Progress Automate MFT Report

A Broadband-Testing Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Managed File transfer (MFT) is used globally by many business sectors with critical requirements for secure, guaranteed data delivery – banks and healthcare being two obvious examples. The new wave of AI-based applications is not replacing this requirement. However, the need for full automation of file transfer – and the ability to run the system from anywhere – are paramount.

- Progress – already well-renowned for both MFT and AI products – has introduced Automate MFT to provide this very combination of automation and a cloud-based MFT platform. The aim is to provide as scalable and flexible a platform as possible, as well as still being secure and reliable. This includes supporting OnPrem data, as well as multi-cloud-based.

- The platform is built around a combination of the cloud-based orchestration, agents (cloud or self-hosted) and endpoints (cloud or OnPrem), which interact to provide a potentially global MFT deployment, with scalability on demand. A system plan and usage dashboard shows data quota usage and subscription details in real-time.

- Key to the product is the ability to create complex, layered tasks, based on potentially sourcing and delivering data, from and to, several different locations, using different protocols/security types, in a single, automated job, which can be run standalone or scheduled. Importantly, this is achieved via a simple flow process, selecting from multi-choice options, with absolutely no coding or scripting requirements. This not only saves on costly – and often hard to source - skilled developers, but also inherently reduces the "human error" problem that creates the vast majority of problems – especially security-related – in a contemporary IT deployment. It also makes adds, changes and updates completely seamless, as you are only dealing with a single product/platform.

- Over a period of several weeks, we created a whole series of automated tasks – from simple to complex – that were either manually processed or scheduled, including multiple different endpoint/protocol options, and both cloud-based and OnPrem agents and data repositories, including local Cerberus FTP servers and remote Progress Moveit Transfer storage, to show the flexibility and depth of the product.

- Throughout, we were able to see, either in real-time or post-task completion, exactly what was happening, process by process and file by file. We also used the post-run email notification service, so we knew immediately whether or not a task was completed successfully. Audit logs can be created (json or xls formats) for any time period, all helping with the compliance requirements of modern IT.

- With Automate MFT, Progress has achieved its seeming aim of moving MFT into a cloud-based environment, while providing an all-embracing, code-free orchestration platform for automated managed file transfer.

THE NEXT STEP FOR MANAGED FILE TRANSFER

With so much talk currently focused around AI – an area Progress itself is heavily invested in - it's easy to forget that pre-AI automation has been around for decades.

Moreover, automation is more relevant than ever, given the amount of data being moved around – and the increasingly complex infrastructures it is moving around in. In a sense, this mirrors the hype versus reality that is the world of applications; too often the marketing behind the modern wave of AI-driven apps hides the reality that the vast majority of application usage out there has not changed in years – decades even. There's a good reason for this; many traditional applications are not only every bit as relevant as they were in the past, but businesses are totally dependent on them.

One such example is file transfer – what company in the world doesn't transfer anywhere between hundreds and millions, even tens of millions, of files daily, in a huge variety of different formats? Verticals such as banking/finance, manufacturing, healthcare and energy fundamentally rely on data transfer for different reasons. Rely is the key word; those data transfers need to be bombproof, both in terms of security and guaranteed delivery.

However, setting up and administering said file transfers can be an excessively arduous and time-consuming task; hence the popularity in recent years of MFT (Managed File Transfer) platforms. The advent of cloud-based data repositories over the past 10+ years, combined with a general move to SaaS-based application platforms has also increased the complexity of that file delivery, given that OnPrem systems are still hugely prevalent alongside cloud-based repositories. This is essentially how IT works; fundamental changes in network infrastructures, data types – and amounts thereof – and the hardware itself, have to interweave successfully with long-established processes and applications – AKA legacy environments. A classic example is when PC networking (local and wide area) became prevalent in the 90s and the "death of the mainframe" was announced. Well, strangely enough, there seem to be a huge number of mainframe systems around still, running critical applications. Some requirements simply cannot change.

But what we have is the need for ever more efficient – and secure – MFT platforms that follow the transition from being OnPrem based, to cloud-based; manageable from anywhere, anytime. With this in mind, Progress – long associated with a broad range of secure file transfer platforms in the form of the MOVEit products – has introduced Automate MFT; a platform that is cloud-based, secure, and supports a modern hybrid (On/OffPrem) infrastructure, allowing you to automate from the most trivial, to extremely complex MFT operations, all without any coding/scripting requirements – a key ROI point that we will revisit later.

Our focus in this report, then, is to evaluate the capabilities of the new platform, from deployment to day-to-day usage, exploring its range of functions and features. We'll start with an overview of what the platform itself offers.

AUTOMATE MFT OVERVIEW

Automate MFT is designed as a highly scalable, secure and resilient cloud-native workflow orchestration platform, for managed file transfer (MFT), built on a multi-stage topology, based around agents, endpoints and the cloud-based orchestration platform itself (hosted by Amazon AWS).
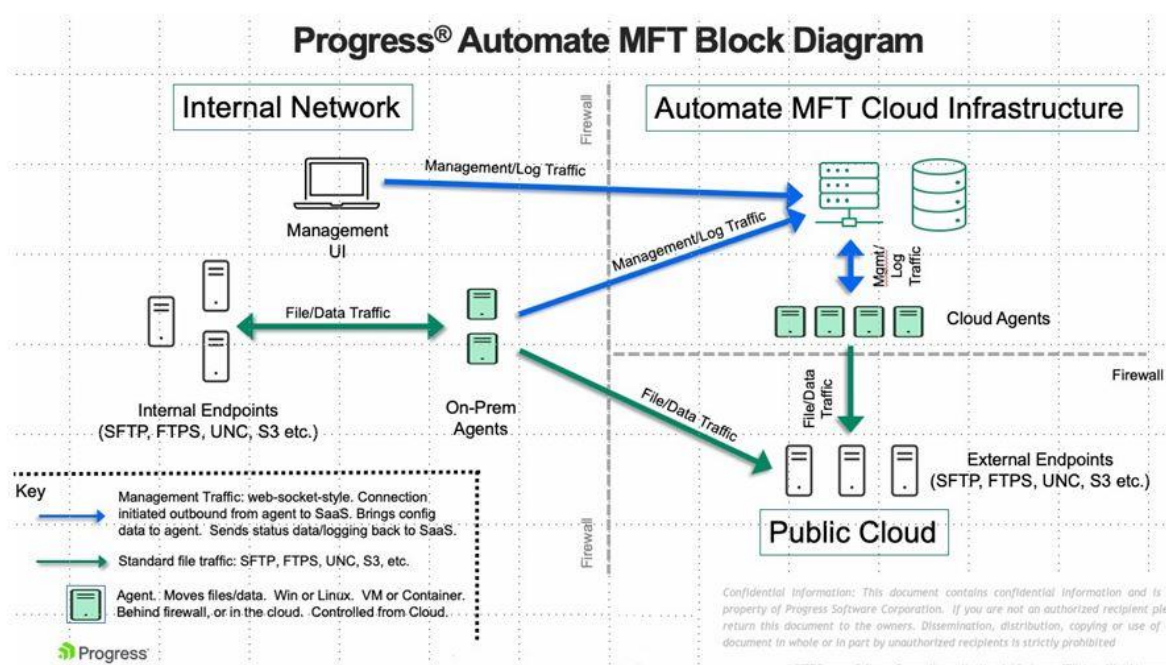
Figure 1 – The Automate MFT Architecture

As such, it features a multi-tenant architecture and has a management user interface (UI), currently in English, with plans for multi-lingual additions over time. The design means it can support hybrid cloud workflows via centrally managed agents that can be deployed in the cloud or locally, behind a firewall. This gives the platform a truly global reach, as well as a near-infinite range of use cases.

Each file transfer workflow can be composed of multiple elements, with a variety of different endpoints and agents involved, as the use case demands. A workflow is defined as a task – the real building-block of the system. Each task itself can involve multiple steps and multiple sub-tasks as you build the task. These include the ability to define multiple source and destination paths, how the data itself is managed as part of the process – files can be compressed, decompressed, encrypted/decrypted etc – how they are managed at the destination point; files overwritten, compressed etc, as well as more complex operations, such as file loop (where each file is processed individually) or using a conditional "if/then/else" type structure.

Additionally, the cache is cleared at the end of the operations – it can also be cleared mid-task - and a status email can also be delivered, post-run, to confirm the success or failure of a task, to the administrator. File types can also be filtered, based on a number of options, including wildcard matching, for downloads, uploads and additional processes.

Any tasks can be scheduled, with multiple scheduling options available to cover any standard date/time related scheduling requirements, or run manually at any time. Tasks can be grouped into folders, allowing users to categorise them in ways that align with their workflow, such as by vendor, project, or stakeholder. Additionally, you can create custom tags - simple one-word identifiers - that can be applied to tasks. Colour-coded tags can also be attached to a task, for easy visual identification.

Tasks also support versioning so, every time a user saves a task, a new version is created, meaning users can revert to previous versions if necessary. The system automatically keeps up to two hundred versions of each task, in a rolling format, so that when the user has 200 saved versions of a task, the oldest versions are overwritten as new ones are saved. Additionally, users can save up to a hundred 'named' versions of a task.
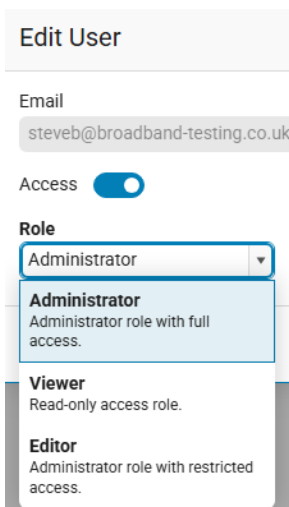
Reports and logs are available for tasks and file activity, as well as highly detailed audit logs, compliance being a key pre-requisite of the product. Additionally there are graphical system status views from the management UI.

We'll now go "hands-on" and look at the Automate MFT platform in operation, starting with the deployment and management, then looking at some of the functionality in action.

AUTOMATE MFT: HANDS ON

Installation, Deployment and Management

As noted, Automate MFT is a cloud-based service, so is sold on a subscription basis, based on a number of factors: monthly data transfer, number of task runs (maximum number depends on subscription tier - all are generous) and number of agents required.

Regardless of the size of the deployment, basic installations follow the same, simple process. First, you receive login credentials for access to the platform itself; for the users, we created multi-factor authentication access, using a standard authenticator app to validate logins.

Users can be granted four levels of access: Owner, Administrator (unlimited), View (read only) or Editor (Administrator with access restrictions – ideal for temporary roles, for example). Typically, two Administrators maximum is all that is required, and then read-only roles for backup administrators. At this point you can begin to build the deployment, which is essentially based around four elements: endpoints, agents, schedules and tasks.

First, you create the endpoints and their corresponding authentication method. Currently, these include SFTP, MOVEit Transfer, CIFS, AWS S3, FTPS, SMTP, ShareFile, SharePoint and Azure Blob Storage.

Endpoints are simply where files will be sourced from or delivered to (or both). Any or all of these endpoints can be combined and multiplied, depending on your subscription

levels. The actual transfer work involves the use of agents – local (OnPrem) or cloud-based. Local agents can currently be Windows or Linux-based. We created Windows agents; this involved a download and running an executable which then sits as a background process.

In terms of local resource utilisation, this obviously depends on what hardware configuration the agent is installed on. But, as an example, on a fairly basic Dell Intel i7 server, with 16GB of RAM, at "idle" memory consumption was recorded as 41.6MB with no other resource usage. While running a local task, we recorded peak usage as around 10.8% CPU utilisation and 50.7MB of memory allocation.
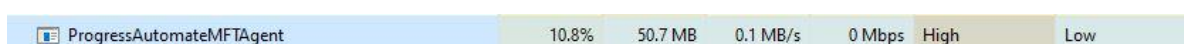
Figure 2 – Local Agent Resource Utilisation

As we've already noted, the fundamental building blocks of Automate MFT are the tasks. These, however, go hand in hand with pre-defined schedules.

Figure 3 – Defining Schedules

Schedules can be defined by time zone, start and end times and dates (minimum repeat time is five minutes) and by day/month and effective from/to dates and times. Clearly, given the "automated" nature of the product, the scheduling is a critical element, but is very simple to define. With agents, endpoints and schedules created, the next step is to create tasks, which will encompass all of the aforementioned elements. We will cover task creation and provide examples in the "tasks" section that follows.

All of these management tasks are carried out from a single management user interface (UI) that gives access to all administrative functions. For example, as part of the initial deployment, you will probably need to add some private or public keys and security

certificates, depending on what 3rd party elements you are using, such as (S)FTP servers, for example. A getting started/user guide is also available directly from the UI.

Figure 4 – Management UI

In addition to the element creation tabs, as described above, the UI is also home to reports, logs and a system overview screen. There are reports screens for "Task Run" and "File Activity" which are updated in real-time. You can also manually create audit logs in either Json or .csv formats to download at any time, by simply specifying what period of time of activity you want the logs to report on. There are also system screens for users and "Plan and Usage", the latter showing data transfer, task execution and self-hosted agent statistics against your subscription limits. Importantly, it provides an instant status check on whether your allowances are exceeded or not, with a red alert – as well as the actual usage figures, so you can upgrade the subscriptions immediately, as required.
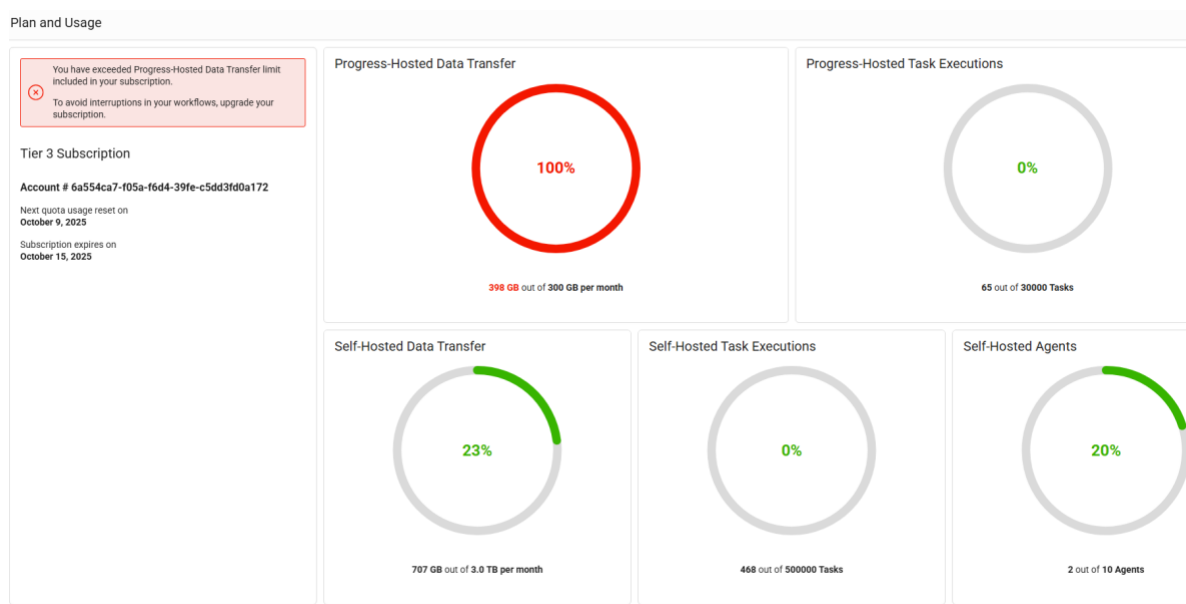
Figure 5 – Plan and Usage Report Screen

Creating And Running Tasks

The Testbed

For the testing itself, we created an environment consisting of local and cloud-based endpoints and agents, with a local 3rd party FTP server (Cerberus) and cloud-based storage in the form of Progress' own MOVEit Transfer product. This gave us a deployment that closely mirrored the architecture diagram shown in the overview section. So we could validate all connections to the FTP server, we also used a 3rd party FTP client (SmartFTP) in order to do this.

Schedules

In order to simulate multiple classic use cases, we began by creating many different schedules, to automate daily, overnight and weekly runs, using different combinations of source and destination points, including the FTP server, local OnPrem storage and the aforementioned cloud-based storage.

Name ↑	Status	Time Zone
13:30 Daily	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
14:00 Daily	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
14:30 Daily	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
15:00 Daily	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
4 til 6	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Accidental_Timing	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
By The Minute	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Cloud Test	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Daily_Run	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Every 30 Mins AM	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
In-The_Clouds	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Overnight	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London
Upload to cloud	⏲ Scheduled	Europe/London

Overnight ✏ ✕

Runs regularly through the night

Details	⌃
Enabled	Yes
Schedule	00:00 - 08:03 (UTC+01:00) (repeating every hour) Every day Every month, effective from 2025-09-15 00:00 (UTC+01:00)
Time Zone	(UTC+01:00) Europe/London
Created By	steveb@broadband-testing.co.uk
Created At	7:34:50 PM 2025-09-15
Last Modified By	
Last Modified At	

Number of tasks using this schedule: 1 ⌃

Overnight_Scheduled

Figure 6 – Schedules – Overnight Schedule Example

For example, our overnight schedule test was based around a task being run every hour, on the hour from midnight to 8am, every day of every month. While this is obviously one step beyond reality, for test purposes it was an ideal overnight test platform. We also set different scheduled events to start at the same time, to see how Automate MFT coped with queuing them.

Other schedules we set up - again for the express purpose of testing the platform as heavily as possible during the test project period – were anything from repeat every five minutes (obviously designed to work with a very small file transfer load) to daily runs, designed to work with much larger file transfers.

File Transfer Test Data Sets And Use Cases

For the purposes of the testing, we created test file folders, consisting of a wide range of file type and sizes.

File types included jpegs, PDFs, Excel worksheets, PowerPoint and Word docs, mpeg video files, text files and zip files. File sizes varied from 130KB text files to 2GB zipped files.

In this way we were able to simulate many different types of users and use cases, bearing in mind Automate MFT is designed to serve a broad range of industries including banking and finance, insurance, education, healthcare, manufacturing, retail, public sector and government.

We used a combination of Self-Hosted (local) and Progress-Hosted (cloud-based) agents to carry out a wide range of data transfer use cases across local and remote endpoints.

Putting Automate MFT To The Task

As noted earlier, the heartbeat of the Automate MFT product is the task building process.

These are basic building blocks, step by step, which enable you to specify multiple sources and destinations (with data paths) and what actions are carried out on the data itself – other than the transfer thereof. Tasks can be organised in specific folders (and sub-folders) for easy management.

To reiterate, the platform also supports task versioning, allowing users to track changes, maintain historical records, and manage updates to automated workflows. It is basically a snapshot of a task's configuration at a specific point in time – very much like a data backup/restore system. Every time a task is modified and saved, Automate MFT creates a new version, preserving the previous state for reference or rollback. The versioning is carried out automatically - there is no manual requirement here.

Name	Description	Version Type	Author	Date ↓	ID	Is Current Version	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-10...	Version created by the system ...	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-10-02T12:35:02.000Z	5c4d1a96-98e8-43ba-bb40-f69...	Yes	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-10...	Version created by the system ...	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-10-02T12:30:20.000Z	dd602fe4-039e-4a3e-a6c9-fe5...	No	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-09...	Version created by the system ...	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-09-29T07:47:51.000Z	48b661f2-744d-4ea1-892f-714...	No	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-09...	Version created by the system ...	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-09-11T11:51:11.000Z	c7e28eca-6daa-4baa-ba5f-94e...	No	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-09...	Version created by the system ...	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-09-11T11:45:59.000Z	72204e5a-1777-4064-ab2a-0e...	No	
SystemStoredVersion_2025-09...	Initial version	automatic	steveb@broadband-testing.co...	2025-09-11T11:45:59.000Z	a8249155-565b-4c3d-b006-de...	No	

Figure 7 – Task Versioning Support

Note: the system keeps up to 200 versions of each task, and once that limit is reached, it automatically replaces the oldest versions to stay within that limit.
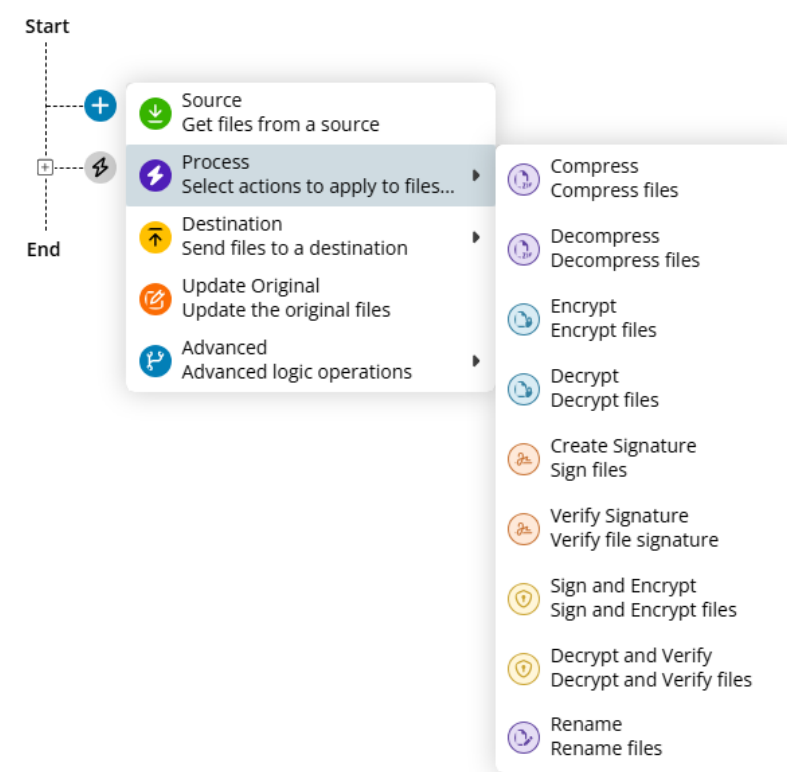
Figure 8 – Task Actions

As noted, task process options are extensive and include:

- Compression/decompression

- Encryption/decryption

- Create/verify signature

- Sign and encrypt

- Decrypt and verify and rename.

Additionally, you can update the original file, in terms of renaming or deleting it, with an option to allow renamed files to overwrite existing ones, and another option of providing a warning or a fail on error. You can also filter on specific files types.

File Loop
Process each file individually

Conditional
If, Else, Elseif statements

Clear Cache
Removes files from cache

Advanced file actions include creating a file loop, where you process each file individually (with a file filter option again), creating a series of conditions for the files, in the form of a classic "if/then/else" process and there is also the option to clear the cache again with a file filter and the option to remove the original metadata.

There are also two post run options. One is where you can ask Automate MFT to send an email confirming the status (successful/failed/no transfers) of the task and an option to trigger another task to be run, depending on the observed status. So, for example, in the event of a task receiving a "failed" status, you might wish to automatically rerun that task, or run a replacement task instead.

Note: Automate MFT also supports the use of macros to dynamically insert values into file names and email alerts during task execution. Macros act as placeholders that are replaced with real-time data when a task runs, allowing for flexible and context-aware automation.

For our lab testing, we created some tasks that were effectively over-engineered, with some subtasks that weren't especially relevant to a real-world use case (these are included in a later section) but were designed simply to push the platform and see how it coped.

Task Example 1: Overnight Scheduled

A classic managed file transfer use case across pretty well any industry is an overnight scheduled transfer. We created one, moving files from our OnPrem FTP server to our cloud-based MOVEit Transfer data repository.

Steps

Start

↓ **Download** from endpoint "SFTP_Test_Endpoint" and path init_share

↑ **Upload** to endpoint "Steve Broadhead" and path /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m

→ Post Run...

✉ **Send email** to steveb@broadband-testing.co.uk

End
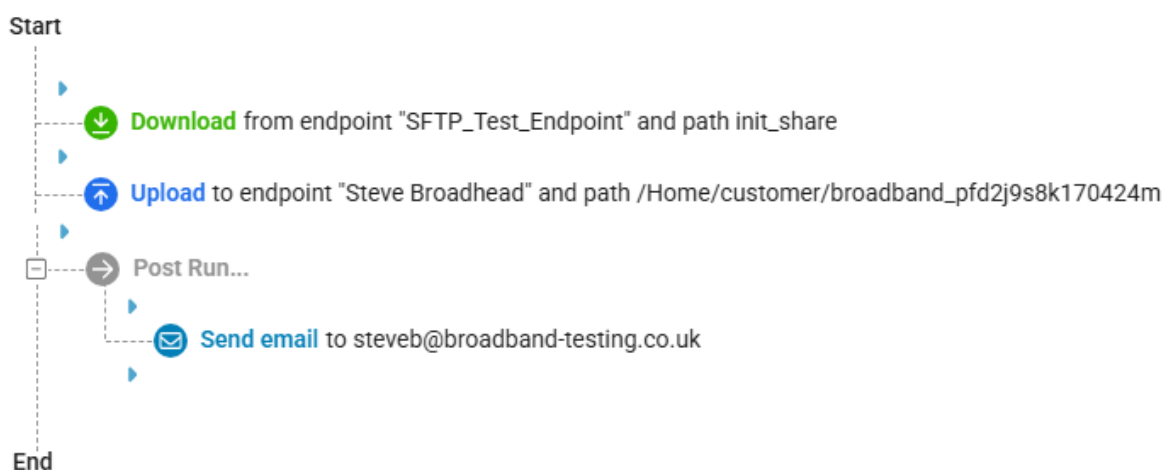
Figure 9 – Overnight Scheduled Task

As noted earlier, while typically this would be a one-off overnight run, for the purposes of the testing, we scheduled it to run every hour for several hours, and added a post-run email validation, which we could then check against Automate MFT itself, in the morning.

Figure 10 – Overnight Scheduled Task Email Confirmation
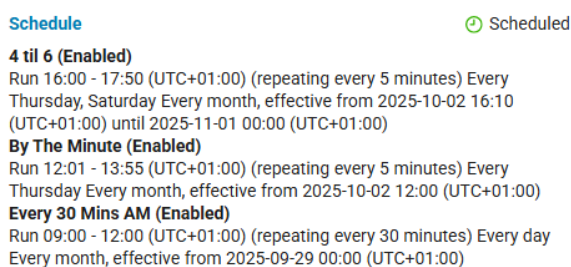
One noteworthy comment is that, while it is possible to see, for each task, how many runs are scheduled for up to the next 24 hours, it would be incredibly useful to be able to get a global view of all task runs scheduled on a single screen. This could avoid overly complicated scheduling by accident.

Task Example 2: Local Folder Transfer

Figure 11 – Local Transfer Task

Of course, while Automate MFT is a cloud-based platform, it fully supports OnPrem data transfer and there are innumerable use case examples, still, of the need to transfer data locally, from one repository to another – in this case from private storage to the FTP server. We also added three schedules to this task, again simply for test purposes:

Figure 12 – Scheduling Example

Note: In terms of local data transfer performance, we averaged 615Mbps for this test.

Task Example 3: Cloud Transfer
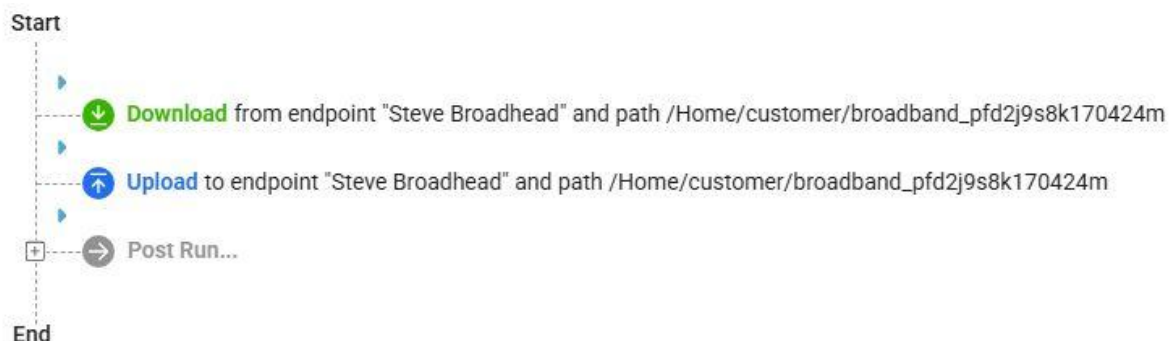
Figure 13 – Cloud Transfer Example

Again, for the sake of testing all options, we also ran a cloud-cloud transfer, using the MOVEit Transfer data storage. For each task run, individual statistics are available from the Task Run reports page.

| Another Cloud Transfer | 00:25:05 | ✓ Success | 962 | 33 GB |

Another Cloud Transfer

Task Run Details

Version	0
Task Run ID	Another Cloud Transfer (10:42:30 AM 2025-10-07)
	userDefinedTask
Task ID	Another Cloud Transfer
Task Name	Another Cloud Transfer
Version ID	1cc7f1a6-2897-423c-98fe-e11d74662a5f
Version Type	automatic
Scheduled Time	10:42:05 AM 2025-10-07
Queued Time	10:42:05 AM 2025-10-07
Start Time	10:42:30 AM 2025-10-07
End Time	11:07:36 AM 2025-10-07
Queued Duration	00:00:25.564
Run Duration	00:25:05.439
Started By	steveb@broadband-testing.co.uk
Status	Success
Downloaded Files	481
Uploaded Files	481
Total Files	962
Downloaded Bytes	16 GB
Uploaded Bytes	16 GB
Total Bytes	33 GB

Figure 14 – Task Run Details

Here we can see run times, duration, including queuing time, and total files – and size – downloaded and uploaded. Transfer time equated to an overall transfer rate of 175Mbps.

Task Example 4: Multi-Endpoint Test

Multi_Endpoint_Test

Steps

Start

▶
⬇ Download from endpoint "Steve Broadhead" and path /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m

▶
⬇ Download from endpoint "SFTP_Test_Endpoint" and path /init_share

▶
⬇ Download from endpoint "SteveB"

▶
⬆ Upload to endpoint "SFTP_Test_Endpoint" and path /init_share

▶
⬆ Upload to endpoint "Steve Broadhead" and path /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m

▶
⬆ Upload to endpoint "SteveB"

▶
⊗ Clear Cache

▶
⚡ Post Run...

End

Figure 15 – Multi-Endpoint Task

In addition to the simpler local-local and cloud-cloud task tests, we also created a more complex multi-endpoint test, sending to and receiving from three separate endpoints. Again, from the Task Run reports page, we can show a Task Run log – a line by line (task by task) breakdown of the entire transfer process.

Task Run Log   ✕

```
2025-10-07T16:33:01.211Z   normal   Finished downloading file /MPAA_v2.2 v3 0.9 - working version for Report.xls_5ab5ed4a-0be7-4586-9a74-f9faa5c79e0t
2025-10-07T16:33:01.211Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_5154f6b1-b1e8-4492-9577-ddbf3c41ba80.
2025-10-07T16:33:01.647Z   normal   Finished downloading file /IMG_20240907_143100908.jpg_457b314f-34d5-4aa5-9c23-120f84101ff8.
2025-10-07T16:33:01.647Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_88cdbe0a-2ba8-413c-a566-52acda77e07e.
2025-10-07T16:33:03.011Z   normal   Finished downloading file /NetEvents final nn.ppt.
2025-10-07T16:33:03.011Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_88cdbe0a-2ba8-413c-a566-52acda77e07e_6cbc4733-d98d-4848-90e6-2d92c8e6a35a.
2025-10-07T16:33:03.822Z   normal   Finished downloading file /NetEvents final nn.ppt_1b6295d6-4dc9-4e4d-9917-2b902cba500d.
2025-10-07T16:33:03.823Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_efdcf3cb-fad8-4a47-9dad-822a797eb743.
2025-10-07T16:33:04.337Z   normal   Finished downloading file /NetEvents final nn.ppt_f520d519-5a5c-4237-a202-bc374fb8325d.
2025-10-07T16:33:04.337Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_efdcf3cb-fad8-4a47-9dad-822a797eb743_64f0dce0-9abf-4627-bf45-db3c055c959f.
2025-10-07T16:33:05.376Z   normal   Finished downloading file /NetEvents final nn.ppt_f520d519-5a5c-4237-a202-bc374fb8325d_b1cd9998-c4ff-4c7e-a96a-6c
2025-10-07T16:33:05.376Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_efdcf3cb-fad8-4a47-9dad-822a797eb743_85c44105-3802-4242-be58-0e6b9dcebafc.
2025-10-07T16:33:05.919Z   normal   Finished downloading file /IMG_20240907_143100908.jpg_457b314f-34d5-4aa5-9c23-120f84101ff8_42d45d54-36db-4c7d-8a4
2025-10-07T16:33:05.920Z   normal   Start downloading file /New_Files.zip_efdcf3cb-fad8-4a47-9dad-822a797eb743_85c44105-3802-4242-be58-0e6b9dcebafc_7
2025-10-07T16:38:29.458Z   normal   Finished downloading file /New_Files.zip_88cdbe0a-2ba8-413c-a566-52acda77e07e.
2025-10-07T16:38:29.459Z   normal   Start downloading file /ProCurve 2600 MgmtConfig Manual.pdf.
2025-10-07T16:38:35.908Z   normal   Finished downloading file /ProCurve 2600 MgmtConfig Manual.pdf.
2025-10-07T16:38:35.908Z   normal   Start downloading file /ProCurve 2600 MgmtConfig Manual.pdf_aaf76998-4c7f-45c0-8e1e-6b5760f0b42a.
2025-10-07T16:38:41.893Z   normal   Finished downloading file /ProCurve 2600 MgmtConfig Manual.pdf_aaf76998-4c7f-45c0-8e1e-6b5760f0b42a.
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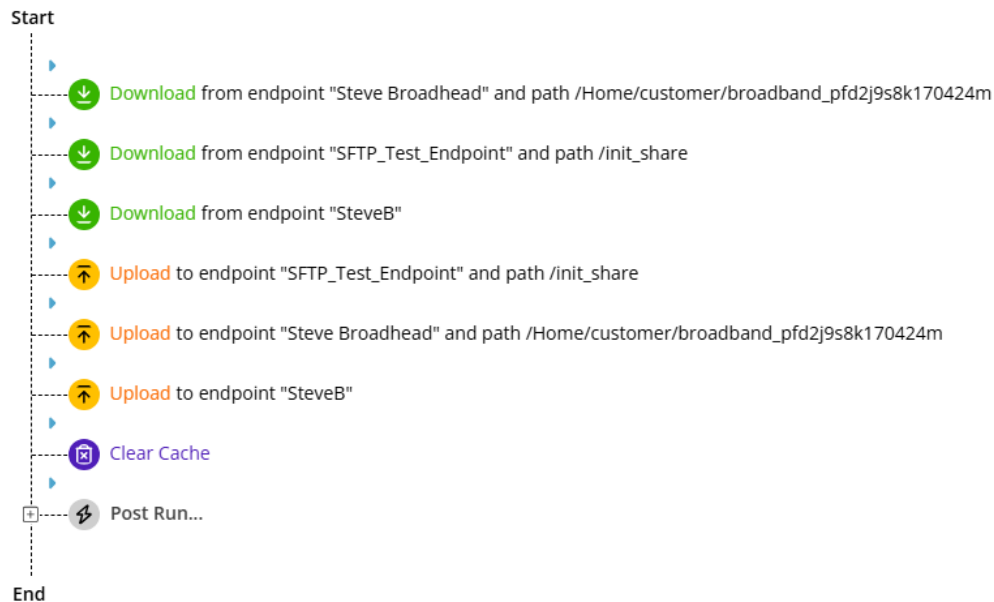
Figure 16 –Task Run Log File

Other than providing a very useful insight – especially in the case of a problem/task run failure – into the task processing, the log is also very revealing in terms of showing just how complex these task runs actually are. In this particular case, the log ran to 6,675 lines/individual tasks.

True Automation Versus Scripting

Historically, for many IT processes, batch jobs and repetitive tasks, such as file transfer, IT teams used scripting as their means of "automating" those routines.

However, the past few years – across pretty well all IT genres – has seen the introduction of no and low-code creation capabilities, while script-free automation in many forms has been around for years. The problems with scripting tasks are manyfold. First, you need the skillsets – and the individuals with those skills. So, what if they leave the company? Who maintains those existing scripts and/or creates new ones. And every time there's a change/update in any element of the process, those scripts need to be edited or rewritten.

In short, scripting simply doesn't scale. It worked when IT systems were generally static – 70s mainframe days, for example. But now the pace of change is beyond rapid, we need true automation. By automation, we don't necessarily mean AI – humans can still create those automated routines, but it's just the one time. And without scripting skills. Apart from the obvious time and cost savings, this also minimises the costly human error factor.

With Automate MFT, the tasks are created using simple multi-choice rules; the only true "manual" element comes when you are adding filter rules and even then it's generally simple wildcard type rules such as filetypes with – say - .jpg extensions.

Moreover, compared with scripts, Automate MFT tasks processes are truly visible, once created. It's simple to see every step in the process – and correct if there's a problem. And because versioning is applied to tasks, it is easy to revert to a previous version, should a new version prove problematic.

Task Example 5: Conditional Test

As noted earlier, "If/Then/Else" style conditions can be applied to file transfers so, as well as including these in several tasks, for the purposes of illustration, we also created a pure conditional kind of task.

This was designed to carry out a conditional file upload from OnPrem to cloud, checking for file size before potentially applying compression and also checking on file modification age before uploading.

Post upload, we additionally cleared the cache and sent an email notification of the task completion status.

Start

Download from endpoint "SteveB"

Condition...

IF (file size greater than 100 megabytes)

Compress

Else IF (last modified older than 60 days ago)

Upload to endpoint "Steve Broadhead" and path /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m

Clear Cache

Post Run...

Send email to steveb@broadband-testing.co.uk

End

Figure 17 – Conditional Task

In this case we processed the download files by specifying if the file size exceeds 100MB, then compress that file, else if any file was last modified more than 60 days ago, upload to the destination, moving files from local storage to the cloud. We also added post upload compression, then cleared the cache, before sending a status email.

Unsurprisingly, given the amount of file analysis required here, it took considerably longer to process this task run, than it would a far simpler data transfer, using the same data set. Here we averaged around 21Mbps:

Task Name	Duration	Status	Files Transferred	Total Transferred
Conditional Test	00:18:30	✓ Success	49	2.9 GB

Figure 18 – Conditional Task Running Time

However, the complexity of the task again should not be understated and remember – this is all created with absolutely zero scripting requirements.

Examining the task run log, we can see all the processes that were applied, step by step, throughout the task run, edited highlights of which are shown below:

```
Finished step action/download/v1/0
Step action/download/v1/0 took 35.253491 seconds to execute
Starting foreach loop with 48 file(s) to process.
Starting step action/compress/v1/0
Adding 1 files to 'Smaller.zip' using compression level 5
Successfully written 207864329 bytes to Smaller.zip
Finished step action/compress/v1/0
Step action/compress/v1/0 took 11.1622722 seconds to execute
Starting step action/compress/v1/0
Adding 1 files to 'Smaller.zip' using compression level 5
Successfully written 442624717 bytes to Smaller.zip

 Finished step action/compress/v1/0
 Step action/compress/v1/0 took 16.5231696 seconds to execute
 Foreach loop completed. Processed 48 file(s).
 Starting step action/compress/v1/1
 Adding 48 files to 'Over 100MB.zip' using compression level 5
 Successfully written 1544381903 bytes to Over 100MB.zip
 Finished step action/compress/v1/1
 Step action/compress/v1/1 took 94.9468229 seconds to execute
 Starting step action/upload/v1/1
 Start uploading file /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m/Over 100MB.zip.

Finished uploading file /Home/customer/broadband_pfd2j9s8k170424m/Over 100MB.zip.
Finished step action/upload/v1/1
Step action/upload/v1/1 took 904.8830277 seconds to execute
Starting step action/removeFromCache/v1/0

 Finished cleanup
 Finished step action/removeFromCache/v1/0
 Step action/removeFromCache/v1/0 took 0.4029101 seconds to execute
 Workflow completed.
 Task completed with status Success.
 Notification sent successfully from Application Default.
 Task and post task actions completed. Task status is: Success.
```

Figure 19 – Edits From Task Run Log For Conditional Task

Clearly, the possibilities with the task automation, going forward, are extensive. Over time, we would expect to see more agent types, platforms, and endpoints supported, but already the product covers a lot of OnPrem and "in the cloud" ground; enough to satisfy most customer requirements, we would suggest.

REAL-WORLD USE CASES WITH PROGRESS CUSTOMERS

Use Case 1: Routing

Our first real-world use case focuses on routing.

This is a typical MFT use case that the Automate product is designed to make far easier to achieve. A single task can gather files from several sources, based on specific criteria and

then route them to several destinations, based on additional criteria. This both simplifies the job significantly, while also making it far more flexible.

A classic example is the US State Government.

➢ Business owners upload various documents of differing types to a state-run portal (which happens to run MOVEit Transfer). The documents might be intended for various state agencies, and might contain employment data, tax data, licensing data, etc. The files are categorised by name/extension.

➢ The State can 'sweep' these directories several times a day and, based on file type/name, move the files to individual state agencies.

Note: for existing MOVEit Automation users, this was possible with the old platform but required more complex authoring with several 'if-then-else' blocks, rather than a simple two-step process.

Figure 20 – Use Case: Routing

Use Case 2: Widely Distributed Corporation

Another classic real-world use case is in that of a widely-distributed corporation – something that is absolutely prevalent in EMEA, for example.

So, we are looking at a complex, distributed organisation with multiple locations and/or manufacturing premises. The task at hand is a daily data upload of manufacturing/quality files. The catch is that corporate security requires these locations to be firewalled with no inbound connection to the factory floor – a fundamental security requirement, in other words.

With Automate MFT, careful placement of self-hosted agents means that those security goals are met, with no added complexity. The added benefit is that easy deployment of agents across multiple locations further reduces complexity hugely, in terms of maintaining full installations everywhere, regardless of location or number of locations.

- ➢ Distributed organisation with many locations/manufacturing centres.

- ➢ Daily upload of data required of manufacturing/quality files.

- ➢ Corporate security requires these locations be walled-off: no inbound connection to factory floor.

- ➢ By careful placement of Self-hosted Agents, security goals are met.

- ➢ Easy deployment of agents across many locations dramatically reduces the complexity of maintaining full installations everywhere.
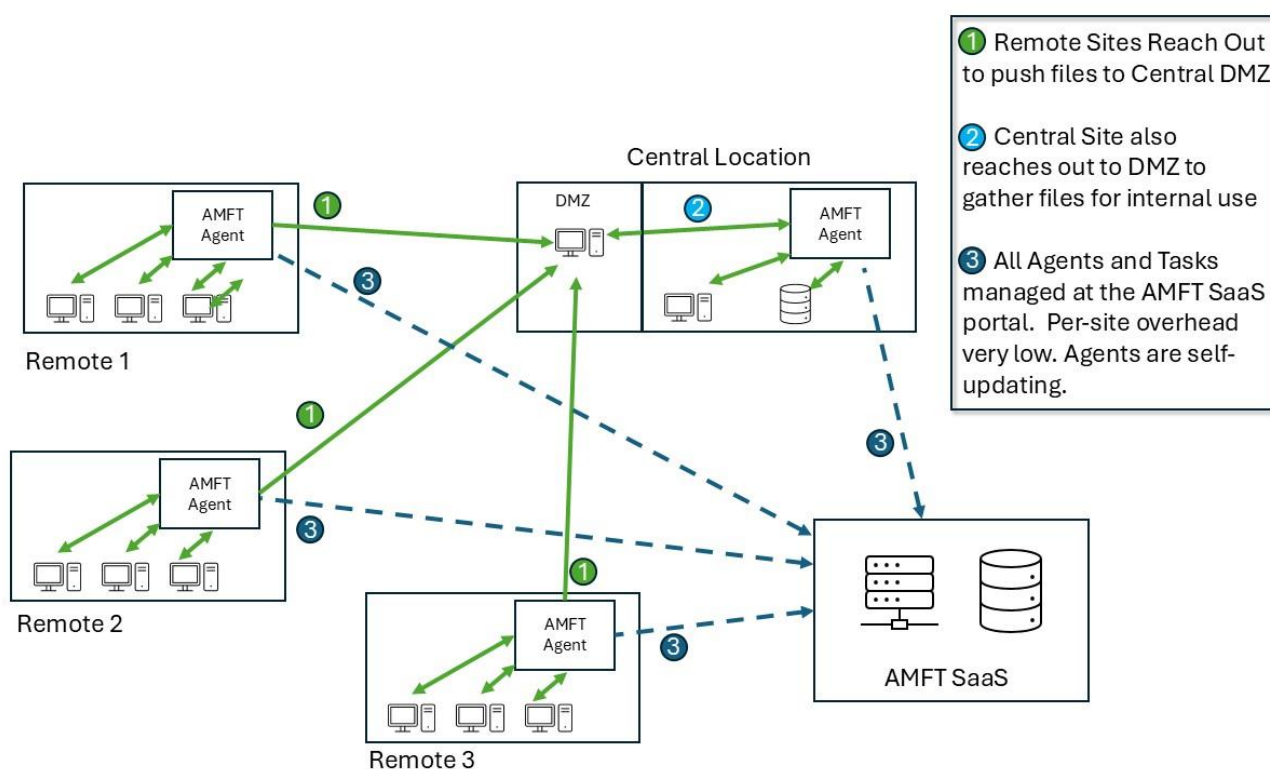

Figure 21 – Use Case: Widely Distributed Corporation

ROI METRICS: AUTOMATION VERSUS "IN-HOUSE"

Total cost of ownership (TCO) is an increasingly important metric in evaluating a product or service.

Not that performance itself isn't still important – indeed it is a fundamental component of both the TCO and the return on investment (ROI). But, looking at everything from speed and ease of deployment, through time saved on automation versus manual alternatives, through to the actual speed of the transfers themselves is the only way to get a realistic view of the true ROI of that product investment.

If we look at the kind of real-world uses cases described earlier and then analyse the alternative scripting approach, with no automation, we get some interesting metrics. Our calculations suggest that for basic speed of deployment, with customer logins already set up, adding an agent, creating two endpoints with logins, and defining a basic task to

move files from directory A to directory B, then adding a schedule for the tasks would take around 30 minutes to create.

Note: that is a single deployment. If you then consider ongoing management, the economics of automation are massively beneficial – and ongoing – compared with a classic, self-managed OnPrem deployment. Factor in that with Automate MFT there is no requirement for expensive and complex elements such as local heavy servers and no database(s). Add in the benefit of a lightweight agent updating itself. Then consider the distributed manufacturing scenario we have described earlier and the management nightmare of trying to keep 20+ sites all up to date and synchronised manually and the picture starts to reveal itself.

That initial – and ongoing – set up cost, combined with maintenance means that a simple deployment will take hours and then the ongoing updates amount to days of work. A complex deployment can hugely increase those time scales. If we look at a typical scripter/developer (East Coast US, say) cost of around $175/hour, this means that a working week of development would be in the region of $7000 – and that's just for a single contractor/employee. Another point to consider here is the human error factor; this is a simple reality – humans make errors. Fixing those errors is not simply adding cost – and deployment time – but it can also create security issues (note that around 90% of cybersecurity problems are based around human errors, such as incorrect updates or simply not performing updates).

As we stated, speed of transfer is still an important consideration. Automate MFT uses caching at all times, so it adds an extra step to a transfer process, but then you get the performance – and predictability - benefits of caching. Progress has added multi-threaded file movements for certain endpoints which, as with any multi-threaded process, can add huge performance improvements under suitable conditions.

It's then important so consider how much time is spent on performing and managing manual file transfers. Naturally, this is different for every customer and every use case, but, depending on the complexity of the transfer, times and costs can bloat enormously and quickly get out of hand. Even getting a script-based transfer to work correctly (and optimally) can take hours to get right, first time around. With Automate MFT, as we proved in the hands-on section, it takes those hours down to minutes.

Then there's the dreaded maintenance to consider. Adds, changes, fixes and tracking are all major financial headache areas with a manual method approach. And, from a compliance perspective, with Automate MFT, not only are modifications made simple, but they are all audited and reportable on. Then, as with the initial deployment scenario, there is the potential human error factor to consider again.

So, from speed of initial deployment, to ongoing maintenance, erasing the "human error" factor = and even making the difference between guaranteeing or violating an SLA – there are clear and obvious financial benefits to using automation. After all, that is what computers were invented for!

IN CONCLUSION

With Automate MFT, Progress is offering a true, cloud-based approach for contemporary managed file transfer requirements.

It's impossible to over-emphasise the importance of both the scalability and the flexibility of this kind of approach. Customers can "buy in" at whatever subscription level they feel comfortable with and expand as required, effortlessly. Given the ever-increasing data loads companies are having to manage, combined with the diversity of locations for that data, this kind of flexibility is exactly what is required right now.

Progress' no-code approach to task automation should also be applauded. The world in general is suffering from a lack of skilled workforce candidates, so anything that lessens the burden on finding those skilled individuals is to be welcomed.

Overall the product achieves precisely what it sets out to do – automate managed file transfer by means of a management interface that can be used by anyone – with the administrative credentials - from anywhere with an Internet connection, 24x7x365. It's also, in many ways, a set up once, use endlessly, without additional labour being required, kind of product, so ROI should be rapid.

It is the first iteration of the product, so we do expect to see more features added and support for components increased over time but, right now, it already delivers.