

Apollo Scientific: Chemicals Supplier and Manufacturer

Apollo Scientific was established in 1993, its head office is located in Stockport in the North West. The company employs 65 people and predicted revenue for this year is around £16million.

Apollo's main niche market is high quality fluorochemicals and precursors for pharmaceutical products approved for use as antibiotic, anti-cholesterol, anti-inflammatory, anti-depressant, anti-viral and anti-cancer drugs.

Apollo also supplies chemicals for liquid crystal applications used in TVs, the iPhone and iPad.

Since 2002 Apollo had been using a mid market Sage application for accounting alongside a separate system for their extensive chemicals database, and had experienced rapid growth with the number of employees growing from 16 to 65. They needed a single system across the business that could cope with the increased size of the organisation. Equally important was the requirement to have a solution that could grow with the business as it developed further.

As the business grew, the existing Sage system became increasingly problematic. Vicky Williams, Senior Sales Executive, Apollo Scientific recalls, "The system was badly structured and would freeze or crash frequently. In the worst instances the system could be down for up to 2 hours and in many cases this resulted in lost data and time as sales and purchase orders had to be re-entered."



In addition, as data was stored in more than one system, staff were forced to switch constantly to locate the required information-costing the business hundreds of man hours per year. There were other small issues such as the invoice documentation excluding header information, which looked unprofessional when emailed to customers. Apollo was in need of a centralised system to streamline its business.

When it became clear that Apollo had outgrown Sage, the IT department looked at the possibility of moving to another Sage product. This was quickly discounted as it didn't have the desired flexibility and couldn't offer enough integration between the two systems.

Apollo's Accountant recommended Frontline Consultancy and a preliminary meeting took place. This covered what Apollo were looking for and what Frontline could provide. The solution arrived at was SAP Business One, an affordable complete business management system geared towards the needs of small and growing businesses.

"SAP Business One has saved us considerable time and money and it continues to be an excellent investment for us"

Vicky Williams, Senior Sales Executive,
Apollo Scientific

Vicky comments "I was very impressed with the meetings and subsequent demonstrations (from Frontline). This led us to realise all the things that we could do with our business processes and the potential of SAP Business One." Vicky continues "The solution was well presented and right from the beginning we

knew what the project would involve and the time scales concerned.”

Following on from the demonstration several workshops took place with Frontline to brainstorm ideas and Vicky found it very useful to get Frontline’s perspective on their processes. Apollo’s management team began to realise that they could move the business along with better systems in place.

Vicky was impressed by the setup and the people at Frontline. The accreditations from SAP and being a Gold Partner further added to Frontline’s credibility.

“The implementation process ran very smoothly, the pilot system was installed 3 to 4 months before the go-live date and the pilot and training ran in parallel to the day- to- day running of the business so there was no disruption.” states Vicky.

SAP Business One went live over a weekend and when Apollo employees went into work Monday morning they picked up with SAP straight away and were fully up to speed within an hour or so. After the go live, Apollo were finding their feet for the first few days, but there was no significant downtime; and any initial issues were ironed out with the help of the experienced SAP team at Frontline.

Vicky believes that the smooth transition to the new system was assisted by the fact that one of Frontline’s SAP implementation team remained on site for the first week. “This proved very beneficial as he was spot on with resolving any problems as he had extensive knowledge of the system.” Furthermore Vicky states “The run up to the go live was particularly good. We received a lot of help from Frontline and their SAP team provided a lot of input into the pilot stage helping us get the best solution .”

As the implementation was so successful Apollo has had little need to use the Frontline Helpdesk. On the occasions that they have, the service has been quick and Apollo has always been kept informed of progress.

SAP Business One has saved Apollo a lot of time by eliminating duplication. They can now see a clear complete picture of their business. Extracting data is also a lot easier, Apollo can quickly run reports to get turnover and margin analysis by salesperson and customer, something that used to take hours of preparation.

One particular development which is very important in the chemicals industry is the detailed batch information. Apollo now has full traceability of batches, from supplier to customer.

Apollo is now processing more orders and SAP Business One is not only coping with the increase, but most importantly there is clearly room for further growth and the capability to develop and grow with the business.



Some of the benefits Apollo achieved with SAP Business One-

- A clear complete picture of the business
- Time and cost savings by eliminating duplication
- Traceability
- A flexible solution that can grow with the business