

LycoRed

A leader in nutrition and fortification solutions

LycoRed is a global vitamin and mineral premix supplier developing a range of ingredients to provide functional and nutritional solutions. The company produces natural lycopene, lutein and beta carotene designed for food fortification, dietary supplements and food colouring. Committed to meeting consumer demands of the 21st century and beyond, LycoRed develops a range of ingredients to provide functional and nutritional ingredient solutions.

“It would take our planner almost two days to do the work in spreadsheets. Now this runs instantly – this saves an incredible amount of time for us.”

Nigel Nash, Financial Director

The background

LycoRed tried to make the best out of an inflexible SAP system, but this proved to be a difficult exercise. Nigel Nash, the firm's financial director, explains, “Instead of the system meeting our business needs, we had to try to change our operations to fit with what SAP could do. It was a difficult time because I had no control over anything – it was all carried out at the group's head office which, for me, was a challenge.”

Following the sale of the company, the management team replaced the SAP system with Access Supply Chain.

“We knew we would need a working platform on which to move forward,” says Nigel. “The business was eager to grow our existing base as well as expand into new areas.”

A winning solution

Making the move to ASC proved to be the right decision. “We can react so much quicker than many of our larger competitors,” says Nigel. “They're bigger organisations with more product lines. We have limited product lines, but we can respond quicker and cut lead times.”

Indeed, the lead time averages are between two and three weeks – elsewhere, it is five or six weeks. For LycoRed, its success has been built on combining a quality product with speed of response.

Developing the right mix

LycoRed's formulation database was a standalone system, but Access was able to integrate it with ASC, producing significant results. “We used to take our recipes and label them with information from that system and physically key it in, which took about half an hour per formulation,” says Nigel.

Industry	Manufacturing
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Geographic	Kent
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Employees	52 in the UK
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Turnover	£12m
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Solution	Access Supply Chain Access FocalPoint Access Payroll
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Once the customer gives the go ahead, LycoRed can download the authorised recipe at the push of a button. The information includes label requirements, pack sizes, ingredients, the percentage per kilo of production – it's all there and ready to go.

"We'd have to do this 10 times a week, so that's 300 minutes a week we've saved," says Nigel, "We've also eliminated the errors from manual keying. The benefits of speed and accuracy were immediate."

A perfect blend

For day-to-day business, Access has also led to dramatic improvements. Nigel describes the process, "When an order comes in, it goes straight to customer service where it's entered on the system. This gives the planner a prompt that a new order has been entered. He checks when it can be produced and confirms if that matches the date requested by the customer, which it is in most cases."

Interestingly, LycoRed blends the IT capability with human expertise to give the best result. The planner still has the opportunity to exercise his skill and experience. "Since implementing the system, we've seen our on time in full delivery rating jump from an impressive 95 per cent to almost 98 per cent," says Nigel.

Easier to manage debtor days

Nigel has also regained the control and visibility that was lacking before. "Debtor days went through the roof when credit control responsibility lay with head office," he says. "It's now halved to less than 60 days for most of our customers. We do have a few customers with extended terms agreed, and the system allows us to define individual terms for each customer."

Automates processes, saves time

Elsewhere, ASC is boosting efficiency. Previously, production planning was done outside the system. Access worked with LycoRed to automatically

"Running a business is all about having the right information at the right time. Access provides us with just that,"

Nigel Nash, Financial Director

run the planning straight off the system. "It would take our planner almost two days to do the work in spreadsheets. Now this runs instantly – this saves an incredible amount of time for us," says Nigel.

Strong reporting, better information

Checking product shelf life is now automated with ASC. LycoRed can easily create reports on expiry data as well as auto-allocation of materials.

"I can run reports to show if stock is going to run out in one or two months – whatever data period I want," says Nigel. "The reports allow us to monitor out of date stock or slow moving stock, we can get the information we need in seconds."

Stronger reporting functionality makes it easier for Nigel to access information that's crucial to the business. "We've developed a lot of our own reports that allow me to analyse data by country, by product and product range, and the figures can be displayed in various formats."

Expanding into new markets...

Over the last two years, LycoRed has experienced many changes to its business. It recently built a new plant in China, and this is already creating new opportunities for the company.

"We implemented the latest version of Access Supply Chain at our China plant, and it's working nicely," he says. "Based on the results we've seen in China, we upgraded our UK plants to the newer platform. So far, the feedback I'm getting from our users is positive. They're all very happy with the new system."

...adding more functionality

Perhaps the biggest benefit of upgrading its system is the FocalPoint integration available with the latest version of ASC. By adding FocalPoint to its solution, LycoRed can customize workflows to automate more business processes.

The first workflow the company is creating will expand its costing module, which was created in-house.

"Right now, I'm responsible for all our costing, but we want to roll it out to our staff," explains Nigel. "The costing workflow form will pick up all our formulations and other variable costs from our two systems. It made sense to develop this through Access Supply Chain. The link is already there, and having this information will help our sales people who are out on the road. Workflow forms look to be a good tool for us, and I can already see how we can use it in other ways."

Future developments

LycoRed continues to branch out in new markets as well as develop key relationships with customers to support continuous growth.

"We work in conjunction with customers to see what requirements they have for coding on finished products. It's not enough to solve our own issues, we have to satisfy customer needs. We may be a manufacturer, but service is what our business is built on," says Nigel.

Nigel meets with Access on an annual basis to extend the scope of the system to help drive the business forward. "I always have something I want to develop; I never want to slip behind," he said.

About Access

Since 1991, Access has become established as a leading business solutions provider to the mid-market. It helps organisations improve performance, profitability and cost efficiency by delivering integrated organisation-wide solutions spanning finance, HR and payroll, professional services automation, document management and manufacturing.

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