.

R&R Marketing uses LANSA Composer for several integration solutions. One of these is the routing of R&R's fleet of 50 trucks. Using Web services, LANSA Composer exchanges information with a third party solution from UPS Logistics Technologies, refreshing the information about the location and status of truck deliveries every 15 minutes to R&R's DB2/400 database. The solution, in its final stage of beta-testing, will allow customers to get a near real-time update on the status of their deliveries via R&R's new Microsoft Silverlight customer Web portal, connecting to the DB2/400 database via LANSA.

LANSA Composer is also used to transmit daily sales and inventory information to suppliers, by building an SQL view over the DB2/400 data and have LANSA Composer create a CSV file to transmit to a vendor who needs a daily update.

"LANSA Composer has been a big help in those areas where we need a quick process to transmit data," said Matthew Portsmouth, IT/Project Manager at R&R Marketing. "It's very detailed logging of the transmission process is impressive and helps IT be proactive about failures."

STRATTEC Security Corporation, headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA is the world's largest producer of automotive locks, keys and related security access control products for global automotive manufacturers. STRATTEC wanted to streamline parts of its System21 ERP to improve productivity and provide better customer service.

STRATTEC uses LANSA Composer, running on a Windows server, to automatically retrieve aftermarket customer orders from iConnect (its EDI VAN) in XML format, transform them and map them to a System21 interface file for processing. The first implementation of the new procedure was for HELM, a large wholesale aftermarket customer, who places between 60 to 100 orders each day for drop shipping to individual dealers and locksmiths. Pete Chrostowski, Senior Business Process Analyst at STRATTEC, responsible for delivering the EDI solution, notes that the benefits of streamlining order procedures are substantial. "We have been able to save staff over 25 hours per week, with just this first customer implementation. There are many more customers to follow and at some point LANSA Composer is going to be the heart of our order entry system."

Chrostowski also sees the potential to use LANSA Composer for streamlining procedures that have nothing to do with EDI. "LANSA Composer is good at automating repetitive processes of any kind," he said.



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The Terminix International Company, headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee, USA, is the largest termite and pest control company in the world, safeguarding over three million homes and businesses in the U.S. and 14 other countries. Terminix's LANSA-based core system is used by 12,000 employees at over 400 locations and by 5,500 service specialists with wireless hand-held devices. The system also interacts with an increasing number of third-party systems using LANSA Integrator and Web services.

Terminix used LANSA Composer to automate the remittance processing with third parties, such as mortgage providers, who include with their monthly statements an insert advertising Terminix services. Homeowners who take up the advertised offer will see the fee for Terminix services added to their next monthly statement. The process of accepting the customer's order, invoicing and processing of the payment is completely automated between Terminix and its partners, with LANSA Composer processing multiple EDI transmissions for each customer.

Wells and Young's Brewing Company is the UK's largest privately owned brewery and a leader in cask beer and premium lager. The company's portfolio includes some of the UK's best loved beers and premium lagers, including Wells Bombardier, Young's and Courage, Red Stripe and Corona Extra. Wells and Young's first LANSA Composer project involved an AS2 solution for exchanging EDI transactions in TRADACOMS format with its main distributor.

Phil Bly, Head of IT at Wells and Young's Brewing Company, said "With LANSA Composer we now have a toolset that enables us to do native EDI AS2 transmissions directly to our distributor. From an IT point of view, that gives us total end-to-end visibility. We know the exact status of each transmission and where our orders are at."

"We didn't have to hire an EDI specialist and we managed to deliver the solution in just over eight weeks. The process is now far more efficient and we enjoy significant savings. Those 'end of the day' pressure situations where we cannot get our orders through before 6:00 pm have disappeared, together with the penalties that apply in those situations. We have good control over what we are sending and get a quick turnaround."

Wells and Young's is standardizing on using LANSA Composer for all its EDI communication with external parties, as well as for establishing a formal process for exchanging customer product information between its System21 ERP and various other internal systems, such as Kelros CRM and Lotus Notes.

Conclusion

LANSA Composer satisfies the four key requirements of a business process integration solution: Transport, Transformation, Process Orchestration and Administration. It provides a simple and cost-effective way to get business transactions in and out of your core line-of-business systems with less human effort. ■