*Customer name withheld by agreement

Xtracta
Your AI Data Engine

Crossing the Border at Scale

Zero-Latency Automation for Global Customs Brokerage

For a global customs brokerage processing tens of thousands of shipments every month across Canada and the United States, there is no margin for error. At the firm, the speed of data extraction is not just a matter of office efficiency—it is a critical factor in maintaining international supply chains.

By replacing a legacy, template-based system with Xtracta's AI Data Extraction Software, the company transformed some of its most complex workflows. It turned high-volume shipments that once required hours of manual keying into automated tasks completed in a fraction of the time.

The Critical Bottleneck of "Fingerprinted" Templates

Before modernizing its approach, the brokerage relied on a legacy data-capture system that was hindered by a rigid, "fingerprinted" template model. This meant that if the invoice format fluctuated by even a small margin, the entire extraction process would fail, requiring staff to intervene manually. In an industry where 10,000 entries can arrive in a single day, these manual touchpoints created a significant drain on resources.

The stakes for this manual latency were highest at the border. Customs paperwork is often finalized only after a truck is physically loaded and sealed, meaning brokerage teams often receive documents just hours—or even minutes—before a driver reaches a border crossing.

As the firm's Processing Manager explains, the pressure on these "short-track" shipments is immense. "We can shut down an automotive line if we don't make sure that those goods cross the border." Any delay in processing a multi-line shipment could result in significant demurrage and detention costs for clients and disruptions for time-sensitive manufacturing lines.

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Moving Beyond OCR to Intelligent Data Extraction

To solve these challenges, the firm transitioned to Xtracta's AI Data Extraction engine, which utilizes machine learning to identify key data—such as consignees, part numbers, and values—regardless of where they appear on a page. Unlike the old template model, this "intelligent" approach allows the system to learn and adapt to thousands of different international invoice layouts without breaking

This technology is deeply embedded in the brokerage's proprietary operating system. When a document arrives, it is indexed and automatically checked against a list of pre-trained clients. If a match is found, the data is extracted and returned to the user as a seamless hyperlink within their existing workflow. For well-trained high-volume clients, the system utilizes automated "transformations and validations" to output data directly to the operating system with minimal human oversight. This flexibility has enabled the company to customize setups for various departments, from Canadian commercial imports to complex US air and sea shipments.

Precision, Compliance, and Operational Resilience

The primary benefit of this automation has been the time reclaimed. For smaller shipments, the system saves 10 to 30 seconds per entry; across 10,000 entries a day, these incremental gains provide a massive cumulative lift. However, the most dramatic return on investment is seen in the larger entries.

Beyond speed, the system has introduced a new level of consistency to the firm's compliance efforts. Customs brokerage often involves ESP (Exceptions to Standard Operating Procedures) notes, where clients have highly specific requirements for how certain parts or PO numbers must be handled. In a manual environment where a hundred different people might touch a single file, these notes can easily be missed. With AI data extraction, these rules are baked into the logic.

> "A person having to key 500 lines of data into our operating system manually could take hours," the manager notes. "And there are some cases where we can do it in an hour or less in Xtracta."
>
> CEO @ our Global Customs Brokerage client.

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The Processing Manager highlights the value of this reliability. “Consistency in how we train the documents means every document is cleared the same way. The data is extracted automatically, so a shipment is done the same way every single time.”

This reliability is particularly vital for the company’s 24/7 operations. On Sunday mornings or overnight shifts when staffing levels are naturally lower, the ability to process complex files without being “tied up in one file for your whole shift” ensures that border crossings remain fluid around the clock.

The key benefits include:

- Massive Efficiency Gains
  Transformed hours-long manual data entry tasks into automated processes for large-scale shipments.
- Scalable Throughput
  Manages a monthly volume of approximately 85,000 shipments.
- Enhanced Compliance
  Automates the handling of complex client requirements, ensuring every document is cleared according to a client’s specific needs every time.
- Strategic Resource Allocation
  Frees up specialized staff from “tedious, or data entry type work” so they can focus on high-level customs compliance and client service.
- Reduced Logistical Risk
  Accelerates last-minute paperwork processing to prevent line shutdowns and minimize costly demurrage fees for international clients.

Seamless Evolution and Enduring Support

The enduring success of this integration is a testament to the collaborative partnership between the global brokerage and Xtracta. Beyond the significant technical achievements in speed and compliance, the relationship is built on reliability and mutual growth.

As the firm continues to navigate the complexities of global trade, they do so with a partner that understands the high-stakes nature of its business and the need for seamless support.

> **“We enjoy a really good working relationship with Xtracta. We’ve been collaborating for several years now, and they have made the entire process incredibly easy for us to manage as our requirements have evolved.”**
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