Scaling with Appian at a Contract Packaging Firm

CHALLENGE

MaxUS Operations LLC, a Midwest contract packaging firm partnered with Macedon Technologies and embarked on a digital transformation journey. The firm faced scalability challenges as it began 24/7 operations and contemplated opening new warehouses outside of the Midwest. Leadership realized that process inefficiency and lack of real-time metrics would hinder its ability to scale. They selected Appian's low-code platform as a tool to support the rapid digitization of key processes and increase visibility into operations.

As organizations navigate a rapidly changing landscape, upended by both technology and current events, they need to constantly adapt and increase efficiency to remain competitive. Processes that rely on word-of-mouth, paper documents, or offline document editing are difficult to scale and are inherently inefficient. By unifying data and automating processes on the right technology stack, businesses can focus on delivering for their customers rather than fighting inaccessible data silos and time-consuming busywork.

MaxUS Operation's first task was to eliminate reliance on paper forms and Excel documents on the warehouse floor. Tailor-fit, informative dashboards were built to represent order staging, delivery scheduling, and production line metrics. Unifying this data in Appian meant that records could be linked together so that employees could instantly answer questions like:

- Where do I need to be during this shift? Once I'm there, what tasks do I need to complete?

- When will this order be ready?

- Are production lines currently facing issues?

SOLUTION

Using the Appian mobile app, production line workers use professional-grade barcode scanners and wall-mounted tablets to move inventory, track the production of finished goods, and receive purchase orders. Rather than waiting for paper forms to be turned in at the end of a shift, managers are alerted to address quality and velocity problems in real-time. With data centralized and fine-grained metrics captured, management now has instant visibility into production line run rates, machine performance, and employee time all from one informative dashboard.

> " *With the organization of data and the ability to add, change, and move processes around, we can make our systems work in the best way possible for our teams!* " — *Director of Engineering*

Macedon Technologies accelerates Digital Transformation by delivering sustainable, enterprise-grade applications quickly and reliably.

Solving operational challenges at scale with Appian

> *"Macedon is a great asset and I'm really glad we got to do the project with them."*
>
> — *Product Owner*

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Appian's low-code integration capabilities were leveraged to provide two-way communication and integration with two legacy ERP systems. With these integrations, new dashboards and workflows built in Appian read records from and pushed results to existing databases, thus eliminating the need for slow and error-prone duplicate data entry. As an additional bonus, the firm substantially reduced the number of necessary user licenses required for one solution and retired another entirely. This provides substantial ongoing cost savings.

RESULTS

MaxUS Operations was able to vision, design, build, test, and deploy their Appian solution in eight weeks, to coincide with the beginning of their 24/7 operations. Warehouse personnel have noted an immediate decrease in the number of manual tasks needed to be completed at the end of a shift. Instead of having to remember to save excel documents, erase and redraw diagrams on whiteboards, and file paperwork, users simply log out of the system knowing all the necessary information for the next shift is ready and waiting.

Appian has proved critical during disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As an essential business in the grocery and household goods supply chain, the firm faced an unprecedented surge in demand following the imposition of stay-at-home orders. Since Appian is a cloud solution that is available anywhere, anytime, on any device, managers can perform their administrative tasks from the comfort and safety of home during lockdowns. This was simply not possible with paper processes and excel documents stored on local computers. Armed with data and with visibility into processes, managers are far better equipped to provide critical information to their customers than they were previously.

As a platform, Appian can host an unlimited number of applications across the enterprise. After delivering the aforementioned warehouse management application, the firm also developed a solution to track quotes throughout the sales process. Looking forward, the firm plans to continue to enhance warehouse management processes and create a portal for their customers to track the status of their orders. Appian is now at the core of operations and strategy and is a serious competitive advantage in their market.