



## **Macro Scheduler User Podcast Interview: Antonius Momac from InSync, now a division of TriplePoint Technologies**

### **Interview by Tracy Fitzpatrick**

**FITZPATRICK:** Hello. This is Tracy Fitzpatrick, and I'm interviewing Macro Scheduler users about their experience with the software. With us now is Antonius Momac from InSync, now a division of TriplePoint Technologies. Antonius, thank you for joining us.

**MOMAC:** Good to be here, Tracy.

**FITZPATRICK:** I've really been looking forward to this interview, for a variety of reasons. One of the things I do to prepare is a little background research on the company that I'll be interviewing the person from. And needless to say, I realized really quickly that you are a huge enterprise. You've got offices around the world, and you're an established leader in commodity trading solutions.

**MOMAC:** That's right, the risk stuff, and now with our product here that we specialize in at InSync, it's actually a hedge accounting system. So needless to say, we actually do a lot of number crunching.

**FITZPATRICK:** Yeah. You're one of the leaders, clearly. Well when I looked at the company and what you do, it told me two things right away. The first is that you've got to have really rigorous testing processes in place. And that you probably have the budget to work with almost any testing tool you want. Is that a pretty true statement?

**MOMAC:** Well, you're right on both accounts. I mean, our tests - just to give you a little bit of oversight of what we typically do - before we looked at automated solutions, our manual test would be something that would be a six month type of process (like processing for a company) or a year, and it would step through all their general kind of daily record crunching and things like that to use the system. But it turned out that one of these tests in a Word document, something like 300 pages long, it would take a human something between eight to, I don't know, sixteen hours - more or less two days to complete. And I mean, it just, it's so many records, it definitely scares people when they first see these things. So on that account, yeah, our tests are pretty big and not something you want to do over and over and over again. Which is kind of what automation is all about.

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**FITZPATRICK:** Right.

**MOMAC:** The second thing is yeah, we basically had an open budget for picking any tool that would work for us. The main idea was just get something that works well, works efficiently, and you know, that's where you'll realize all the value. Something like that. So, yep. You were right on both accounts, there.

**FITZPATRICK:** Ok, and so if I understand correctly, you were pretty much responsible for selecting an automation tool?

**MOMAC:** Yeah, I'm still wondering how exactly I kind of stepped into this job. But I guess somebody had a good sense of what I'm about. It's probably because I'm kind of hard. I'm probably really cheap and really hard on anything I pick.

**FITZPATRICK:** Ok.

**MOMAC:** Which might be a really good thing right? Yeah, so basically I was in charge of this whole thing and everything was open for me to do it any way I felt fit to do it. So I went about how anybody would go about doing it. I did a Google search for any kind of automation tools and once you start looking at the sites, you'll find out there are something like a hundred different things out there.

**FITZPATRICK:** Right.

**MOMAC:** All of them have different flavors. But what we were looking for particularly with something that would test the GUI aspect of our system. Basically, the way automation goes, there's I guess the driver, like a tool that would actually drive, or step through the system as a normal human would do. And Macro Scheduler does that excellently, and it does a really great job of that. It's really simple and it really acts, well once you do the scripts, as a human, you know. So in that case, anything a human can do on the system or on Windows, or you know, no matter which your system, Macro Scheduler can do that which impressed me. And the second part is doing the verification. Making sure your inputs go through a process. And then your outputs are always the same. And although Macro Scheduler it doesn't have those, like, rich facilities built in, it's so flexible that we were totally able to build any kind of verification we wanted to. So, you know, that's kind of where I found



Macro Scheduler to work well. And that happened after reviewing, I don't know, something like ten to twelve different products.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.

**MOMAC:** The best part about it, was that Macro Scheduler was the last one I looked at, almost. And the reason that's so good, is I kind of learned from all the other tools, where there were problems, you know. So I'd go, like use, a particular tool, and say, oh my God, this is so impossible. Just waiting for - we have -like a process that does a restore of a database. We have a process called, basically, a restore of the database, in our... it's basically kind of like a snapshot of where you were. Before you do any processing or stuff like that.

**FITZPATRICK:** Right.

**MOMAC:** So the problem is that, different machines would require different variable times of doing the restore. Some were faster, some were slower. It would all depend. And I swear to you, it would take me on different applications, two or three painful days to try to get that process done. Some wouldn't work at all. To tell you the truth, I never got it to work. And I would just have to skip it, but with Macro Scheduler it took like about 30 minutes of scripting.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.

**MOMAC:** No, it's really impressive. I mean it might just be the application that we're testing, but it's really hard to get certain things to work right. I mean I remember once I had a demo, because I was doing demos and people would come on and show me, oh yeah, come on check out demo, it's great. So they would go through their, you know, basic process, and they'd know exactly, you know, the flashy stuff to show. And then I tried the product and I couldn't get anything to work, so I started to think, hmm, there's gotta be something wrong with me, not the product, right? After awhile I thought there's just got to be something wrong with me... I just can't figure it out. So on one of, you know, on one of the other tools we chose, we said you know what, if you guys are going to do a demo for us, please let's try, you know, one of those web conference things and let's try to automate a little process in our system. You know, I just gave them like ten pages to automate...

**FITZPATRICK:** Sure.



**MOMAC:** You know, we'll try to attack this. You know, they said, great. We'll have an expert on the line, take it, go with it. It turns out, that even with an expert on the line, I mean just logging into our application, because it's, there's no image or recognition that they could do. It was impossible, even with the expert on-line, it took them something like an hour, he tried a million different things, and we basically couldn't even log into the system. So after that I was like, well... it's really that we have a pretty tough application to automate and if anyone could do it, that would be like, I mean...

**FITZPATRICK:** Right. Something from the sky.

**MOMAC:** Something like, truly automate. We were ready to wrap it all up. But then luckily, I did find Macro Scheduler. And the tutorials were really what set off, like, a fast pace development set up.

**FITZPATRICK:** Oh, wonderful. Ok.

**MOMAC:** Yeah.

**FITZPATRICK:** Ok.

**MOMAC:** It was pretty good.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wonderful. Well that's good to know. I'm glad you were able to find something that actually worked for you.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, you're not the only one, trust me.

**FITZPATRICK:** I know from speaking with you another time, that you had mentioned, in order to, you know, stay competitive in this market, you've got to be extremely responsive, and I understand you develop applications at an extremely rapid pace.

**MOMAC:** That's right. To meet our customer demands. I mean, whenever we have a new customer, typically, they buy the system for what it already can do, and then they would almost customize it, almost everybody is customizing to meet their, you know, particular business needs. So in that sense, we usually have I don't know, about two or three months of heavy development work almost every time we sign somebody new.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.



**MOMAC:** ... That extends our system. A lot.

**FITZPATRICK:** Ok.

**MOMAC:** In this case, you know, making any further changes, and as anyone can tell you, even a small change will have an impact on any previous development or any previous code that was working correctly. In our case this can't be more true. I mean usually we have...new field added to a table, new tables, a whole lot of changes made to the system in many ways. For instance, our - we usually have something we call a data update that, we have scripts that update database tables in our kind of system. It's not, not unreasonable to have upwards of 400 different data changes to a system between builds. So, it's really, really, really a lot of changes that are made, so it's really important that we have a test that is precise.

**FITZPATRICK:** Would you be, actually be able to do that with a human?

**MOMAC:** With humans, it's, obviously, those things we didn't even test.

**FITZPATRICK:** Yeah.

**MOMAC:** We just look at the surface of the business logic. There are some comparison tools that might be able to check the databases, but the problem is, it's new. So you don't know if it's something that was supposed to be changed, if it was changed correctly, and that sort of thing. So what we've kind of come about to rely on is to say, hey, you know what, we have a process, right? Make sure all the unit testing and new things are done by valid business, you know, business analysts. And once they pass a certain test, it will be added to a big slew of regression scripts. So, these regression scripts, what they do is, they pretty much step through the system doing what they needed to do every time. And I have, for instance, one of our biggest ones is a six month cycle. And what it does is, it goes through the processing and it has, I don't know, something like 50 or 60 contracts, which doesn't seem like much, but every step, I mean, relies on the previous step. So, it's the eight-hour test, and at the end of it there are like 362 tables or something like that that are checked. Every single record, every single field, and if it passes that, it's pretty impressive. You know, if it actually passes that, it's impressive. And there have been many catches. Almost every build there are like three or four catches of things, you know, that aren't correct.



**FITZPATRICK:** About how many man hours do you think that would take?

**MOMAC:** Well, the problem is, to tell you the truth; we wouldn't even be checking those tables previously. So were only able to introduce this very, very efficient checking with Macro Scheduler. If we didn't do it, if we did it manually, it takes at least two days to do a test like that.

**FITZPATRICK:** Ok.

**MOMAC:** And we might not even catch everything, to tell you the truth. Other things could slip through the cracks that we aren't aware of. So now not only do we test quicker, because it's only two hours, the test actually only runs two hours with Macro Scheduler, yeah.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow. From two days to two hours, essentially.

**MOMAC:** Yeah.

**FITZPATRICK:** And you actually weren't even doing it... before, manually.

**MOMAC:** Exactly. We weren't even checking. You know, it was basically out of all the tables that I mentioned, we would do two table checks in a sense because we were looking at results on screen, but they would reference two tables. And that would be times six - so only 12 tables. Now we're doing 12, plus 350 other ones that we weren't really checking before...scrutinizing, so.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, I mean the benefit when you do it, it's tremendous. It really is, I mean you definitely feel better for doing it. And the other thing, is, I haven't mentioned it. The other great thing about Macro Scheduler is that it basically just, again, acts like a human so you can have interaction between applications, you know...

**FITZPATRICK:** Uh-huh.

**MOMAC:** Like if you had a, you wanted to move things into Excel, so if your application touches more than one and you really couldn't have, like, the hooks into the code to test for instance, you could actually the Macro Scheduler to test the results on another application, or what's being sent



there. So in that sense, I mean, the tool is so flexible, it's just, it's basically up to your creativity.

**FITZPATRICK:** Right. Well, that's a great way to put it.

**MOMAC:** I mean really, it is. Because that's probably the challenge most people don't think of it as an automation or software testing tool because I guess in a sense those are, they adhere to a certain paradigm, you know. You have to test the software this way. And you only have a few ways to see your results. What Macro Scheduler does in this case... I mean it's so open to any way you feel like doing the verification, of running your test, you know, I mean...I've... one of the things I've built I'm kind of happy about is we have a test that has to do with what we call data retention policy. And we, we archive the system, based on a few different criteria. If it's a month end close, all these other things that a business does. I don't really want to get into it, but one of the challenges, was, is that this test, this is the longest one we have because it has to do archives, and we've run through, oh, I think it's three years worth of processes. So...

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, it's a very long test, and that one had a minimum, takes 24 hours, 3 days. And you want to test it on a number of different platforms, there's SQL server 2000, 2005, yada, yada, yada. So, you know, basically at the end of a build, you have a person doing this test for two weeks. The one thing that we never had before is we never had a way to...it lets say you made a mistake, I don't know, 240 pages into it, and you know, the mistake was back on page 160, we had no way to roll back to that point in time. You'd basically have to start the whole test over.

**FITZPATRICK:** ooh..

**MOMAC:** This time it was your fault. Yeah, not, not appealing at all.

**FITZPATRICK:** No.

**MOMAC:** But with Macro Scheduler, we're in the process of actually automating it now. What, you know, I said, it would be nice if we had, at the end of each month, if we could have a way of just rolling back to this point, you know? And you know, using SQL Server, there's a way to do a database backup. I mean we



totally built the tool with Macro Scheduler in about two hours that that would let us roll back and forth to any point in the test line that we want.

**FITZPATRICK:** Wow.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, it's, I mean, you know after that was done, I'm so glad we got... I mean I can't imagine any other tool that would let you get into that.

**FITZPATRICK:** That's excellent. Again, you were really using your creativity there.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, that's one, that's another thing - as long as you can think it, and you can see it happening, you can do it. I'd be surprised if you can't, you know. I'm willing to take requests from people if they're interested and finding out how they would go about setting up...

**FITZPATRICK:** Well, thank you, that's a great offer. You know, and that's one of the reasons we're doing these interviews is to help our community, because we have a really strong community. Everyone is really helpful on the forums...

**MOMAC:** You're not joking. I have to interject because the community helped me out many times and in fact, that's one of the other awesome things, the support. I mean, Marcus, he is usually there and answers questions even if you post it to the discussion forum and in less than like two hours. Which is great, because he's a top level guy.

**FITZPATRICK:** Yeah.

**MOMAC:** And he knows exactly what you need.

**FITZPATRICK:** That's great.

**MOMAC:** Yeah. I mean I looked at other tools, you know. Something that would cost like \$1500... and all their support was email from Russia. So you'd have to wait like two days to get an answer.

**FITZPATRICK:** That's helpful.

**MOMAC:** Yeah. No, it really wasn't. So, I mean the support level is incredible. It really is. That's why I love giving back.





**FITZPATRICK:** Yeah, and I know that you've been helpful on the forum as well. And, you know, I know that's appreciated.

**MOMAC:** Yeah, any time I can... I like to give back. I'm like, look at this cool thing I just found out how to do, and

**FITZPATRICK:** Wonderful.

**MOMAC:** Yeah.

**FITZPATRICK:** Well, Antonius, thank you very much for your time. This has been an excellent story, and I have a feeling that a lot of the community will benefit, and also, thanks for your offer for people to reach out. I'm sure they can find your contact information in the forum?

**MOMAC:** Yeah. I'm usually in the forum, and I'll try to check the automation discussion forum a little more often, to make sure I'm posting a few things, and just open up the creativity again.

**FITZPATRICK:** Yeah, that's a great way to put it. Well thank you very much. Now for our audience, if you found this Macro Scheduler story useful, you may like to listen to our other user story podcasts, by visiting our website at [www.mjtnet.com](http://www.mjtnet.com). Or if you have a story of your own to share, we'd love to hear from you. Send us an email to [sharemystory@mjtnet.com](mailto:sharemystory@mjtnet.com). Thank you so much again, Antonius.

**MOMAC:** My pleasure.

**FITZPATRICK:** Have a great day

**MOMAC:** You too, bye.

**FITZPATRICK:** Take care. Bye-Bye.