



SAP S/4HANA: the key to faster, more value-adding reporting at Animalcare Group

As an organization grows, so does the need to harmonize systems and accelerate the path to deeper management insight in order to run a tight ship and stay in the lead. Hence the SAP S/4HANA journey of Animalcare Group, a leader in animal health. Step by step, the organization is embracing more SAP S/4HANA applications and reaping more rewards. The impact on reporting and analytics is already impressive – but the best is yet to come.

Liza Delvael, group head of financial planning and analysis, joined Animalcare Group as a corporate business controller in January 2017. They called in Liza's help to take reporting and analysis to a higher level. "The company, then called Ecuphar, was growing exponentially, both organically and through acquisitions," she explains. "As they expanded, they wanted robust management reporting in order to closely follow up on their course and take well-founded business decisions."

1 The basics: financial planning in Excel

When in July 2017 UK-based Animalcare completed the reverse acquisition of Ecuphar, the need for management reporting became even more vital. By that time, Animalcare was active in six countries. "I started with very basic reporting, like reports on monthly sales per country and per product," says Liza. "Though seemingly straightforward, this reporting was time intensive to set up and maintain, as I had to extract that data from both the SAP FI/CO and the SAP S&D modules, reconcile it and then export it to Excel."

2 The benefits and perks of SAP Profitability Analysis

Step by step, Liza refined the reporting approach. "I introduced SAP Profitability Analysis (CO-PA) to analyze profit margins by market segment, classifying the market segments according to products, customers and business units," she explains. "That yielded more detailed insight to support accounting and decision-making. The process, however, remained complex and fairly rigid: CO-PA reports were mainly driven by KE30 reports, which have a pretty standard format and there were no off-the-shelf possibilities to analyze the data based on multiple dimensions. So again, I exported the reports to Excel." Things got much simpler for Liza when CIO Saeid Gharakhaninia decided to move to SAP S/4HANA.

3 Why move to SAP S/4HANA?

"Our trusted SAP ECC system had been installed almost a decade earlier," explains Saeid. "Yet, our business structure had changed dramatically since then. SAP S/4HANA was just what we needed to support our growth and help us thrive in today's digital era. Its alleged efficiency, ease of use, intuitive interfacing and smooth integration features helped win us over." Merely six months after Saeid's decision to [migrate to SAP S/4HANA](#), the digital core and additional features like embedded analytics were completely integrated and ready for use by nearly every subsidiary. Animalcare UK, the latest Animalcare acquisition, fully embraced SAP S/4HANA in January 2019.

4 Rapid real-time reporting





“In May 2018, we started exploring embedded analytics in SAP S/4HANA. At the start of 2019, we uploaded our budgets into SAP S/4HANA for the first time. While we had opted for a step-by-step move to SAP S/4HANA, the benefits for me were unbelievable right from the start. As SAP S/4HANA provides a single source of truth, I no longer have to reconcile data from different sources,” Liza explains. “To enhance profitability analysis, we started using the Market Segments application. It helps me smoothly evaluate the profitability of materials and customers based on data from across business units, like sales, production, logistics, etc. Configuring the KPIs is smooth, so I have a load of parameters to choose from and I can also compare actual and historical data. Last but not least, I love the Excel add-in of SAP Analysis for [MS Office](#). It lets me use my familiar Excel system, but it continually refreshes the worksheets with real-time data. Altogether, SAP S/4HANA saves me loads of time and provides more valuable insight.”

5 Not your usual upgrade

While Liza reports to the CFO of Animalcare Group, she works together with local finance managers at local subsidiaries. They, too, are gradually embracing SAP S/4HANA for their controlling jobs. “A migration always requires a bit of change management,” she says, “but once they started using SAP S/4HANA and experiencing the benefits, they are soon won over.”

“Replacing an SAP ECC platform with SAP S/4HANA is not just an update, it’s a change of the entire ecosystem,” confirms Jeroen Van Hulle, SAP Financials architect at delaware. “That’s why Animalcare called in our help and chose a step-by-step approach. They first moved the system to the cloud and then migrated the software. Then, they further segmented these two phases into milestones: securing the hardware, upgrading it, identifying how to optimize or replace existing functionalities and introducing a new user interface. Step by step, they are now embracing more automation and collaboration features.”

6 Gradually unlocking more value

“This incremental approach helps us adapt to changes and learn from the process,” Saeid explains, highlighting how the move to S/4HANA is work in progress – and will always be: “Except for the UK subsidiary, we have not yet embraced the [Fiori](#) user interface, for example, yet we’re planning to do that in the near future. We also hope to implement an SAP solution for consolidation in the near future, as well as a cash management and extra logistics applications. And new requirements are brought to the table continually. This really is an ongoing process. We’re happy that delaware is always available to think with us as we identify how we can unlock more value.”