

IntelliChief Case Study: Hydrite Chemical Co. - Multiple ERP Integrations, A Complete Interdepartmental Success



Company: Hydrite Chemical Company

ERPs: JD Edwards, Infor Prism, IBM Maximo

Paper appeared to be vehicle of the problem. Too much of it throughout their organization had become an increasingly cumbersome, costly absence of usable information. The ultimate benefit was discovered when the paper-based information's capture and workflow was automated.

Headquartered in Brookfield, WI, Hydrite Chemical Co., established in the exuberance-turned-exasperate year of 1929, survived and thrived to become one of the largest and most utilized providers of chemicals and related services in the United States.

The company's continued rapid growth has expanded to a portfolio of 6000 products, and an industry-acclaimed specialty services group, creating enhancing compounds benefiting us all each day. Industries impacted include Agriculture, Biofuels, Food Processing, Graphic Arts, Industrial, Oil & Gas, along with Paints, Coatings, Inks & Adhesives and Pulp & Paper.

A strategic Hydrite differentiator is the company's rapid response in filling orders to significantly shorten lead times; this capacity facilitated with a nationwide, distribution-focused grid of 11 (and counting...) R&D and production facilities. This places **Customer Service** at the top of their priorities.

Faster Order-Filling

This is where Hydrite's problem became their solution. "We were drowning in paper," stated Lianne Peters, the company's Business Systems Specialist on-point for strategy and implementation of Hydrite's document management project. "There was an identified need to streamline order information throughout our processes."

That need was addressed by a team comprised of **IT, Customer Service** and **Invoice Management**, involved in enterprise content management (ECM) program evaluations of Hyland Software's OnBase, Lexmark's Perceptive Content and IntelliChief. Key criteria encompassed integration with the enterprise resource planning systems (ERP) they were utilizing throughout their organization, and flexibility for expansion of interdepartmental workflows, configurable to each group's unique processes.

Hydrite's ERP installations include:

- JD Edwards, utilized by **Finance, Accounts Payable** and **Accounts Receivable**,
- Infor Prism, used by Hydrite to house manufacturing process documentation, purchasing data and product production information management, and
- IBM Maximo for asset management, branch location non-inventory purchases and MRO inventory.

After putting each ECM through its paces, Hydrite chose IntelliChief. According to Peters, **"IntelliChief had the preferred integrations with all three primary business systems, along with the ability to be utilized with any future ERP or line of business system strategically beneficial for us to add. IntelliChief's features set has proven outstanding."**

IntelliChief's implementation began with the Customer Service group, with thorough discovery and strategy planning conducted with Hydrite and IntelliChief staff, mapping an optimized automation environment befitting Hydrite's processes. Configuration was then created and implemented, with provision for process adjustments and expansion as needs evolved over time.

The program provided the group ability to:

- Automate and organize all customer and order information by automating the document capture process,
- Verify information against customer and product information in Hydrite's ERPs,
- Look up and access any related documentation, assuring current data and providing for instant customer interaction, and
- Quickly circulate information between Hydrite staff and their customers, from order acknowledgments to billing, while adding notes to order's electronic files for thorough capture of information relayed by phone and other on-the-move means throughout processing and fulfillment.

"Management appreciates this real-time visibility of orders from our customers, noted Peters. **"Additionally, Customer Service is now able to implement a round-robin order assignment, to help facilitate even distribution and workload among staff to further expedite fulfillment."**

Customer Service/Invoicing Teams

The **Invoicing** department proved the perfect workflow paring with Customer Services' IntelliChief automation. Orders sent by email or fax are captured through IntelliChief's automation, with physical (paper) documents scanned into the system at each location, utilizing departmental and production scanners, as well as multifunction products (MFPs). All are then routed to the appropriate business system for records updating and real-time access, then enter configured workflows with IntelliChief. For Prism's benefit, Quadrant Software's Formtastic automates forms creation from information in Prism for entry into IntelliChief's workflows. Workflow then automates invoice email from Prism-stored information, and matches with related transaction documentation in the IntelliChief content management system.

To reduce billing processing time and associated costs, benefits from interdepartmental workflow with Customer Service include:

- Shared visibility of each order's progression, from receipt to delivery
- Timely invoice customers and collect payments, enhancing cash flow
- Reducing costs associated with paper: staff's time with invoice retrieval/return from filing cabinets, and making additional copies of documents
- Reducing on- and off-site document storage, eliminating them altogether in some locations, allowing for reallocation of valuable square footage for mission-enhancing uses (**industry average cost for a standard filing cabinet and filing resource's management – \$3000/year per cabinet**).

Automating Accounts Payable Actions

With the impacting results realized throughout Customer Service and Accounts Receivable operations, automating Accounts Payable was a natural expansion of IntelliChief's use. Difficulties Hydrite had previously experienced with paper-based information in the other two departments had also become evident in Accounts Payable. Hydrite received an **Account Review by IntelliChief, together launching into discovery and planning for AP's needs.**

"Manually routing paper documents for reviews and approvals is slow, and ultimately costly," noted Peters. "It encompassed more of our people's time than it should have, and forfeited vendor discounts we were contractually eligible to receive."

Hydrite processes a mix of Purchase Order and Non-Purchase Order entries totaling over 5000 transactions per month, with half arriving by email and the balance by postal mail. Prior to IntelliChief, they manually keyed data into JD Edwards at their headquarters facility, and into Maximo from their branch locations. **With IntelliChief's automated capture environment, manual entry has been reduced by 70%, allowing AP staff resources to take on additional responsibility.**

"Better organization through IntelliChief's automation pays dividends daily – literally. We're able to remove document processing, access and routing costs per transaction," stated Peters. "We avoid late payment fees and achieve vendor discounts available to us."

The Invoicing team processes over 9000 invoices per month. Since implementing IntelliChief, processing time has been reduced by providing the Invoicing team with easy access to documents needed for invoice processing.

"IntelliChief made it easy for our Specialty Customer Service personnel and Invoicing Team to work together, with each group having visibility and access to each order's status, streamlining the invoice process for specialty order types" commented Peters.

Hydrite's Accounts Payable automation benefits include:

- Effective documentation capture and organization for each transaction, in all paper-based and electronic file formats,
- Real-time data verification with each of their ERP's, assuring each transaction's contractual
- Thorough visibility throughout all transactions
- Increasing both convenience and speed of transaction documentation routing for notifications, reviews and approvals
- Increased on- and off-site paper document storage cost reduction, (reducing the number and space occupancy of those \$3000/year file cabinets...)
- Enhancing control of cash flow.

What's Next

Human Resources is currently in discussion of their need for an automated document management environment. With numerous paper and electronic file documents generated when creating and maintaining Human Resources department files for each employee and 1099 contractor, organization is imperative. It starts with having the ability to capture and structure all information befitting Hydrite's specific business processes, all through automation and server-based storage. Password protected access is enabled, with keyword search providing instant access to any needed records. The automated workflow provides the ability to route documents to staff and vendors electronically for prompt action. Structured colocation archival assures secure long-term, low-cost storage.

Being a records-heavy department by discipline, information security is at the conversation's forefront. "A paper-based HR environment is at risk," explains Peters. "There's irreplaceable documentation unprotected from physical damaged, primarily from fire and water. Having those files on secure servers with password access protection mitigates that risk, while providing reliable colocation backup and archival."

Automating **Human Capital Management** improves:

- Documentation Consolidation – information in every format, paper or electronic, is uniformly formatted and stored together based on specific criteria
- Employee File – Convert to a electronic employee file
- Information Validation – when integrated with Hydrite's ERP or Human Resources management systems, IntelliChief validated and updates stored information in these programs, assuring data integrity
- Paper Cost – reducing, often eliminating on- and offsite physical storage, and staff's time filing and retrieving it, freeing space for other Human Resources' uses
- Documentation security.

The Present and Future

"We're also looking into implementing **IntelliChief's Capture Enterprise**, to further reduce manual processing of paper-based documentation, conserving more company resources and expediting information to our ERP's and IntelliChief's workflows," mentioned Peters.

Capture Enterprise' multi-channel capture capabilities streamlines processing of documents from scanners, MFPs, fax, email and other digital sources, creating both centralized and distributed capture environments. The program facilitates processing of documents with barcodes, machine-printed text (OCR), hand-printed text (ICR) and check boxes (OMR), with full text and zonal identification, for locating and processing data on both structured and unstructured documents.

Addressing **Operations, Finance and Legal** management's needs, IntelliChief provides Hydrite thorough, ongoing documentation archival for future reference, regulatory compliance, risk mitigation, audit organization and preparation ahead of any disaster recovery or business continuity needs.

Then there's the stand-behind-your-product assurance that every company needs, yet is notoriously weak in the business software industry. **"IntelliChief's Support Team has been awesome," exclaimed Peters. "They're there whenever we need them, and remain committed to solving anything that could ever arise."**

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