



SANOFI SPAIN — ACCELERATING ORDER PROCESSING TIME BY 40% WITH ESKER'S CLOUD AUTOMATION SOLUTION

Each year, Sanofi Spain's Hospital Customer Care unit processes around 70,000 fax or email orders that it receives in various languages. Faced with the challenge of speeding up processing time for these orders which, because of their size and complexity, threatened the company's ability to fill orders on time, Sanofi looked to Esker to automate the manual aspects of its order management process in the cloud while seamlessly integrating with its SAP® system.

Challenges & Objectives

Prior to Esker, Sanofi was facing a wide range of challenges in how it managed the fax and email orders it received from hospitals:

- About 70,000 orders annually required manual entry for 300 product numbers and 1,100 delivery points.
- Every customer used a different order format.
- High paper volume led to lower efficiency, reduced visibility and peak-traffic management problems.
- Many customers had not yet adopted the electronic data interchange (EDI) system, meaning more orders had to be processed manually.

Precise order entry is critical for a medical company like Sanofi because their products must be delivered within 24-48 hours of order receipt. Therefore, an efficient and error-free procedure is essential.

Sanofi's four main objectives in its automation initiative were:

- Maximising service quality.
- Generating added value from employee activity.
- Evolving and optimising the flow of orders from the time they are submitted to the moment they are integrated into the SAP system.
- Achieving an efficient, environmentally friendly process that cuts down on office space by eliminating paper and materials.



Aside from reducing order management time by 40%, Esker is saving us the cost of manual processing each and every day.

Luis Calabuig — Director of Customer Service & Channel Intelligence — Sanofi Spain

Key Requirements

To optimise its order management process, Sanofi needed a solution that could meet a number of specific requirements.

First, the solution had to be capable of automatically capturing data from fax and email orders and correctly interpreting industry-specific terms, regardless of incoming order volume. It also had to support storage of all orders in digital format.

Secondly, for Sanofi Spain's employees and partners, it was important that the solution be remotely accessible via a cloud-based, software as a service (SaaS) platform. It needed to be easy for hospitals to use, transparent, and capable of redistributing workloads among order processing staff in case of employee absence or work overload.

Finally, the solution had to support automatic order validation performed outside of the SAP system.

Solution

Esker's solution automates all phases of order entry, from document receipt to creation of a corresponding order in an SAP management system. Since Esker's solution supports different formats of incoming orders, it can achieve the goal of making all orders electronic and immediately accessible.

In order to automatically gather and convert data, the solution detects the product reference for the ordered product and then automatically compares it to the SAP system to find the item and customer codes. Additionally, the system conducts a search based on other features of the product (e.g., description, molecule, dosage form and amount, etc.) and finds the closest matches to determine the best option for the customer.

Five factors were key to the success of the project:

- The solution was capable of automatically recognising and converting data.
- The solution was capable of determining the correct quantity unit, accounting for the difference between consumption and sales units.
- The validation form was easy to generate and use.
- Teaching capability was key, since the solution will be refined as new order formats are introduced.
- Online file storage was essential for saving space and easily retrieving documents as needed.

Benefits

Sanofi's lower incidence of order entry errors allows the Hospital Customer Care unit to process orders faster and more accurately, saving both time and money.

Additionally, the electronic workflow improves efficiency and provides greater visibility throughout the entire process, making it easier to track, trace and transport orders, which speeds up delivery times.

The benefits of automating order processing with Esker are evident in three different settings:

- **Hospitals:** Hospitals now receive a timelier, more efficient response to their requests, along with quicker issue resolution. Orders are now being processed 40% faster, which not only ensures rapid and more accurate service for hospitals, but frees up employees to attend to patient needs.

- **Sanofi:** Reducing errors generates savings of both time and money: Management time is freed from manual tasks and reduced errors bring down costs. Moreover, full visibility is achieved. Processed orders are stored electronically, together with corresponding incidents, notes, dates and authors, and related actions are logged.
- **Environment:** Sanofi Spain is working on innovative and effective ways to minimise the environmental impact of its activities, promote public health and combat climate change. The company has a clear strategy for corporate social responsibility which it is applying to many areas, one of which is the reduction of paper use. With Esker's automation solution, Sanofi was able to reduce its paper consumption by 13% in 2012.

Sanofi's order processing automation project is just one aspect of their overall digitisation strategy and an indication of the company's strong commitment to protecting the environment. Sanofi has already adopted Esker's technology internationally. It is using the Esker solution in Spain, France and the U.K. with plans to expand its use into Portugal as well.

About Sanofi Spain

Sanofi is an integrated global healthcare leader that discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed on the Paris (Euronext: SAN) and New York (NYSE: SNY) stock exchanges.

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