Improving Productivity with Optimized New Product Introduction Process

About Dole

Dole Packaged Foods, LLC (DPF) offers a full line of healthy, nutritional packaged fruit products that makes it easy to add more sunshine to your day, every day. From packaged shelf stable fruit and frozen fruit, to healthy snacks and beverages, DPF is a world leader in bringing their product portfolio to North America and Europe.

To help keep the sun shining everywhere, they're committed to sustainability in all operations, focusing on four key areas: water management, carbon footprint, soil conservation, and waste reduction. They ensure there's vibrant goodness in each and every one of their products, so you can add sunshine to your day, every day.

The Situation

DPF utilizes a portfolio of modern SAP S/4 HANA based products to support all business functions in a highly automated and seamless manner. Even with the high levels of automation and platform sophistication, there remained an important but complex and manually managed process relating to new product introduction and the creation of enterprise data required to support this critical function. Their process was highly manual, segmented and the approval workflows too rudimentary; considering the need to pull together different artifacts and follow FDA Compliance guidelines.

DPF also wanted to be able to compile all possible product information, including supply chain and nutritional and digital assets. Their goal was to create, essentially, "One Version of the Truth" which could be published to syndicated data networks where information could be reliably available to distributors, customers and consumers. To make this possible, requirements to invest in a reliable and robust platform were needed in order to allow for the enablement of critical new product functions for their business. DPF initially considered various 3rd party Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) solutions, however, the cost associated with purchasing and implementing these solutions proved impractical.

Building a custom solution was also considered, using readily available SAP development tools, however, this proved to be too cumbersome for DPF to scale and sustain. User experience, powerful workflow capabilities, integration to SAP and system performance were key requirements. Additionally, speed to build and deploy a solution was a serious consideration. It was also imperative that DPF's chosen solution be sustainable and available as both a web and mobile application.

The Business Challenge

- Manual, lengthy paper processes, disconnected spot solutions, email, MS SharePoint and MS Excel processes for New Product Introduction (NPI) all lead to delays in getting new products socialized, approved and systematized.

- No easy way to access and combine nutritional data to go along with all other key product data.

- Not having a repository to pull together supply chain data with nutritional content prevented a "One Version of the Truth" scenario to be created. New product introduction process was not as efficient as other systemized processes within the company.

- No easy way to consolidate all product data for transmission to syndicated data networks.

Pillir's Solution

- Designed and built a custom web/mobile app with user-centric, customized experience, tightly integrated to SAP, allowing for systematized gathering of data in a singular repository, workflow approvals and the ability to combine data with other key product data as needed.

- Deployment to NPI data integrated into the existing MDM solution.

- Hosted on Pillir's cloud based SaaS platform, with no infrastructure or operational overhead added to DPF's plate – a simple user based pricing model for a fully customized enterprise scale application.

- Trained DPF team on Pillir's EdgeReady Cloud for additional application development projects.

Benefits Overview

Streamlined and Efficient Processes

Process and productivity efficiencies were gained with real time information sharing across the organization and the ability to take base NPI data and combine it with other relevant product data for use internally and externally - in other words, "One Version of the Truth".

Deployed Quickly with Little ABAP Programming

Developed and deployed very quickly, customizing capabilities rapidly with minimal resources and very little ABAP programming. Significant reduction of maintenance time and effort for future enhancements and support were also produced.

Ensuring Best Practices

SAP was maintained as a base system of record but was kept standard and within best practices for existing processes as much as possible while still having customized user-centric experiences for edge use cases and processes.

Pillir's EdgeReady Cloud is designed, built and deployed using AWS. Pillir uses AWS to extend business applications like SAP to remote places with no connectivity and enables personnel to work from any location, with any device, with or without connectivity or system availability.

With AWS, Pillir-built EdgeReady applications can scale to any amount of users and load in seconds, with no infrastructure or people overhead for internal IT organizations.Leveraging Amazon EC2 with Dynamic & Auto Scaling across Multi-Availability Zone redundant infrastructure and Amazon Elastic Load Balancer along with Amazon RDS and Dynamo-DB.

About Pillir

Formerly appsFreedom, Pillir is a low-code, cloud native, PaaS provider that specializes in enabling customers to generate resilient, always-available, self-managing applications that work in any connectivity landscape. Pillir's EdgeReady Cloud provides rapid application development with little-to-no programming and reusable objects; enabling companies to enhance speed to market and innovation. With pre-built integrations for SAP, Oracle, Microsoft Dynamics, Salesforce.com and other legacy systems, customers leverage Pillir to modernize any process or application in weeks, regardless of connectivity, device or back end system. Contact us to explore how Pillir can improve business productivity by enabling teams to build apps quickly on any device and tightly integrate with core business systems that are critical to your operations.