

NOVO NORDISK LEAN MONTHLY REPORTING SYSTEM

Novo Nordisk and NNIT develop first-ever comprehensive R&D project reporting system

In pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk, there can be as many as 50 R&D projects running at any one time – and they are all tracked by executive management. But for management to make good decisions, they need access to all the relevant project data, including information on project progress, key milestones, budgets and patient recruitment.

Every R&D project manager in Novo Nordisk prepares a monthly report, but Novo Nordisk realised that the reporting process was extremely time-consuming. Also, different project managers used different reporting styles, so it was hard for management to maintain a clear overview. After conducting a LEAN study, Novo Nordisk developed an alternative, and asked NNIT to make it a reality.

The resulting system cuts the reporting process down from a couple of weeks to just a few days – and is the first comprehensive reporting system of its kind.

THE CHALLENGE

Novo Nordisk's worldwide R&D organisation includes 2,900 employees – and keeping track of all the ongoing research projects is essential. But the company found that compiling monthly reports for executive management could be time-consuming for project managers.

Henrik Troelsen, Finance Director at Novo Nordisk, explains, “We found that on average over 15 management reports were made each month, and some of them could take up to two weeks to complete. The reports were often ‘handed over’ to a number of people before they were completed, and some project managers felt they were constantly involved in the reporting cycle. Also, we found that project managers were using at least 10

different reporting styles, meaning data was not presented to management in a consistent way. This added to management's work when preparing for monthly status meetings.”

So Novo Nordisk's cLEAN® department and Project Finance department (both part of Novo Nordisk's Strategic R&D area) teamed up to find a solution. The resulting LEAN study came to a simple conclusion: Novo Nordisk needed one reporting tool that automatically pulled all the relevant information for each project into a single-page report. The project manager would then simply add comments before pressing ‘Send’. But the big question facing Novo Nordisk was: could it be done?

THE SOLUTION

“Once we'd established what we needed, we called in NNIT,” says Henrik. “They have knowledge of the different systems we use and understand the issues facing pharmaceutical companies like us.”

The resulting solution automatically pulls the right information for each project from three different systems: Microsoft Projects for basic project data and milestones; SAP for financial information; and IMPACT for patient recruitment information if the project is in the clinical trial phase. It then presents this information for the project manager in a one-page Excel spreadsheet.

“All the project manager has to do is write the executive summary, add comments on key project milestones and write explanations if the project costs deviate from budget,” Henrik explains. “For example, if a milestone may not be met, they add an explanation. All the information is then sent to the executive management team in a report generated from Excel.”

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For the development team, the biggest challenge was understanding Novo Nordisk's complex work processes. "Our reporting system actually has four different levels and can be quite complicated," says Henrik. "But NNIT was excellent: they worked closely with our team and with end users to understand our requirements – and the entire thing was driven by our internal project manager who kept everything moving forward."

As part of the change management process, the NNIT team helped Novo Nordisk develop training materials for users, and they created a user-support system including a Q&A site on the intranet and a Helpdesk.

THE SOLUTION

For project managers, the new reporting system is proving a success. "We did a user satisfaction survey not long after launch and it scored four out of five – pretty good for an IT system," says Henrik. "It's cut the amount of time project managers spend on reports from weeks down to days – and it's given them more time to dedicate to their projects."

And some of the additional features are proving popular. For example, because the system is global, project managers can complete a report from anywhere in the world. There is also a simple traffic-light system enabling project managers to flag their project if it needs particular attention from the executive management team.

So has the system helped executive management? "The reports they receive are now much simpler to read," Henrik says. "This saves them time when preparing for monthly status meetings. It may be too early to say if it's improved their decision-making capabilities, but it has certainly made sure that they have all the information they need."



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HENRIK TROELSEN, FINANCE DIRECTOR, NOVO NORDISK

ABOUT NOVO NORDISK

Novo Nordisk manufactures and markets pharmaceutical products and services that make a significant difference to patients, the medical profession and society. It is a world leader in diabetes care, and also works in areas such as haemostasis management and growth hormone therapy. With headquarters in Denmark, Novo Nordisk employs more than 27,000 employees in 81 countries.

ABOUT THE REPORTING TOOL

- Pulls all relevant project information from Microsoft Projects, SAP and IMPACT
- Allows project managers to quickly update the project status, including entries for milestones, budget and patient recruitment
- Presents all the information to executive management in a one-page Excel spreadsheet

PREVIOUS PROJECTS FOR NOVO NORDISK

- ISOTrain, a system for creating and sharing SOPs
- Globeshare, an intranet system for sharing documents

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact us at nnitcontact@nnit.com to learn more about the case or our services. Or read more on www.nnit.com

ABOUT NNIT

NNIT is one of Europe's leading consultancies in the development, implementation, validation and operation of IT for the life sciences industry. We create value for our clients by treating their IT as if it was our own, and of course, we meet the industry's strictest requirements for quality. For over a decade, we have applied the latest advances in technology to make our clients' software, business processes and communication more effective. NNIT employs nearly 1,300 people and in 2008, our turnover exceeded €185 million.