

Movement is not created in the moment – but in the system behind it

ottobock.

Company:

Ottobock

Industry:

Medical technology

Products:

Prostheses, orthoses, wheelchairs

Number of employees:

9,300

Turnover:

1.6 billion euros

Headquarters:

Duderstadt, Germany

Website:

www.ottobock.com

CHALLENGES

- Limited global controllability of expenditure due to lack of transparency
- Governance and compliance risks in the procurement process, as approvals were not consistently carried out upstream
- Difficult to implement standardised and efficient processes due to evolved international procedures
- Data analyses were predominantly based on downstream invoice data instead of real-time requirements
- Limited scalability for global growth

SOLUTIONS

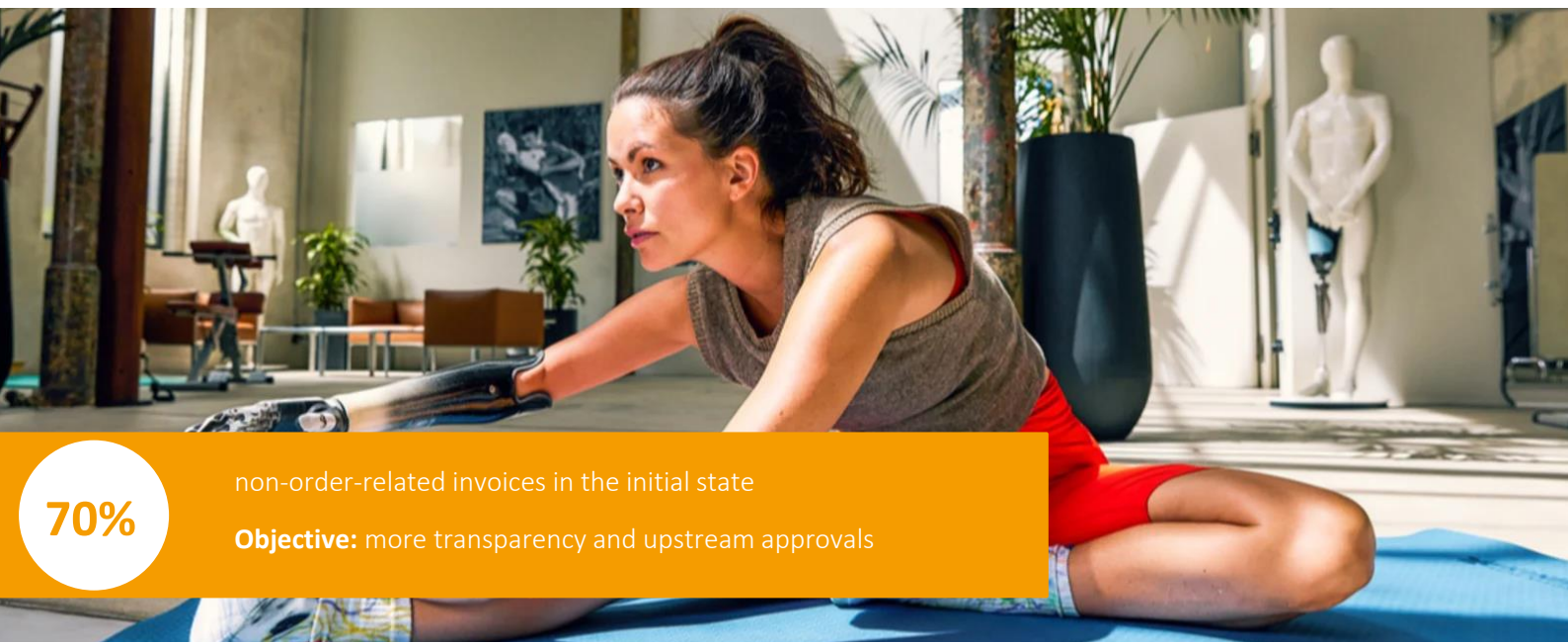
- SAP Ariba Buying
- SAP Ariba Contracts
- SAP Ariba Supplier Lifecycle & Performance
- Mapping of customised, highly automated user management
- Integration of a 3rd party master data governance system

BENEFITS

- Global transparency and controllability of expenditure
- Systemically anchored compliance and governance
- Greater process efficiency and organisational relief thanks to standardised workflows
- Further development of purchasing from an operational processor to an active management tool
- Improved decision-making quality through reliable real-time data
- Scalable platform for global growth

WHY APSOLUT?

- Deep process understanding instead of pure tool implementation
- High realisation reliability in terms of time and budget
- Extensive experience with SAP-based procurement transformations
- Pragmatic, solution-orientated consulting approach



70%

non-order-related invoices in the initial state

Objective: more transparency and upstream approvals



~6

months from project start to go-live

Together with apsolut, Ottobock is reorganising its purchasing and thus creating the basis for security of supply, controllability and sustainable growth.

When a person can walk again, you see movement. What you don't see: the processes, decisions and supply chains that make this movement possible in the first place. For Ottobock, whose technologies enable people around the world to be more mobile, the real challenge was therefore not in the laboratory, but in the procurement processes behind it.

There was a lack of transparency for managing expenditure globally, reliably enforcing compliance and basing strategic decisions on reliable data. Procurement processes had grown over the years, were internationally fragmented and in practice were often organised outside of structured systems. Expenditure was only visible after the fact, approvals could only be controlled to a limited extent – and this also limited the strategic control capability.

Ottobock therefore redefined the requirements for a future-proof purchasing platform. Transparency should be created at an early stage, approvals should become binding and data should become the basis for strategic decisions. After a structured selection process, the decision was made in favour of SAP Ariba – not least because of its integrative integration into the existing SAP landscape and the prospect of mapping global processes on a standardised platform.

After selecting the tool, Ottobock put the implementation out to tender separately in order to ensure the right implementation expertise. apsolut impressed not only with its project experience, but also with its consulting approach with operational penetration. “apsolut delved deep into the processes,” recalls Yanneck Bode, Project Lead, “and that's exactly what gave us the confidence to find solutions quickly, even when things really got stuck in the project.”

The actual transformation began with the start of the project. In addition to the Ariba modules Buying, Contracts and Supplier Lifecycle & Performance, Ottobock-specific requirements had to be mapped – including highly automated user management and the integration of an external master data governance system to ensure consistent master data.

At the same time, the organisational structure posed fundamental questions for the project team. The separation between direct and indirect purchasing could not be mapped one-to-one in the system. They were looking for solutions that were practicable without breaking up established structures. In

addition, a differentiated approval logic was created that clearly assigns responsibilities and ensures compliance even before the order is placed.

The right balancing act was crucial: Use standards where they create efficiency and future-proofing – and at the same time map organisational realities in such a way that acceptance and auditability are maintained. During the course of the project, it became clear that the aim was not to introduce a system, but to change perspectives. Transparency is no longer created in retrospect, but in the process itself.

The project work was characterised by close exchange and pragmatic cooperation. Requirements were iteratively sharpened, processes harmonised and solutions developed through dialogue. “A tool should not mirror every structure that has developed,” explains Johannes Müller, Head of Global Indirect Procurement. “It is also an opportunity to scrutinise which processes we really need in the future.”

Changes in everyday life became apparent shortly after the introduction. Approvals are structured before the order is placed, expenditure is visible at an early stage and order-related processes improve the quality of invoice processing. Standardised workflows shorten throughput times, reduce coordination and provide employees with orientation.

Ottobock gains more than efficiency with the new platform. Early transparency enables data-based decisions and active management of the global supplier portfolio. Compliance is anchored in the system and purchasing is evolving from an operational processor to a strategic management tool.

At the same time, it creates a scalable basis for further growth. Following the successful launch in the first countries, the solution can be gradually rolled out in other markets in order to exploit synergies and harmonise procurement processes internationally.

Efficient processes are not an end in themselves at Ottobock. They enable innovation – and thus mobility and quality of life for people worldwide. Transparent purchasing strengthens this mission in the long term.