



DANONE BABY NUTRITION

SAP® SAFEGUARDING HELPS BOOST PERFORMANCE AND ENHANCE SKILLS

QUICK FACTS

“SAP Safeguarding has given us the knowledge and skills needed to provide reliable support during ongoing operations. Plus, we know the potential pitfalls in implementations of this kind and how to sidestep them.”

Freddy Portier, Regional IT Director,
Danone Information Services – Asia Pacific
Sdn Bhd

Company

- Name: Danone Baby Nutrition, a division of Groupe Danone SA, with subsidiary Danone Information Services – Asia Pacific Sdn Bhd
- Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Industry: Consumer products
- Products and services: Baby food
- Web site: www.danone.com, www.dumex.com.my

Challenges and Opportunities

- Resolve problems with newly implemented business planning and simulation functionality
- Increase employee productivity and end-user acceptance of data warehousing software
- Ensure a robust return on investment in SAP® applications

Objectives

- Identify and eliminate causes of software performance problems
- Mitigate risk by teaching new skills to in-house IT specialists for ongoing support tasks and implementation projects

SAP Solutions and Services

SAP Safeguarding portfolio of services

Implementation Highlights

- Excellent collaboration via on-site technical quality manager from the SAP Active Global Support organization
- Successful rollout of new functionality in line with business departments' expectations

Why SAP

- Unparalleled project experience and knowledge of SAP software
- Commitment to ensuring resolution of all issues

Benefits

- Significant performance improvements
- Runtime of batch jobs for planning slashed by about 10 hours
- Average data loading times for reporting and analysis down by 75%
- Average query times for critical reports reduced by 90%
- More users leveraging SAP software for day-to-day tasks
- Greater employee productivity and satisfaction
- Enhanced in-house support skills through effective training
- Lower risk in delivering future projects – thanks to knowledge of pitfalls and how to avoid them

Existing Environment

- SAP software for enterprise resource planning, data warehousing, and business planning and scheduling
- SAP Advanced Planning & Optimization component

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: Hewlett-Packard
- Operating system: Windows 2003



DANONE
INFORMATION SERVICES - ASIA PACIFIC

Danone Baby Nutrition – a division of French-based Groupe Danone SA – counts on SAP® software to keep its business running smoothly in the Asia Pacific region. So when it ran into issues with newly introduced planning and simulation functionality, its shared IT service center, Danone Information Services – Asia Pacific Sdn Bhd, called in the SAP Active Global Support (SAP AGS) organization. In delivering its SAP Safeguarding portfolio of services, the experts from SAP AGS provided highly effective recommendations for enhancing performance. They also taught new skills to the customer’s Malaysian-based regional support team – boosting end-user productivity and mitigating risk in future projects.

A Leader in Baby Foods

Marketed by the global Danone Baby Nutrition division, Dumex is one of the leading baby-food brands in China, Thailand, Malaysia, and other countries of the Asia Pacific region. Products include formulas designed for infants and children with special dietary needs – enhancing Danone Dumex’s reputation as a nutritional expert and making it many parents’ brand of choice.

The Asian arm of Danone Baby Nutrition has a long and successful track record with SAP business applications. Since 2003 it has operated a single, harmonized landscape comprised of SAP software for enterprise resource planning, planning and optimization, and data warehousing. The organization responsible for supporting this environment is Malaysia-based Danone Information

Services – Asia Pacific. “Our team is tasked with ensuring that mission-critical SAP applications run smoothly and with implementing new IT-related business solutions,” explains Freddy Portier, regional IT director at Danone Information Services.

Nipping Issues in the Bud

Data warehousing software from SAP plays a particularly important role at Danone Baby Nutrition. It is used by staff throughout Asia to generate up-to-date reports on a variety of key figures – and to adjust business plans and forecasts accordingly. The company recently enhanced its capabilities by introducing new functionality for business planning and simulation. However, it wasn’t long before Danone Baby Nutrition’s finance and sales units began experiencing issues with the new features.

“We already had the planning and simulation software up and running in China without a hitch,” says Portier. “But when we started rolling out to Thailand and Malaysia, we ran into a number of problems. For example, batch jobs for the planning function took over 10 hours to complete, so users had to wait until the following day for the information they needed. This impacted productivity and meant that employees were reluctant to work with the new functionality.”

Danone Information Services needed to increase performance, gain end-user acceptance, and ensure the new SAP software delivered a robust return on investment. So it brought in SAP AGS to deliver SAP Safeguarding – a portfolio of services designed to mitigate technical risk and help manage technical quality in implementation and upgrade projects.

Getting Staff and Software Up to Speed

“Our small in-house team couldn’t have tackled the issues alone. Joining forces with SAP AGS was the logical choice – after all, who knows SAP software better than SAP?” says Portier. “We wanted to iron out all our performance problems and skill up our IT specialists for future support tasks and implementations. SAP Safeguarding promised to deliver on both counts.”

Following the kick-off meeting, the top priority was to tackle the planning and simulation functionality. Experts from SAP AGS first sat down with Danone



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Information Services to get an overview of the company’s business requirements and its approach to implementing the software. They then analyzed system performance to gain deeper insight into the underlying technical issues – and, on the basis of these findings, drew up proposals for corrective action.

Tangible Improvements from the Get-Go

“Because we were still rolling out the new functionality in Thailand and Malaysia, we wanted to make sure it met our business departments’ expectations. SAP Safeguarding gave us targeted recommendations for improvements – and fast,” recalls Portier. “By putting these into practice, we were able to enhance the performance of our business planning and simulation functionality at a very early stage.”

In the following project phases, attention focused on how Danone Baby Nutrition was managing its data warehousing software and on processes for data loading and query tuning. “Thanks to their structured, step-by-step approach, the specialists from SAP AGS could pinpoint where changes were needed in each of these key areas.”

Tight Coordination, Effective Knowledge Transfer

Throughout the engagement, a dedicated technical quality manager worked hand in hand with Danone Information Services staff. “Our technical quality

manager from SAP AGS not only coordinated all activities and helped ensure all recommendations were implemented, he also brought a lot of expertise and enthusiasm into our team,” says Portier. “He really did a tremendous job.”

In addition to keeping the project on track, the technical quality manager made sure that the Danone Information Services team had the skills needed to support the new software and handle future implementations on its own.

“SAP AGS provided us with a wealth of knowledge, tips, and tricks via a mixture of structured meetings and informal talks,” states Portier.

Significantly Higher Performance and User Acceptance

By implementing the recommendations made by SAP AGS, Danone Baby Nutrition has considerably enhanced the performance of its data warehousing software and planning and scheduling

Although these figures are impressive in their own right, they add up to much more: including greater employee productivity and a better return on Danone Baby Nutrition’s investment in SAP applications. “The performance enhancements enabled by SAP Safeguarding have significantly increased acceptance of the data warehousing and planning and scheduling functionality,” reports Portier. “As a result, a lot more people are using the software in their day-to-day work.”

Enhanced Support, Reduced Risk

End users aren’t the only ones to benefit; Danone Information Services has also gained a great deal from the engagement. “One of our top priorities was to successfully introduce the new functionality in Thailand and Malaysia. With the help of SAP AGS, we’ve achieved that – and raised our organization’s profile in the process,” says Portier. “SAP Safeguarding has given us the

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functionality. Scheduled batch jobs for the planning function now take just 20 to 50 minutes – about 10 hours less than in the past. Average data loading times are down by around 75%. And queries for critical reports can now be executed over 90% faster than before.

knowledge and skills needed to provide reliable support during ongoing operations. Plus, we know the potential pitfalls in implementations of this kind and how to sidestep them. So we can approach future initiatives with much greater confidence.”

Danone Baby Nutrition is set to further enhance support for key business processes by implementing more SAP software. Right now, the IT experts

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at Danone Information Services are gearing up for a number of projects – including the possible introduction of the SAP Trade Promotion Management application and an upgrade to the latest release of the SAP ERP application.

“Given the resounding success of our recent engagement, we will certainly be leveraging SAP Safeguarding should we choose to implement SAP Trade Promotion Management,” says a satisfied Portier.

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