Why go modular?

MASSIMO RUOSI: AX FOR PHARMA

Modular enterprise resource planning solutions like AX for Pharma allow pharmaceutical companies to lower the costs and complexity of managing the drug production and distribution process

Producing drugs that are safe for human consumption involves multiple complex processes. Pharmaceutical companies must procure the necessary ingredients, store them in the appropriate environment (particularly if they're temperature-sensitive), and then they must accurately weigh and dispense ingredients before they can start manufacturing the final drug products. Once manufactured, the drugs must be packaged and labelled correctly, before they are shipped to the right national or international warehouses and eventually to the end user. Throughout every step of the process, pharmaceutical companies must also ensure their operational procedures and staff meet high quality control standards and strict industry regulations.

Managing so many processes can be expensive and difficult, particularly if a company has multiple disparate IT systems. However, an easy and cost-effective option is to implement a solution that integrates different modules for each of the specific processes.

Using modular software has multiple benefits. Pharmaceutical companies can start small by implementing key modules – ERP and LIMS – and add others as their business expands or industry requirements evolve. Alternatively, companies can roll out a single module, or all available modules in one go to completely transform how they manage their operations. This flexibility enables organisations to scale the solution according to their specific needs at any given time. It also allows them to spread the investment, system maintenance and validation costs. Plus, it can help them to manage regulatory compliance as legislation changes.

Built on the Microsoft Dynamics AX platform, AX for Pharma is a modular solution designed specifically for use in the pharmaceutical, life sciences and biotechnology industries.

AX for Pharma offers core ERP and LIMS functionalities in modules like Basic Pharma, Advanced Quality Management, Weighing and Dispensing, Advanced Warehouse Management, Regulated Content Management, and Corrective and Preventative Action management. It also leverages Microsoft SQL Server, SharePoint and Office to support additional modules for managing specific processes. These include procurement, inventory and products, quality control, plant maintenance, clinical trials, regulatory compliance, activity-based costing, administration, sales, project and much more.

Together, all of these modules give pharmaceutical companies a full overview, and complete control, over their entire manufacturing, warehouse and distribution, and supply chain processes. Having a clear picture of everything that is going on in their organisation allows them to identify any issues, spot opportunities

for process optimisation, and make faster and more informed decisions.

Global legislation also requires pharmaceutical and life sciences companies to accurately track every individual product unit as it passes through the supply chain, from the initial weigh-

"Customers choose AX for Pharma because they know it's a low risk, low cost and easily maintained solution"

ing and dispensing phase, to the manufacturing and final distribution stages. Not only does AX for Pharma enable pharmaceutical companies to automatically trace every drug they produce, but it also supports the functionality they need to create electronic signatures and approved vendor and manufacturer lists. This makes it easy for them to implement best practices and comply with Good Automated Manufacturing Practice, Good Manufacturing Practice and electronic documentation requirements.

As a commercial-off-the-shelf solution, AX for Pharma has also been extensively tested for standard use and typical process in the industry. This means it's quick, easy and cost-effective to update, extend and validate the solution if a company decides to start small and add more modules in future.

Customers worldwide have chosen our AX for Pharma software because they know it's a low risk, low cost and easily maintained solution that can be implemented quickly to transform their pharmaceutical operations. They also value the fact that as a Microsoft partner, we're able to use Microsoft's training materials and standard methodologies – such as SureStep – to help them plan and accelerate their implementations.

Working with our team of knowledgeable advisors and experienced consultants will ensure that pharmaceutical and life sciences companies can reap the rewards an integrated ERP and LIMS platform can bring in today's highly regulated and intensely competitive market. ■

Massimo Ruosi is senior partner at AX for Pharma