

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

ECOLAB

Truly Global
Complaint Tracking

Centralizing Processes into
a Streamlined Solution



AssurX

ECOLAB

Truly Global Complaint Tracking:
Centralizing Processes into a
Streamlined Solution

Ecolab is the world's leading provider of cleaning, food safety and health protection products and services for the foodservice, food and beverage processing, healthcare and hospitality markets in more than 160 countries. Partnering with AssurX, they sought to consolidate their many isolated systems (more than 17 in the US alone) into a single, global quality platform everyone could use to effectively track and address customer feedback and complaints.



ECOLAB SELECTED ASSURX OVER ALL OTHER VENDORS FOR ITS:

- + Simple, Flexible Configurability
- + User-friendly Software, Forms and Intuitive Workflows
- + Ability to Quickly and Easily Deploy Worldwide
- + Global Visibility with Executive Dashboards

The Company

Ecolab is the global leader in cleaning, sanitizing, food safety and energy technologies and services. Businesses in the food, hospitality, healthcare, industrial, and oil and gas markets choose Ecolab to keep their environments clean, safe, operating efficiently and sustainable. Ecolab consistently earns global industry recognition for ethics, safety, sustainability, innovation, and leadership.

Ecolab's business units focus on a wide array of cleaning and sanitation solutions for customers all over the world—across divisional markets and geographic boundaries—and they understand that the quality of their products is serious business. Effective handling of customer issues and feedback is critical to their success. *"We know what we do is important for many people and we believe strongly in our mission,"* said Karl Kriger, VP of Quality.

The Challenge: Create Consistent Visibility, Communication and Efficiency

With operations in over 160 countries, with thousands of sales and service associates spread across these countries, effectively managing customer feedback and complaints worldwide had become burdensome and ineffective. The existing system of paper-based processes and application silos had reached its limits and was unable to support growth.

In North America alone, Ecolab had 17 individual systems tracking customer complaints and feedback in a variety of ways using Excel spreadsheets and Access databases, Kriger said. *"There was no communication, no transparency, nothing was connected,"* he recalled.

These disparate systems lacked the connectivity, visibility and coordination needed for efficient tracking and response, and employees were spending significant resources and time on duplicated efforts. *"It involved a lot of double and triple work,"* Kriger added. *"We had lots of people doing the same thing over and over again."*

The team decided they needed to find a way to harness a single platform everyone could use. *"Our customer base was growing more global, so that demanded even more transparency, consistency and better communication,"* he said.

Ecolab took full advantage of two of AssurX's key features—its simple configurability and user friendliness—to get the system up and running fast.



“The software is so user-friendly and intuitive that even employees speaking different languages can still pick it up easily.”

KARL KRIGER

Vice President of Quality | ECOLAB, INC.

The Search

After exploring offerings from various providers, they narrowed their search to ten applications and contacted each company with a brief survey to see if that application met Ecolab's needs. Two of the most important requirements were that the application be Web-based and 21 CFR Part 11 compliant. *“AssurX's solution was the clear winner because it offered the lowest total cost of ownership, and was the most flexible and easiest to implement,”* Kriger said.

AssurX provides a versatile, configurable solution that automates quality and regulatory compliance-related processes so issues can be globally managed—from detection to corrective action to trend analysis. It helps collect, organize, analyze and share information to better manage and improve quality and compliance performance across the enterprise.

The Solution: A Truly Easy Global System in Under 12 Months

Ecolab took full advantage of two of AssurX's key features—its simple configurability and user friendliness—to get the system up and running fast. Kriger's team found that installing, training, and using it was surprisingly easy. Ecolab started development and training with AssurX in September and had it finished in North America by December, with launch the following month. Over the next eight months, the system was put into worldwide production in all remaining regions.

“What made [the process] so successful was that it was very easy to use the software and the training was so good,” Karl said. In fact, the software was so user-friendly and intuitive that even employees speaking different languages could still pick it up easily, Karl added.

AssurX's approach to training was also helpful, Karl said. In the United States, AssurX did on site training with Ecolab user groups by using a software demo and computer terminals. Outside the US, they used teleconference training to conduct the training efficiently and effectively. AssurX *“training was excellent,”* Karl reports.

It's also easy bringing new employees on board today, Karl noted, because AssurX helped Ecolab set up a voice-over Powerpoint presentation with screen shots.

The Benefit: Efficient Transparency Across 50+ Countries and 1000s of Users

Ecolab is now leveraging the system in more than 50 countries and with thousands of users, Karl says.

“Transparency has improved immensely,” he noted.

“Our executives worldwide can look at reporting and see the same information wherever they are,” he added. *“Senior management loves it because it provides them with KPIs and metrics...and they use 30 or 40 standard queries set up as dashboard display parts. We rely heavily on the use of the dashboard features.”*

The AssurX platform has enabled Ecolab to achieve global transparency and increased efficiency without the need for additional technical support or IT staff.



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The system allows Ecolab to reach across their global operations with instant access to information on pending issues for a complete view of what’s happening. The benefits are many:

- + On demand queries and report viewing
- + Globally standardized workflows
- + Central repository of all Ecolab issues
- + Accessibility to real time information 24/7
- + Increased responsiveness to issues
- + Automatic routing of issues to appropriate departments and divisions
- + Elimination of redundant tasks

The result is that the resolution and settling of issues across various divisions has significantly improved since Ecolab went with AssurX. All divisions in Ecolab are using it to great effect.

AssurX has provided Ecolab with consistent forms that have made it much easier and more efficient when dealing with quality issues across divisions and international regions.

“The forms in AssurX’s system are simple to use and user feedback has been very positive,” Karl said.

The highly scalable system has delivered the much needed global transparency and increased efficiency without the need for additional technical support or IT staff.

“It’s been the smoothest and most ‘uneventful’ product since we’ve had it up and running,” he noted.

Ecolab’s two call centers—customer service and tech support—use the AssurX system and in North America alone, it has saved them the equivalent of two full-time employees. The system also supports their Lean Six Sigma program as well as their overall Quality Group.

Expanding For The Future

The solution has been so flexible and robust that Karl and his team are increasingly excited about how they will leverage it in new ways going forward.

For example, at the time of this writing the company has planned to expand use of AssurX to their Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) program and will leverage the system to track safety incidents and other quality processes as well.

“It’s just an outstanding solution that is helping us more and more each day,” Karl reported.

Conclusion

Ecolab is a globally successful company that takes its mission seriously. In more than 160 countries, businesses rely on Ecolab to help keep their important operations clean and sanitary.

In AssurX, Karl and his team at Ecolab believe they’ve found a valuable and committed partner. *“It’s become ingrained in the culture at Ecolab,”* said Karl.