

Triumph International, Japan

Dinesh Kumar, TIJ, Japan

1-1. SYSTEM OVERVIEW:

After achieving considerable success with Workflow implementation, culminating in the 2000 Pacific Rim Gold Global Excellence in Workflow Award, Triumph International Japan has continued to develop novel workflows with our ActiveFlow workflow system. This has resulted in a very measurable efficiency improvement. In this paper we review some of the recent developments at Triumph.

Our review includes complete e-commerce integration, from order right through to the print out of shipping documents. A similar system for our mail order catalog sales, orders being accepted via—phone, fax, postcard and even I-mode mobile phones. An integrated Cash Advance and Settlement System that interfaces to an expert fare look-up tool for Travel Expenses. Web Enabled POS integration for our Fashion Boutiques, Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) to manage both “in-house” and “out-sourced” projects. Lastly we look at the ordering of Japanese name cards—“Meishi” with an interesting card preview.

EXPANDED OVERVIEW:

We are continuing to document our processes using the ActiveModeler process definition tool. Wherever possible we are trying to automate these defined processes using the ActiveFlow web based workflow engine. Considerable benefits have been attained in the following areas:

E-Commerce Integration:

- Integration of orders from our two online shopping sites—www.triumphjapan.com and www.amosstyle.com to the UNIX backend systems.
- Orders arrive as E-mail and this triggers a workflow that is processed by a Checker. The order is automatically raised to the UNIX system given that stock is available and payment type is COD.
- If payment type is Credit then a Card Handler processes the payment using an interface to an online billing company. This step is for our official site because the customer does this online. An order can only be raised if we have confirmation of successful payment.
- We also have a Customer Support function that handles stock not-available situations.

- Shipping documents are automatically printed from a customer information file generated that is generated when an order is successfully raised.

Mail Order Integration:

- Catalogues are placed at our Fashion Boutiques and can also be requested for over the phone or be sending a fax or postcard. More recently by accessing our I-mode shopping site www.amosstyle.com/tsuhan.
- The workflow form has been designed in such a way that orders can be entered while talking to the customer over the phone.
- The stock availability is checked online and credit payments are handled using and interface to an online billing company.
- The order entry job has now been outsourced to a third party and they can access our workflow over the Internet. This has been achieved by utilizing the Microsoft ISA tool.
- I-mode orders are fully integrated and require no manual intervention. The customer is provided with stock status as well as the interface to an online credit billing company.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- We started off with a travel expense workflow interfacing to an expert fare lookup third-party application and now we have increased its scope to include the settlement of other expenses as well.
- Also a new workflow to apply for a Cash Advance has been added. This has been integrated to the Expense Settlement workflow.
- Now whenever a user starts a Settlement workflow, the system automatically identifies any outstanding Cash Advances for the current user and they can be settled in this manner.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- The POS cash registers in our Fashion boutiques have been web enabled and they can now participate in the Head office workflows.
- Not only workflow but also all circulars regarding shop layout etc. that were sent to these outlets are now available on the intranet in an electronic format.

SDLC—Project Management:

- This workflow allows timely tracking of a system related request right from the point that the request is raised all the way through to the implementation of a project.
- It is now also possible to group all related requests and to deal with them in a way that requires the least amount of development.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- In Japan it is a custom to exchange business cards with all the persons that you meet on a daily basis. Also the periodic rotation of staff members within departments is not uncommon.
- Our “Meishi” ordering workflow has automated not only the approval process but also the sending of e-mail order to the Printing agent. An attached file contains the card information in the format required by the printer.
- In this way it is possible for even the printer to automate his side of the process and this has resulted in next day delivery in most cases.

2. KEY MOTIVATIONS:

The following have been the key motivations behind the development and enhancement of the Integrated Workflow System.

E-Commerce Integration:

- Eliminate printing of order mails.
- Reduce manual processing and data entry.
- Speed up the process to cater to increasing volumes.
- Ensure integration with Head office and Warehouse systems.
- Enable status checking to cater to customer queries.
- Ensure standard business procedures.
- Formalize the business process.

Mail Order Integration:

- Reduce paper work and manual data entry.
- Stream line the process and stock look up.
- Enable the outsourcing of the order handling.
- Access the growing I-mode user market.
- Develop a CRM database.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- Reduce paper flows and manual processing.
- Merger related paper flows into a single workflow.
- Ensure that Cash Advances are settled.
- Improve the accuracy of data entered into the accounting journals.
- Proper audit trail for the archiving of receipts.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Enable Fashion Boutique staff to participate in all workflow.
- Reduce paper flows and postage costs of circulars.
- Receive online sales data form the stores.
- Enable the development of a Loyalty scheme.
- Develop an integrated CRM database across the various sales channels.

SDLC—Project Management:

- Reduce paper flows and improve tracking.
- Improve the analysis of the pending system development requests.
- Improve deadline adherence.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- Reduce paper flows and processing time.
- Give a visual preview of the layout of the final card.
- Reduce the lead-time for delivery. (1 week)

3. BUSINESS INNOVATION:

The impact to management as result of continued improvement of existing Workflow's and implementation of new Integrated Workflow's has been as follows.

E-Commerce Integration:

- Increased productivity.
- Reduced human errors.
- More efficient shipment of goods.
- Full integration to Head Office systems as well as warehouse systems.
- Integration to Business Partner for credit payment processing.

Mail Order Integration:

- Improved cost effectiveness through outsourcing of data entry.
- Increased productivity by integrating Telephone, Mail and Fax orders.
- I-mode orders require no manual data entry.
- More efficient shipment of goods.
- Full integration to Head Office systems as well as warehouse systems.
- Integration to Business Partner for credit payment processing.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- Integration of numerous paper flows into a single workflow.
- Ensuring that advances are settled and only adjusted payments are made.
- Full integration to Accounting systems.
- Correct and precise detailed entry into the Accounting ledgers.
- With reduced paperwork it is now possible to accomplish timely month end closing.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Online sales analysis rather than previous day.
- Reduced postage and communication costs.
- Workflow participation from the Boutiques.
- Integrated Frequent Shopping Program across sales channels.

SDLC—Project Management:

- Improved tracking of work in progress.
- Unambiguous view of the status and number of requests pending.
- Ability to juggle the priority of the requests from various departments according to company policy.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- Improved efficiency.
- User-friendly graphic interface.
- The request passes through the proper channels before the order is placed.
- Integration to Business Partner systems.

4. TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS:

Various new technological innovations have been achieved through in-house adaptation and integration of numerous hardware and software products.



Catalog orders can be made using the I-mode Cellular Phones

E-Commerce Integration:

- Using the “virtual client” function of ActiveFlow it is possible to “parse” e-mail and then populate a workflow form with the required data.

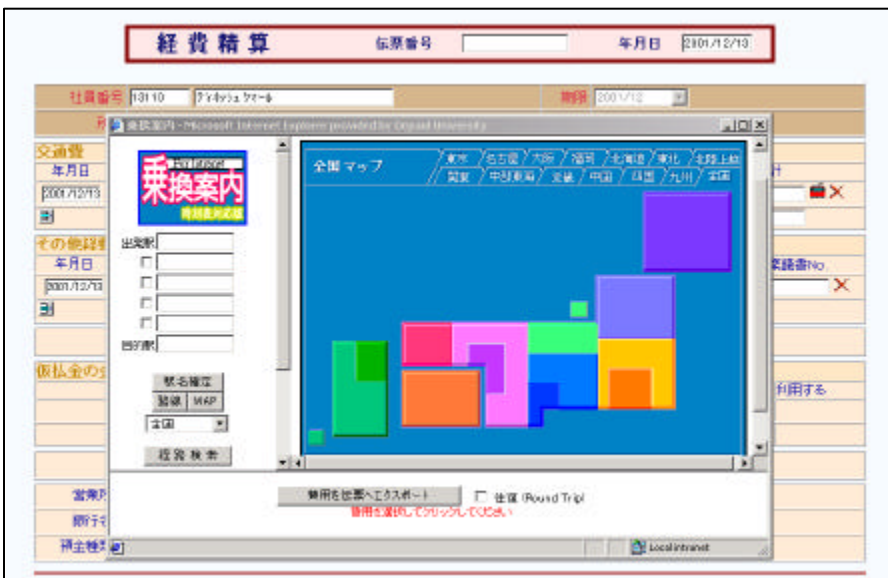
- In this way the arrival of e-mail automatically triggers a Workflow.
- If certain conditions are met no human intervention is required right from the receipt of the e-mail to print out of the shipping documents at the warehouse.
- Integrated interface to a Business Partner for credit card handling, minimum data entry is required.

Mail Order Integration:

- A unified order entry interface for all orders.
- Form is designed in such a way to allow entry while speaking to customer on the Telephone.
- Interface to an interactive postcode to address lookup and vice versa.
- Online stock check greatly reduces unsuccessful orders.
- I-mode portal integration to workflow, once again the virtual client function of ActiveFlow is used to trigger the workflow.
- I-mode customers have online access to our systems and only successful orders are processed by workflow. 100 percent shipment rate.

Cash Advance and Settlement Integration:

- Interface to a 3rd party fare lookup system.
- Imported fares are displayed in a different color and do not require double checks.
- Complete integration to the Accounting system enabling automatic bank transfers on final approval.



Screen shot showing the Fare look-up Interface.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Central PLU (price lookup) database.

- Remote workflow access.
- Frequent shopping program that incorporates the Boutique, Web and Mail order customers.
- Credits attained are accumulated centrally and can be redeemed through any channel.

SDLC—Project Management:

- Full integration of the requesting process and the development process.
- Offshore developers have access and can update the status of projects.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- Unique graphic interface that shows a preview of the actual appearance of the card.
- Automatic e-mail with and attachment sent on final approval.
- Attached file format allows integration to Business Partner systems.

5. END USER JOB—NOW AND PRE-INSTALLATION:

The enhancement of existing workflows and the development of new novel workflows have affected the end users jobs to a great extent.

E-Commerce Integration:

- Review details of orders on screen compared to print out of e-mail and manual data entry.
- Online credit card billing compared to manual faxing and waiting for authorization.
- Prompt customer service compared to calling back after manual search.
- More focused on Sales planning rather than Sales handling.

Mail Order Integration:

- All data entry has been out sourced.
- Prompt customer service by using the comprehensive reporting functions of ActiveFlow.
- I-mode order integration has further reduced the time spent of order entry.
- More time dedicated to Sales planning rather than Sales handling.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- Paperwork has been greatly reduced.
- The process is now faster and it is even possible to track the status of ones application.
- On the accounting side also a lot of paperwork including fare checks and filing has been eliminated.

- Two persons who were dedicated to full time data entry in the accounting department have been diverted to other more productive duties.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Less paperwork, the user can now participate in workflow—travel expenses, attendance, etc.
- Easily stay up-to-date with the required store layout etc.
- Use e-mail to communicate to the Head Office.

SDLC—Project Management:

- Less paperwork as the request form is now electronic.
- Automatically flows through the approval process.
- Easy status lookup using the reports function.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- Less paperwork.
- Fewer data entry mistakes.
- No need to keep a large stock.

6. HURDLES OVERCOME:

Hurdles have been overcome in all areas of improvement and new development.

E-Commerce Integration:

- Extracting the required data from the mail was a major hurdle because it is meant to be a confirmation for the customer and only a copy is sent to the merchant.
- Not only does the mail contain a lot of unnecessary information but also the format would change without notice.
- Interfacing to the card company was also a significant hurdle, as great care must be taken with the credit card details.
- Internal integration was smooth.

Mail Order Integration:

- The third part has access to our workflow over the Internet and this sometimes leads to connection problems.
- A major hurdle has been to keep comprehensive logs of to cater to any data lost en route.
- Once again the interface to the credit card company is also via the Internet.
- With the I-mode development the size of the screen was an impediment.
- There is also a limited amount of animation that can be used with this medium.
- Further the screen size and resolution varies with the handsets resulting in a layout that may not be optimum for all.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- No major hurdles, mainly integration to internal systems.

The screenshot shows a web-based form for ordering name cards. The form is divided into several sections:

- Personal Information:** Fields for name (姓和文, 名和文, 姓(英文), 名(英文), 役職名, 部門名), email (E-mail), and a comment field (コメント).
- Contact Information:** Fields for name type (名刺種類), name code (名刺ロコ), company name (事業所名), phone number (電話番号), fax number (FAX番号), and a dropdown menu (掲載).
- Other Fields:** Fields for gender (ボイスメール) and a checkbox for "太字" (bold).
- Preview Section:** A section titled "請求部門コード" (Request Department Code) with a value of "01000". It includes a "箱数" (Quantity) field set to "1" and "C2", and a "優先度" (Priority) field set to "普通" (Normal). A red asterisk indicates "入力必修項目" (Required input item). To the right is a preview of the name card, featuring the Triumph logo and contact information for "ケマール デイナッシュ" (Kemaru Dynasushu).

Name card order form with preview function.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Integrating the credits for purchases made through different sales channels posed some difficulties.
- But overall a smooth implementation.

SDLC—Project Management:

- We have a continuous supply of requests from our demanding sales teams. Simply managing this volume has been a hurdle.

“Meishi” Ordering:

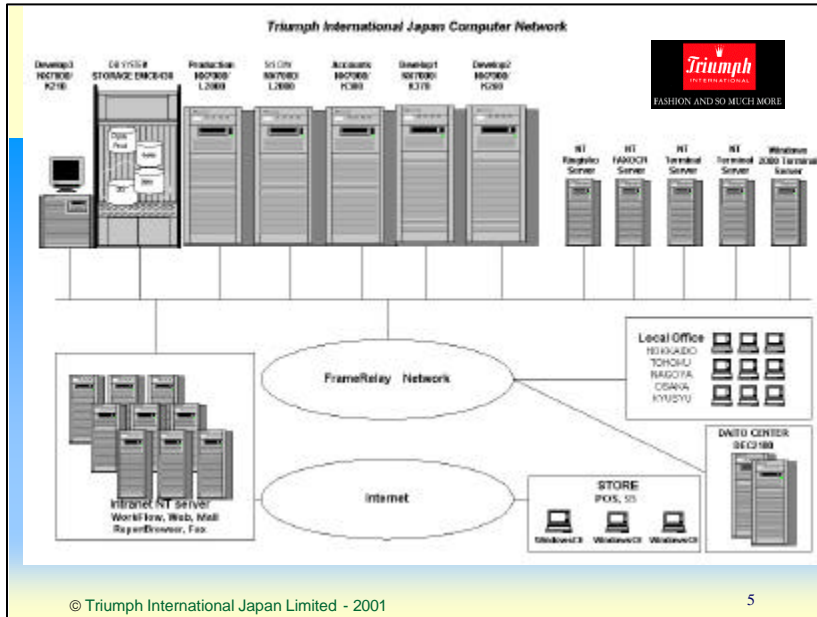
- Sending e-mail with an attachment is a standard function of ActiveFlow resulting in a smooth implementation.

7. SYSTEM CONFIGURATION :

The system configuration can be best displayed using the following diagram.

The Triumph International Japan computer configuration. (Shown below)

- Unix backend processors with Emc2 disk arrays.
- NT Servers.
- 600 Head Office PC's connected on the Intranet.
- Store SIS—1,300 CE devices connected to the Internet.
- Local offices connected via Frame Relay Network.
- 150 Boutique Web enabled POS registers connected to the Internet.



Computer Network at Triumph International Japan

8. RESULTS—COST SAVINGS, INCREASED REVENUES, PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS ETC.:

The improvement and development of new novel workflows continues to considerably reduce the man hours required to perform many routine tasks resulting in cost savings, increased revenues, and increased productivity overall.

E-Commerce Integration:

- A cap of six persons regardless of the sales volume.
- Cost savings through decreased paperwork integration between systems.
- Productivity is greatly increased through the automation of routine tasks.
- Increased revenues through one on one sales as a result of the Frequent Shopper Program.
- Time saved spent on a better web design and selection of goods also resulting in increased sales.

Mail Order Integration:

- Significant cost savings as a result of outsourcing of the data entry process.
- Out of a total of six dedicated staff, three diverted to other tasks.
- Saved time spent on market research and improved catalog design.
- I-mode sales represent a whole new market and sales continue to grow.

- The cross channel Frequent Shopper Program is also contributing to increasing sales.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- Two data entry staff diverted to other duties.
- Eliminating paperwork has reduced processing time.
- It has even been possible to relax the weekly cut off date by one day.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Greater productivity as resulting from participation in workflow.
- Costs related to distribution of paper materials have been eliminated.
- All information is now available online and market trends can be grasped immediately.
- Ability to share purchase credits across channels is contributing to sales.

SDLC—Project Management:

- One person-employed full time to manage the backlog of system requests is now able to devote his time more productively.
- Increased productivity as a result of less paperwork.
- Less time spent looking for paper sheets and deriving the status of requests.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- Next day delivery is possible in most cases.
- Proper authorization is required to place an order resulting in more conservative ordering.
- Graphic interface reduces mistakes and saves time.

9. COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES:

Triumph International Japan has gained competitive advantages that have resulted from the continued improvement and introduction of new workflows.

E-Commerce Integration:

- Marketing through all available channels has increased brand recognition.
- As the Internet boom kicks off in Japan, we are targeting a whole new market.
- By automating our systems we are able to meet delivery requests thus increasing trust in the E-commerce sector.
- A cross channel Frequent Shopping Program gives the customer freedom to move between sales channels and still be recognized as a loyal customer.

Mail Order Integration:

- One on One sale eliminates the middleman and help to increase profits.

- The customer has a variety of ways to submit the order, Telephone, Fax, Mail or even using and I-mode cellular phone.
- With I-mode orders the system is completely automated and interactive so we need no human intervention regardless of volume.

Cash Advance & Settlement Integration:

- By reducing paperwork all persons can concentrate on productive tasks.
- All applications are thoroughly checked along approval process.
- Cost savings allow funds to be transferred to sales generating tasks.

Web enabled POS Integration:

- Full integration of the ERP system into the various Head office systems.
- Workflow participation achieved from the Boutiques.
- All communication to the stores are online and market trends can be grasped in a timely fashion.
- Circulars and shop layouts can be presented in color without raising costs.

SDLC—Project Management:

- Considerable cost benefits are achieved by In-house development.
- The means to manage projects in a consistent manner helps meet the sales requirements in a timely manner.
- By inviting system improvement/development requests from all members of the company we are constantly getting new ideas.

“Meishi” Ordering:

- By automating routine office tasks it is possible to give employees more time to spend on revenue-generation duties.

10. IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM PLANS:

We will continue to integrate more Head Office paper flows into the Intranet. We would also like to integrate our systems regionally with our offices in Asia. We have completed the first phase of this integration, namely the documenting of all the major business processes in the various countries in the Asia/Pacific region.

The Japanese workflow requirements are very demanding and we are sure that the systems that are developed here will be adaptable to other countries in this region as well as internationally.