

Upgrading to SAP ERP ensures continued support, and brings significant business benefits

ABOUT THE CLIENT

Wolters Kluwer is a global company that provides information, software, and services. Their customers are legal, business, tax, accounting, finance, audit, risk, compliance, and healthcare professionals. Wolters Kluwer helps them make decisions with confidence.

With over 19,000 colleagues in 40+ countries, Wolters Kluwer can serve customers everywhere. Their headquarters are in the Netherlands.



HIGHLIGHTS



- A challenging project completed on time and on budget to deliver major benefits



- Standardisation achieved across key business processes



- Internal teams re-motivated by collaborative working



- A future-proof system established to build upon



- Automation and process efficiencies have reduced costs and headcount



- SAP Systems enhance the online business and support improved customer response

CHALLENGE

The Wolters Kluwer Business Strategy consists of three building blocks:

- Expand their leading, high growth propositions
- Deliver solutions and insights
- Drive efficiencies

Essential to this are developing their online services, and improving their back-office process efficiencies, hence they called this project "Backbone".

In May 2014 Wolters Kluwer appointed SOA People to help them implement SAP ERP, as their existing Siebel system was running out of support. Their aim with SAP was to improve productivity, standardise their processes and to totally integrate their complex systems, in order to provide more flexible offerings to their customers.

"In my view, the main thing we needed to do, as a worldwide organisation, was to standardise. When you have standard procedures and work instructions then it's cheaper and you can be more agile," explains Roland de Munk, Wolters Kluwer Project Manager.

SOA People won this contract due to its SAP expertise and extensive knowledge of the business, having completed the SAP implementation for Wolters Kluwer Belgium. They were able to put very experienced consultants into a very complex environment.



TECHNICAL DETAILS

- SAP ERP
- 3 tier landscape
- Separate application server for the Netherlands
- Common database server for Belgium and the Netherlands
- Oracle database
- 300 users across 2 locations
- 54 complex interfaces fully integrated

BENEFITS

A challenging project completed on time and on budget. SOA People delivered SAP ERP in a complex landscape, to give Wolters Kluwer full visibility of the business at an organisational, operational and financial level. The Backbone project gives them the back-office improvements they required and inspires performance.

Standardisation has been achieved in key business processes from pricing, sales and orders through to delivery. *"I think it's a real benefit that we are standardising our processes. It allows us to align process with our corporate policies,"* says de Munk.

Internal teams re-motivated by strong leadership and collaborative working.

"The Backbone project has required change across the organisation but by working through the change process and engaging staff along the way, the teams are now stronger. I'm pretty proud of that. There's a great team in place now," says de Munk.

A future-proof system established to build on. This project has been the first step in preparing Wolters Kluwer for the commercial landscape of the future. By focusing on their core products and streamlining their back-office with SAP ERP they are now in a strong position to move forwards.

Automation and process efficiencies have reduced costs and optimised administrative headcount. The standard automation within SAP ERP has reduced administration, clarified processes and reduced the time to fulfil orders, in line with their strategic business objectives.

Systems now support improved customer response, and the online business proposition. Customer experience is being improved through quicker turn-around of orders, clearer pricing, and more services being available online through the Wolters Kluwer webshop.

SOLUTION

Improving back-office efficiency

Wolters Kluwer chose to implement SAP ERP having seen tangible benefits from the same system operating in its other offices in Belgium and the United States. The "out of the box" SAP ERP solution manages all back-office processes from sales and orders through to delivery and invoicing.

"The orders for simple products are entered in a web application. For more complex custom-made sales the orders are entered via Salesforce. SAP optimises the whole process, so that when an order is entered into the system, the invoicing and delivery are automated. It works very well," says de Munk.

One of the challenges for SOA People was the integration of SAP with multiple established satellite applications, including Salesforce.

Change management

A significant challenge for Wolters Kluwer was re-engaging the people working on, and impacted by, the project. The Backbone project lasted 18 months and it required employees to review and change the way they worked, challenging the way things had been done in the past.

For example, previously the sales team had been able to create a wide range of prices for different orders, but Wolters Kluwer wanted to standardise their pricing

structure. SOA People helped them do this through standard SAP functionality, while allowing a flexible pricing model for bespoke sales.

"My job is to build a team which is enthusiastic about the work. We ask a lot from our employees and I need to keep people motivated and performing. I relied on SOA People for their SAP expertise and also their help engaging the end users, as it's the change we need to manage," explains de Munk.

Developing an online proposition

Wolters Kluwer's main product is knowledge and content. The company is developing their online proposition and services to expand their reach. The new webshop will be implemented in April 2016 along with a self-service platform for customers.

"We are aiming to optimise the customer experience so we need a good online proposition. That means assistance is one click away, the process should be executed in one day, and it should be available 24/7," says de Munk. SAP supports this and gives Wolters Kluwer the platform to build on for the future.

"I have a great relationship with SOA People and I trust their judgement. They have passion and expertise. They challenge us but also coach and support us. They were good at building relationships across our organisation, from management to maintenance."