

Performance Made Synchronized: Global XRD/XRF Supplier Turns to QAD to Simplify Data Management

The Company: Leader in X-ray Analytical Instrumentation and Software

PANalytical is the world's leading supplier of analytical instrumentation and software for X-ray diffraction (XRD) and X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), with more than half a century in the industry. The company's systems and software are used for materials analysis and characterization in scientific research and development, industrial process control applications and semiconductor metrology. Organizations all over the world rely on PANalytical's solutions for analyzing materials like cement, metals, nanomaterials, plastics, petrochemicals, industrial minerals, glass, catalysts, semiconductors, pharmaceutical solids, recycled materials, environmental samples and more.

PANalytical has laboratories and research sites in Japan, China, the USA and the Netherlands, with a sales and service network that spans more than 60 countries. Headquartered in Almelo, the Netherlands, the company employs over 850 people worldwide, and is certified in accordance with ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001.

The Challenge: Too Much Information Limits Agility

As its business grew and became more global, PANalytical faced growing complexity in its information and communication (ICT) infrastructures. This made it close to impossible to optimize and standardize business processes, and raised issues of data integrity across the organization.

Over 1,000 customized applications existed from when PANalytical was part of Philips. The customizations had been necessary to integrate PANalytical's QAD systems with the Philips core system. But the most critical issue was managing data: Over time, PANalytical had accumulated 17 different databases and multiple versions of its QAD software distributed across its 33 sites.

"PANalytical being a global company with organizations all over the world, using different base currencies, general ledger structures, statutory reporting and so on, for each

organization a separate database was implemented. Standardization of data and data structures was very weak," says Global Information and Communication Technology Manager Rine van Iperen.

The Solution: QAD Domain Architecture Enables Enterprise-Wide Unity

The introduction of domain functionality with QAD Enterprise Applications version MFG/PRO eB2.1 made it possible for PANalytical to successfully consolidate multiple databases to one, and to eliminate all but a few essential customizations.

QAD shared service domains allow enterprises to standardize and centralize critical business processes, while preserving other location-specific functions. Each domain can represent an individual business unit, with its own base currency, chart of accounts and unique configuration for manufacturing, distribution, service and financials. Yet the domains operate within a single database, making it easy to share data and administrative functions.

PANalytical implemented its new QAD system in a 'big bang' scenario, delivering it to all of its sites around the world. In partnership with QAD Global Services, PANalytical successfully consolidated two manufacturing sites, 31 sales offices and 17 databases.

The project included a strong focus on centralized data management, process improvement and the implementation of global working procedures, resulting in a standard, non-customized implementation of QAD Enterprise Applications (version MFG/PRO eB2.1), running on one virtual machine.

"We chose QAD because their professional people know what they are talking about. We chose QAD Global Services, as we wanted to have a closer relationship with the original vendor of the system than we would be able to have with a systems integrator," says Van Iperen.

The Results: Synchronized Data and Standard Processes Invoke Clarity

Now, all data is maintained in one Master Data Domain. From this domain the data is synchronized to conform to predefined rules of the domains where the data is needed.

The company-wide standardization, clean-up and consolidation of data enhanced accuracy, quality and processes throughout the enterprise. PANalytical leveraged QAD to reduce manual processes and create efficiencies across its operations:

- Eliminated manual purchase and sales orders
- Automated the invoicing and other information transfer between supply centers and sales offices
- Reduced external documents from 350 to 15 parameterized documents that cover all languages
- Integrated forecasting at supply centers
- Automated purchase order requisition using QAD QXtend

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“Thanks to all the data we cleaned and converted, we now have a parts, customer and supplier base we can really rely upon. And due to putting standardized processes in place we are able to keep our vision: that each and every part of data should only be entered once,” says Van Iperen. “Key in this set-up is our centralization approach: Although we are spread over the world, we have one data center where all of our general applications are running. This makes it possible to implement new processes rather easily,” she adds.

The Future: Driving Performance across the Enterprise

The next step, Van Iperen says, is making all the newly-synchronized information easily available to field and support engineers. Projects are underway to roll out QAD mobile and services applications to engineers in the field.

Van Iperen is also in the process of helping PANalytical’s financial organization get the most out of QAD with standardized reporting. Extending the use of QAD Data Synchronization is another of many continuous improvements Van Iperen is implementing or planning, to maintain the organization’s competitive edge and take PANalytical into a profitable future.

Highlights

Company

Company Name	PANalytical
Industry	Electronics
Products	Analytical instrumentation and software for X-ray diffraction (XRD) and X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF)

Solutions

QAD Solutions	QAD Enterprise Application (version MFG/PRO eB2.1); QAD QXtend
Implementation Partner	QAD Global Services
Number of sites	33
Time-to Benefit	Five months.

Results

- Cut number of databases from 17 to 1
- Reduced unique external documents from over 350 to just 15
- Decreased customizations from 1000 to 30
- Eliminated the manual purchase orders and sales orders
- Automated invoicing and AR/AP
- Integrated forecasting for supply centers
- Trimmed number and cost of IT resources