

FONA International Automates Product Development with ProductVision®



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- Jennifer Hoffman,
Regulatory Affairs
Supervisor

FONA International, a global leader in the flavor industry, faced a dilemma in late 2003. Founded in 1987, FONA has built an industry reputation noted for unsurpassed service, outstanding reliability, and an unmatched dedication to their customers. The company had recruited some of the world's leading experts in flavor development and applied food science, and they needed the right tools to support them in an environment focused on personal service, creative thinking and technical solutions. So the selection of a software system to meet their project requirements had to look beyond just the software capabilities to the partnership they would be developing with the software vendor. FONA International selected Advanced Software Designs as their partner to work with them in realizing their vision, and purchased the ProductVision Product Development system in early 2004.



The Requirement:

Automated Project and Sample tracking, integrated to a product data management system and Regulatory System.

The Solution:

ProductVision® Formula Management, Projects, Workflow, Nutrition Labeling, Regulatory Compliance, and Testing Modules

ProductVision Implementation

FONA completed the first phase of implementation (Formula Management, Nutrition Labeling, Regulatory Compliance and the interface with their ERP system) later that fall. Projects, Workflow, and Testing Modules were rolled out in 2005. The ProductVision suite, which was to originally support the R&D, Regulatory and QC departments, is now

used throughout the organization by all departments and streamlines activities such as product selection, sample services, product applications, and customer service.

Jennifer Hoffmann, Regulatory Affairs Supervisor, was the "unofficial" ProductVision project team champion before she was officially assigned that role about midway into the implementation. "What is exciting to FONA is ProductVision's flexibility and the way in which we have been able to tailor it to use as the core for all of our information needs. When we first began the project, we had a very specific idea of where ProductVision would be used – in the R&D lab and for Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and regulatory report generation. However, once other departments saw what we were able to do in these two areas with the software, they all wanted to be part of the project."

When FONA first started the project, they were concerned about supporting the project with internal resources since all of the staff had to do their "regular" jobs. To help get the project up and running, they hired an outside consultant to assist for the first few months of the project in the system design, initial data migration and clean-up, and ERP interface development.



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This allowed for a quick implementation schedule, which was a critical concern of the FONA management team.

The Results

The productivity improvements they have seen are significant since ProductVision was implemented. An integrated data system with extensive query capabilities allows users throughout the organization to provide the same, accurate, rapid response to an inquiry, whether asked of the R&D lab, the Sample Department, Customer Service or Sales. With access to all historical and current lab and production formulas within ProductVision, the product development process has been streamlined. Manual tasks, such as MSDS or Certificate of Analysis generation, have been automated.

ProductVision's security features protect confidential information, and Auditing provides a complete history of all changes to a product.



FONA has also noted how much easier it is to respond to changing regulatory and market needs. Allergen labeling regulations came into effect January 1, 2006 that ensured all materials, including flavors, contain allergen statements on the labels. Previously, this type of regulation change would involve the painstaking review of 4000+ flavor labels and would have taken months. With the implementation of ProductVision, FONA was able to create allergen statement text and automatically regenerate labels meeting the new regulations within a week using allergen information already stored in the ProductVision database.

"ProductVision is the right software to meet the demanding needs of the flavor industry," Jennifer stated.

"We develop a large number of custom flavors for our customers. In fact, we may develop, test, and sample over 100 new flavors in a given week for several different customer projects. And we need data sheets and MSDS's on the samples. Of course, we also need to handle orders for our existing flavors. ProductVision has given us the tools we need to respond quickly to our customers and provide the personal service and technical solutions that are our trademark."

For more information about the ProductVision® Product Development System, contact Ted Pliakos at (636) 532-6021, email: tpliakos@asdsoftware.com.

