About the Company

As a division of a global luxury-goods conglomerate, this cosmetics firm finds itself firmly rooted in innovation as a cornerstone of both their culture and their growth. Over the years, the company has gained a global cult following through developing products that are hallmarked by unique and humorous names, and creative packaging. This growing organization now develops cosmetics and skincare products that can be found in over 35 countries.

Many consumer goods firms operate on a global scale with cross-functional teams at the core, making the need for standardized processes essential to success. The cosmetics and personal care industry in particular is one of continuous fluctuation, with industry leaders finding success in the ability to readily adapt. Constantly changing consumer demands make it crucial for firms to have practices in place that support rapid innovation. Additionally, a changing regulatory environment and inconsistency between global regulatory policies can add further pressure to the new product development process. It comes as no surprise that as we work with leading organizations across this space globally, we are often tasked with helping to bring predictability and efficiency into innovation and new product development processes.

This case study illustrates how Sopheon partnered with a fast-growing global organization with an entrepreneurial spirit to bring structure and standardization to their innovation process. Working together to implement solutions and best practices, the organization was able to improve efficiency in execution, bring visibility into all parts of the product development process, and improve the accuracy of data.

The Business Challenge

The company, like many others in an industry that works closely with store buyers, found itself regularly scrambling to meet the absolute dates that are a natural part of the ‘open to buy’ process with department stores. Employees found themselves working under constant pressure in a frenzied environment as these delivery dates approached, chaotic weekends spent finalizing and packaging shipments was the norm. The company identified the need to put standardized practices in place to better support their innovation efforts, and to bring more predictability into the overall process. Some of the key challenges included a need to:

• Bring standardized processes and definitions to the planning and project management process to improve efficiency.
• Improve visibility through better tracking of project data and status to identify potential issues earlier in the process.
• Support cross-functional working teams and support efficient collaboration.
• Improve the accuracy of sales forecasting.
• Synchronize the use of Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheets to track suppliers, lead times, BOM, packaging, and cost of goods.
• Improve the ability to meet absolute dates and track key milestones throughout a project to better understand the impact of changes along the critical path to product launch.

The Solution

This company chose Accolade® Process Manager™ to drive efficiency, bring structure, and provide visibility to the overall process.

Some of the key reasons for choosing Accolade Process Manager were:

• Robust process management capabilities to standardize deliverables and data captured during the NPD process.
• Strong document, deliverable and activity routing supported by automated notifications for accountability throughout the process.
• Deep integration with Microsoft Office suite to allow continued use of existing document templates.
• Ability to view the status of key deliverables and milestones in real time.
• Ability to support cross-functional team participation.

Sopheon worked closely with the client’s appointed project manager to execute a kick-off meeting that clearly set expectations for requirements, roles and responsibilities throughout the implementation. During the initial phase of the project, the customer shared their current processes to help Sopheon identify the practices and areas most in need of improvement.

By taking a partnership approach, Sopheon worked with the client to define business objectives and goals which set the stage for a seamless implementation and rollout of the Accolade Process Manager.

The Results

Since implementing the Accolade solution, this organization has significantly standardized its innovation and new product development process, and accomplished the following:

• Improved the ability to meet delivery deadlines.
• Implemented gated process and visualization around key milestones.
• Improved visibility and tracking of data and status across all cross-functional areas participating in the development and launch phases, helping to identify potential issues earlier and bringing together all work under one consistent process.
• Improved sales forecasting globally.
• Made lead times and costs more predictable.
• Personalized the user experience to infuse the company culture into the innovation process.
• Improved the accuracy of data by reducing dependency on multiple stand-alone Excel spreadsheets.