

Life Sciences Company Cures Its Business Process Pain and Creates a Blueprint for ERP Success

CASE STUDY

armanino 

At A Glance

Customer Profile:

Ahead of implementing a new ERP system, a life sciences company engaged Armanino to facilitate, manage and document a global business process improvement project with 50 participants from different locations around the world. The result was a blueprint for 70 improved, streamlined processes, and a clear path to the future.

Software & Services

- Armanino Strategy and Transformation consulting

Benefits

- Aligned understanding of 70 global, cross-functional processes
- Redesigned business processes to eliminate issues
- Created a blueprint for evaluating and deploying a new ERP system

Challenge

A company in the life sciences industry needed to focus on improving its internal business processes for greater efficiency to meet growing customer demand. That was the conclusion that the chief financial officer (CFO) reached when he first joined the company. At the time, the life sciences company was poised to embark on an extensive upgrade of its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. The CFO quickly realized that the company was not yet ready to take that step.

“There was the general impression among team members that a new ERP system would fix the problems we were having,” says the CFO of the life sciences company. “I encouraged the team to pause on the upgrade and instead focus on identifying and addressing the source of the problems in our business processes. We needed cross-functional alignment on our processes before we could automate and streamline them with a new ERP system.”

The CFO felt strongly that a global, cross-functional effort was needed to discuss current issues and reengineer business processes to address them. However, due to an internal resource constraint, the company needed an external resource to manage the project, provide appropriate advisory expertise on the internal processes, and document the findings.

Solution

“From his experience at a previous company, the CFO knew a qualified partner that he could turn to for help: Armanino LLP, one of the 25 largest independent accounting and consulting firms in the U.S. Armanino’s Strategy and Transformation team has many years of experience performing business process improvement projects, and particular expertise within the life sciences industry. “Armanino was the right fit for our company, with the ability to give us the level of attention we required and access to expertise we don’t have,” says the CFO.

He gave Armanino and the project team at the life sciences company six months to complete the effort of redesigning 70 different global processes. Bringing together approximately 50 participants from different company locations around the world, the team was tasked to:

- Align understanding of the global processes across the different functions involved
- Identify issues within each current process
- Agree on the root causes of the issues
- Define new processes that resolve the issues

With Armanino facilitating, managing and documenting the efforts and results, the team completed the project on time. “The level of interaction and communication that Armanino brought to the project was exactly what we were looking for,” says the CFO. “Armanino knew when to let

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employees drive the effort and when to provide guidance to keep the project on track.”

Results

Before the project, the company’s employees had been frustrated because of recurrent issues across global processes. “This project opened people’s eyes to how parts of a process affect other areas of the company,” says the CFO. One of the participants in the project adds: “Armanino’s process forced us to ask questions about the future of our business and how we want to operate.”

With its business process reengineering project successfully completed, the company can confidently evaluate and deploy a new ERP system. “If we had deployed a new ERP without addressing our existing problems first, it would have introduced major risk for the company,” says the CFO. “Now, we have a clear mapping of how new, automated and efficient processes will eliminate problems.”

The redesigned processes, together with a new ERP system, will reduce manual efforts, eliminate workarounds due to system limitations in the current ERP system, reduce errors and the time needed to fix them, and save time through more efficient and automated tasks.

Next Steps

With the results of the business process reengineering project serving as its blueprint for the future, the life sciences company can make informed decisions about which new ERP system can best support its needs. The company is currently in the process of evaluating and selecting the new software.

The CFO is looking forward to having streamlined business processes and functions, which will mean that his team will have more time to focus on areas that drive strategic value. “Once the new ERP system is deployed to support our redesigned business processes, we can standardize and automate our data processing,” he says. “Instead of spending time dealing with process-related issues, we’ll be able to focus more of our time on critical activities related to business performance.”

About Armanino

Armanino provides an integrated set of accounting services—audit, tax, consulting and technology solutions—to a wide range of organizations operating both in the US and globally. You can count on Armanino to think strategically, to provide the sound insights that lead to positive action. We address not just your compliance issues, but your underlying business challenges, as well—assessing opportunities, weighing risks, and exploring the practical implications of both your short- and long-term decisions. When you work with us, we give you options that are fully

aligned with your business strategy. If you need to do more with less, we will implement the technology to automate your business processes. If it's financial, we can show you proven benchmarks and best practices that can add value company-wide. If the issue is operational, we'll consult with your people about workflow efficiencies. If it's compliance, we'll ensure you meet the requirements and proactively plan to take full advantage of the changes at hand. At every stage in your company's lifecycle, we'll help you find the right balance of people, processes, and technology.

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