CASE STUDY

Illumina fortifies supplier relationships with Octave Reliance

Key facts:

Company:
Illumina

Website:
www.illumina.com

Industry:
Life sciences, genomics, biotechnology

Octave products used:
Reliance *(ETQ Reliance)*

Key benefits:

- Real-time insight into supplier performance
- Centralized, scalable supplier quality collaboration
- Streamlined workflows and better audit readiness

Illumina's mission — to improve human health by unlocking the power of the genome — focuses on sequencing genetics, developing both genome sequencing machines and their consumables. But the company's previous manual quality control processes were inflexible and unscalable.

Challenge

When in the highly technical life science business environment, manufacturers rely heavily on suppliers delivering high-quality, specialized materials and Illumina was no exception. But the company's manual quality control processes were inefficient and time-consuming.

For example, to create a quality review, one employee had to spend 20+ hours each week contacting suppliers and staffers, manually aggregating the info and updating an Excel spreadsheet — hardly a scalable process.

With a growing list of suppliers, Illumina's quality team realized it needed a more effective way to track quality consistency, empowering them to react quickly when a quality dip occurred.

Solution

Illumina kicked off its quality journey with Octave Reliance by integrating its suppliers into Octave's SMC module — and its quality team's first task was to create supplier change notifications. Because many of Illumina's materials are custom, anytime suppliers needed to change those materials, Illumina wanted that system immediately updated so that appropriate stakeholders and teams could be notified of the change. With Reliance, suppliers can now directly create supplier change notifications, quickly alerting Illumina staffers to any material changes.

Reliance allowed Illumina's quality team to easily set up supplier profiles and push information about changes into the quality management system. This action significantly reduced many of the issues Illumina had been facing, leading to a win-win situation for both Illumina and its suppliers and serving as a springboard for the company's supplier collaboration journey.

Quality journey



Manual quality control processes were inflexible and unscalable



Integrated suppliers into its quality processes



Streamlines SCAR, supplier audits & supplier investigations

"One of the big benefits of Octave Reliance, being that it is a workflow engine, is you truly get incredible insights as to when things were due, how they were completed and when they got completed. So, the face tracking and monitoring of those records is powerful and something that we've leveraged significantly."

Michael Farrell
IT Manager, Illumina



In addition, Octave's SMC module also effectively created a simple API that Illumina could easily integrate with its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, gathering material and supplier info into a centralized location. This provided Illumina with a streamlined quality database, allowing staffers to identify the quality contacts at each supplier easily.

Building upon its early success, Illumina's quality team expanded its use of Reliance to include SCARs supplier audits and supplier investigations; over the past several years, Illumina has built out each of these areas with its supplier quality engineers to provide direct collaboration with its suppliers. "Whenever we have a supplier audit, the supplier can respond directly when it comes to the audit that took place and any nonconformances or follow-up action items that are required as a result of that audit," explained Michael.

When Illumina's ERP generates nonconformances, Reliance's highly configured workflow allows staffers to collaborate directly with the supplier. Reliance allows administrators to configure specific workflows that provide highly customized, granular processes that many other quality management systems don't offer.

Additionally, Octave empowers Illumina's quality teams to get the information they need, allowing them to improve relationships with suppliers by collaborating to understand the root cause of reported issues clearly.

Results

Working with Reliance to streamline and centralize its supplier quality management, Illumina has realized numerous benefits — and one of the biggest is real-time monitoring of in-process records, which allows it to control production processes and maintain quality more effectively.

Additionally, using Reliance has allowed Illumina to abandon its previous manual Excel-and-email process, giving the company a single source location for monitoring quality issues. Reliance also provides Illumina with a one-stop audit trail, allowing the company to quickly and easily access information necessary for internal and external audits.



Having a single platform with everything in one location — SCARs, supplier audits and numerous other areas of supplier quality — has helped streamline Illumina's quality processes. And Reliance's flexible workflow engine provides Illumina with valuable insights into when things were due, how and when they were completed. "One of the big benefits of Reliance, being that it is a workflow engine, is you truly get incredible insights as to when things were due, how they were completed and when they got completed. So, the face tracking and monitoring of those records is powerful and something that we've leveraged significantly," Michael said.

Octave's analytics have also empowered Illumina's quality team to effectively drive supplier strategy, determining how the company interacts with its suppliers. Tracking and monitoring these records has helped Illumina develop key supplier performance metrics or KSPMs. Using Reliance, Illumina has created supplier scorecards to track how the company scored on subsequent audits and how many SCARs the company had against non-conformances.

Reliance allows Illumina to make informed decisions about suppliers. With Octave, team members can now see the supplier's entire performance history across multiple quality records — something impossible before suppliers were embedded in Illumina's quality process. This helps Illumina determine if it wants to continue working with a specific supplier or find another supplier.

About Octave

Octave is a leader in enterprise software, turning data into decisive action and intelligence into your edge. Our software solves for and simplifies complexity, from the design and build to operations and protection of people, property and assets – for any scope, at any scale. For decades, we've partnered with customers to sharpen performance, elevate efficiency and amplify results. From factory floors to entire cities, our solutions are tuned to scale up what's possible from day one onward.

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