



CASE STUDY

AstraZeneca France

AstraZeneca France Singles Out Captaris Workflow, Previously Known as Teemplate

Day one on a new job carries potential to be structured and empowering or jumbled and confusing. With this in mind, AstraZeneca France implemented a workflow solution to handle Human Resources (HR) and other department processes. Using Microsoft technologies and Captaris Workflow, powered by Teemplate, AstraZeneca is automating processes for faster, productive returns. For instance, thanks to preparation directed by a set workflow, new AstraZeneca employees are immediately welcomed with all the tools and information they need to excel and thrive.

BACKGROUND

AstraZeneca is a major international healthcare business and one of the top five pharmaceutical companies in the world, engaged in the research, development, manufacturing and marketing of prescription pharmaceuticals and the supply of healthcare services. The worldwide organization employs approximately 60,000 people. AstraZeneca France, one of many international locations, consists of close to 1,600 marketing professionals and 1,000 employees spread across three manufacturing sites.

THE CHALLENGE

"As long as workflow is not in an automated system, it's manual and there will always be flaws and information lost," Pierre-Frédéric Rouberties, IT director with AstraZeneca France, said. The situation Rouberties described is common for businesses across all industries. Every organization manages departmental and enterprise processes that cross software, department and even company boundaries. The challenge comes in creating an operational workflow, rather than a work stalemate.

Thierry Zucchi is the founder of Aliantiz, a solutions provider in France and consultant to AstraZeneca. He detailed an AstraZeneca HR process positioned to benefit from automated workflow. "In the past, sometimes managers only heard about new employees several weeks after they had been in position. So, the first weeks were very painful for the employees."

Managing new recruits was time-consuming since marketing turnover in any industry can be relatively high: in 2003, AstraZeneca France recruited a new sales force of 200 employees. "We have to make it very simple for users," Zucchi said. "Managers spend a lot of time approving things," including the process for equipping new employees or gaining approval for recruiting new representatives.

The AstraZeneca IT team surveyed its infrastructure. Their Internet site contained rich content mainly based on IBM Lotus Notes Domino server technology; however, Rouberties said they faced limitations for coping with database and other requirements. After migrating to Microsoft .NET, he said, "We addressed different needs with various parts of the Microsoft offering, including the SharePoint Portal Server and we found it was necessary to have a workflow automation system to manage any kind of workflow we would need on the site." AstraZeneca's main requirement for such a solution: tight integration with .NET and the Microsoft server suite.

THE SOLUTION

"When we decided on a workflow engine that would integrate with .NET, it was Captaris Workflow, previously known as Teamplate vs. nothing," Philippe Prudent, AstraZeneca France's Application Department Manager reported. Captaris Workflow provides the only business process workflow technology natively developed to take full advantage of the Microsoft .NET environment, making it the most easily and reliably integrated workflow solution available. Rouberties added, "We went with Captaris Workflow because it was more integrated with .NET technology and user requirements and it can address anything we need, including HR processes."

AstraZeneca's first workflow in production manages the arrival of new employees. It shares information on new employees with several support groups in the company. Zucchi said: "AstraZeneca will be able to anticipate by two weeks the arrival of new employees and prepare all of the resources so they have everything they need to get started." The result, he continued, will be employees who are motivated and efficient.

"AstraZeneca will be able to anticipate by two weeks the arrival of a new employee and prepare all of the resources so they have everything they need to get started." —Thierry Zucchi

AstraZeneca's final objective is to run all HR approval processes through Captaris Workflow with one-stop access through the Microsoft SharePoint Portal Server. "Employees will have a single window where they can go to check and approve or refuse all the items that have been submitted," Zucchi said. The solution enforces set processes and offers more business management flexibility than manual methods, according to Zucchi. "If tomorrow the company used different processes, it's easier to change with an automated workflow engine."

Among its future plans, AstraZeneca is considering Captaris Workflow for archiving prescription records from physicians and for marketing department project management. Overall, current and future integrations make Captaris Workflow an integral component of AstraZeneca's system. "As a whole, Captaris Workflow provides integration ability that can be used today and tomorrow," Zucchi said.

BENEFITS

Rouberties pointed to valuable results predicted and obtained with Captaris Workflow. "It's very necessary for us to have workflow automation for various reasons," he said. In addition to these benefits, Captaris Workflow also:

- Quickens the information-sharing process.
- Ensures quality of information—"We're sure the right person will get the right information at the right time."
- Creates workflow consistency—"If someone is not here, Captaris Workflow is able to forward to a backup."

Rouberties and his IT team also point to helpful aspects of the Captaris Workflow design. For instance, in the case of HR applications, AstraZeneca integrates Captaris Workflow with Microsoft SQL Server as the database manager. "Since SQL Server is part of our IT infrastructure, it's definitely good news that Captaris Workflow uses it as well so we have the keys to administer each product," Zucchi said. Captaris Workflow also provides a high productivity Integrated Development Environment (IDE) patterned after Microsoft Visual Studio .NET. Developers can open an existing model, start with a blank canvas, or optionally drag in a Visio diagram to kick-start development. "IDE is the best way to develop Captaris workflows," Rouberties said.

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Aliantiz - the French Captaris partner, delivers complex business applications, especially in the BPM space using the Microsoft .NET platform and SharePoint Portal Server. For more information, contact www.aliantiz.com.

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