Sarepta Saves Days in Financial Processes with Implementation Support from Apps Associates

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Sarepta is a global biotechnology company that pioneers medical research and drug development for rare diseases. They specialize in engineering solutions for Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), Limb-Girdle muscular dystrophy (LGMDs) and Charcot-Marie Tooth Disease, to reclaim futures otherwise impacted or cut short. Their vast pipeline is driven by their multi-platform Precision Genetic Medicine Engine in gene therapy, RNA and gene editing. With over 40 programs in various stages of development and the most advanced science in genetic medicine, they work tirelessly to save lives, as well as pioneer efficiencies and innovations in their field.

Administratively, however, Sarepta's business and IT teams were coming up against a recurring issue that was taking up excessive amounts of time and resources. The systems and configurations being used to record employee expenses were not set up to support their IT and financial teams, and they needed to find a way to streamline these workflows. Originally, they were using two systems – Concur and Oracle Fusion Cloud – to record transactions, and were manually transferring data from one system to the other. Not only was the manual process a burden, but for a global company using different currencies across countries and working on proprietary databases designed by past employees, the process was nearly impossible to sustain. Overall, this process took days to complete each month, and it became time for them to find a way to update their tech, enhance their methods, document processes and automate where possible.

Outpacing Legacy Systems

For years Sarepta relied on Concur to document employee expenses, and on Oracle Fusion Cloud to record General Ledger transactions and pay invoices. Since Sarepta's workforce spans over 15 countries and Concur doesn't support all the necessary currencies among their employee base, there were two processes taking place. First, the data from personnel within Switzerland and Sweden had to manually be uploaded into Oracle so they could be paid in Fusion Cloud. For the rest of their employees – 90% of whom are in the U.S. – Concur does support their currency, so employee expenses were paid within that platform. However, all of these expenses still needed to be recorded and uploaded to Sarepta's General Ledger for their own records.

Essentially, for every abroad transaction, there was a series of extra steps that were tedious and yet essential to their recordkeeping and business operations. The data needed to be downloaded from one platform and uploaded to Excel spreadsheets where the IT team ran macros to remove superfluous data points. Then, they moved the data into a database that they had set up for further formatting. This backend system used logic that was set up by those no longer with the company – which is potentially high risk as the current team is working within a system they didn't design. Additionally, when new team members were brought on, they faced the same difficulty of navigating a unique database with no guidebook.

Once all the information was migrated, manipulated, and formatted, another spreadsheet would generate, which they used to upload the data into Oracle. This was all done manually and took days to complete even if the team experienced no delays or errors – which can't be avoided with a process so cumbersome.

Working with Apps

Sarepta already had Workato in place as their middleware system, and felt they could further rely on it to reduce the time they were spending on platforms that weren't perfectly meeting their needs as a global enterprise. With internal Workato resources tied up and the large overhaul this implementation required, they thought it would be best to bring in outside support. Due to Sarepta's existing relationship with Apps Associates, they decided to reach out and see if their partnership could be expanded. Sarepta was pleased to discover that Apps had a wealth of expertise that could be brought to the project, and the two companies decided to combine resources and kick off the project.

They began by having several meetings with the Apps team, Sarepta's IT team, and some Sarepta business representatives from Europe and the US. Sarepta provided the logic which needed to be built into Workato, and together the teams developed a project plan, held multiple testing cycles, and optimized as needed. There was great cross-collaboration between the Apps and Sarepta teams, and everyone worked together to bring their specific knowledge and expertise to the task at hand.

Key Benefits

Within two months, Sarepta and Apps were able to completely transform their process for recording and paying financial transactions. The Apps team worked with Sarepta to write new logic within Workato, removed the manual processes entirely, and turned a monthly two-day project into a fully programmed solution. It automatically runs daily, taking up no time on the part of the business or IT teams and if an issue is flagged, Sarepta gets notified in real time.

In addition to saving countless resource hours in financial processing, they have also gained a consistency in their financial reporting. Previously, they were relying on databases and programs that their current team did not create, however throughout the transition, the team was fully integrated into the project. Now all their logic is documented and accessible in the Workato platform – no more Excel spreadsheets or external applications. They are no longer dependent on individuals or proprietary tools, so even if there are personnel changes in the future, there will always be a continuation of this process, stabilizing the health of the business overall.

At the end of this implementation, Sarepta finally had a system in place which could run automatically, as well as a deeper relationship with Apps Associates that they can continue to build on for future projects.

Looking to learn more about how Apps Associates can support, and guide planning implementation needs with Workato and Oracle? Discover our Business Integration and Automation offerings online or follow Apps Associates on social media Twitter and LinkedIn.

About Apps Associates

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To learn more about how Apps Associates can help align your business with the right technology, visit: www.appsassociates.com, or follow Apps Associates on social media on Twitter and LinkedIn.

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