Case Study
SAP Supplier Portals

Implemented for:
Malvern PANalytical
Global materials and biophysical characterisation company, Malvern PANalytical, were keen to drive efficiencies into their Supply Chain whilst improving collaboration with their suppliers. Malvern understood the value of working with a team with a unique understanding of digital touchpoints, SAP and the user experience to deliver their brand new Supplier Portal, so entrusted Weaveability to deliver this project.

The following is an Omnia implementation case study from Weaveability. For more information about SAP services from Weaveability visit www.weaveability.com
Introduction

“Weaveability recently implemented an SAP Supplier Portal which will allow suppliers to access and update their purchase orders, which will reduce admin for the purchasing team and improve the data in our order book.”

Rachel Flaxman
Purchasing Manager, Malvern PANalytical

Founded in 1967, Malvern PANalytical have worked long and hard to build their unshakable reputation as one of the world’s leading materials and biophysical characterisation companies. They are at the forefront of the development and manufacture of analytical instruments which allow you to understand your materials.

Having established themselves as innovators in particle sizing, the company today is highly respected for their leadership in the fields of technology and applications. Malvern provide the materials, technology and expertise which enable scientists and engineers to understand and control the properties of dispersed systems. Used during every research, development and manufacturing stage for items which we use on a daily basis, their instruments are used by industry and academia alike, in sectors ranging from pharmaceuticals to bulk chemicals, energy and the environment. When it comes to accelerating development, enhancing product quality and optimising efficiency, Malvern are critical components.

Their field-leading scientists boast the accumulated knowledge and experience of more than 40 years in material characterisation, across a very broad range of industries. Thanks to a strong communication network, their customers can access this global expertise through a variety of convenient channels and in formats structured to ensure the widest possible availability, anywhere in the world.

Headquartered in Malvern, UK, they have subsidiary organisations in all major European markets, North America, Mexico, China, Japan, Korea and India. With a global network of suppliers, Malvern were keen to ensure that they communicated with their suppliers every bit as effectively as they did with their customers. A desire to enhance collaboration with their suppliers whilst delivering added efficiencies for internal users, led Malvern to a decision that a supplier portal would ensure they achieved these aims.

Malvern are part of the Spectris Group. Spectris develops and markets productivity-enhancing instrumentation and controls. The company had sales of £1,173.7 million in 2014 and employs around 8,000 people worldwide. They make highly specialised measuring instruments and controls for some of the most technically demanding industries in the world. Their products and applications help ensure the safety of aircraft materials, render cars quieter and more economical, and make energy greener and cleaner.
Malvern wanted their Supplier Portal to utilise the business processes and data they already had residing in their SAP ERP platform. Malvern realised that the portal would only be beneficial to its suppliers and themselves if the information being provided by the portal was 100% real time. As such, it was important to Malvern that the solution used to deliver their Supplier Portal could achieve this. They were keen to avoid constant worries surrounding integration between the portal and their core SAP platform and how quickly information could be passed between the two.

Malvern were also keen to ensure that their Supplier Portal could provide features and functionality which would prove beneficial to their suppliers and internal users alike. They were keen to improve their collaboration with their suppliers by giving them a tool which would be easy to use and would provide real value ensuring the portal was quickly adopted upon completion.

A key objective was to empower suppliers in relation to purchase order control. Malvern wanted suppliers to confirm their purchase orders via the portal as well as view relevant information in relation to past, present and future orders. Quotation requests were another area which they wished to manage via the portal allowing Malvern to raise requests for a quotation and allow the supplier to view and respond to these requests.

A supplier dashboard was also a key requirement allowing one central location to provide the platform from which key information regarding a suppliers’ account could be viewed. This needed to include a location for delivering alerts, news and visibility of Malvern defined KPI’s. This easy to view dashboard was to be utilised by the suppliers but would also provide a location from which internal users could easily view key information about all of the Malvern supply base.

The portal was also to be used to remove paper trails by allowing documentation to be uploaded and stored so that it could be viewed at any time by both the supplier and Malvern themselves. This would prove very beneficial in relation to documents such as ECN’s as people on both sides of the fence would know what information was current, when it had been submitted, by whom and who had confirmed acceptance of these changes. This would also be used to cover a myriad of other document types such as CAD drawings and compliance paperwork.

Ultimately, Malvern were convinced that if the project was delivered successfully they would benefit by reducing transactional processing overheads from their supply chain, whilst reaping the benefits of communicating with their suppliers real-time.
Omnia Supplier Portal Solution

“Weaveability are a very professional organisation to work with. They considered our requirements and improved our solution. They were also very responsive and delivered beyond our expectations.”

Rachel Flaxman
Purchasing Manager, Malvern PANalytical

Weaveability utilised the Omnia solution to deliver the Supplier Portal as laid out in the brief from Malvern PANalytical.

With a solution which is delivered natively inside SAP (alongside existing SAP modules such as MM, FI, SD) with no integration required, Malvern took advantage of this ability to share real time data from SAP with their suppliers and allow them (with certain authorisations/ restrictions in place) to pass data through the portal back into their SAP platform. All of this delivered with no requirement to replicate business processes or duplicate data, whilst removing integration layers and middleware, which do not add value. Allied to this simplification in the back end, the Omnia solution was able to comprehensively deliver the required features and functionality. Purchase orders could now be controlled and quality notifications managed via the portal. User experience is always key in the adoption of technology and the removal of paper trails via document management capabilities in the portal allied with an easy to use, self-intuitive dashboard provided the desired experience. Even the on-boarding process can be carried out via the portal. This is linked into SAP workflow and goes through an approval process which is visible and actionable via the portal. Though Malvern only use this function internally, Omnia can make this a two-way workflow between the business and their potential supplier (with limited access log in), allowing full automation of the process.

The portal has facilitated the desired reduction in processing overheads and the Malvern supply chain has been streamlined thanks to improved collaboration with their suppliers plus access to real-time information. Malvern have plans to continue to add further features and functionality into the portal. By taking advantage of the SAP-centric approach Weaveability have implemented, this continued innovation becomes much easier. Integration concerns are allayed, whilst the scalability and flexibility Omnia provides ensures that the Supplier Portal is ready to deal with future developments. For example, Malvern have not been using the quotation capability of SAP but with the assistance of Weaveability this is to be configured ensuring the management of the quotation process will also be carried out via the portal in complete harmony with the back end SAP process.