

Success Story

Future-proofing a business with SDMO

Ansell Lighting is ready for all market conditions with Sage Distribution and Manufacturing Operations

“Things are much faster, especially for our finance and technical teams. It’s making a massive difference.”

Chris Squire

IT Project Manager, Ansell Lighting



The Challenge

Upon outgrowing Sage 50, Ansell Lighting saw an opportunity to future proof their business with a purpose-built, cloud-native solution while staying with Sage.



The Solution

Taking expert advice and considering other options, Ansell Lighting chose Sage Distribution and Manufacturing Operations (SDMO). Working with Sage partner Datel, they implemented SDMO to upgrade and modernize their operations management while integrating it with the company’s existing Sage Intacct financial and accounting system.



The Result

Ansell Lighting’s cloud-native SDMO system is much faster than the previous solution, and permits multi-tasking. Remote access has removed bottlenecks arising from computer access, and the creation and replication of bills of material (BOMs) is more efficient. Integration with Sage Intacct has enhanced data flows.

- Streamlines BOM processes, helping get products to market quicker.
- Sage Intacct financials integration expedites decision making.



Company
Ansell Lighting

Location
United Kingdom

Industry
Manufacturing Process

Sage Products
SDMO, Sage Intacct



About Ansell Lighting
Ansell Lighting manufactures quality internal and external lighting products for commercial, industrial and retail settings.



Future-proofing an established business

Founded in Belfast, Ansell Lighting sold just £70 worth of product in its first trading month, August 1992. However, the firm quickly gathered momentum and by 2001 it had a subsidiary in China. An award-winning lighting design arm followed, and Ansell Lighting moved into export sales. Today, the company is thriving. It has an operations and technical base in Warrington and a finance team in Belfast.

Ansell Lighting's operations base knew they had outgrown Sage 50. And when their successful growth included a strategic move into Spanish markets, they decided it was time to move to the cloud. They wanted to future proof the business with a level of resilience, streamline and modernise processes, and stay with Sage so they could connect their financial and operational data.

"We had outgrown our old system and it was slow. With between 100 and 300 items processed weekly, this affected our productivity," explains Chris Squire, Ansell Lighting's IT Project Manager. The company also recognised the need for a cloud-native system that would allow remote access and be able to process transactions in the background while staff continued to work elsewhere in the system on other tasks. Previously, remote working was only possible via remote desktop access, which effectively locked out other users.

Straightforward implementation

Ansell Lighting approached their Sage partner, Datel. "We started to discuss what our best options would be in terms of an operations BOM management system and the first thing that came up was SDMO (Sage Distribution and Manufacturing Operations)," explains Chris. Further discussion convinced Ansell Lighting that SDMO was the best choice: it was cloud-native, with potential to alleviate problems around accessibility and processing speed, and it would quickly and easily integrate with the finance team's existing Sage Intacct system, improving the flow of data between sites.

Ansell Lighting and Datel worked together on the implementation of SDMO, which took about three months. The vast majority of the process was simple, with some occasional data manipulation required to align with the software's structure. Chris says, "The fact that it was really just a matter of copying data from one system to another via CSVs and exports made everything relatively straightforward."

With the finance department based in Belfast and operations based in Warrington, Ansell Lighting had historically experienced delays in data flows between them. However, the seamless integration of SDMO with the finance team's established Sage Intacct set-up swiftly consigned those challenges to history.



The day to day of Ansell Lighting's technical department has been massively improved by the SDMO implementation.

Immediate benefits

Once up and running, Ansell Lighting quickly noticed several important benefits. Perhaps most striking was the sheer speed of the system; the cloud-native SDMO implementation is significantly faster. So, the operations team is now creating and duplicating BOMs much more quickly and staff are creating and tracking items at much faster rates than before. What is more, the processing power allows staff to work elsewhere on the system while SDMO processes the tasks they have already set in motion: this focused multi-tasking represents a large productivity gain.

As Chris puts it: "Our technical department and the team that is raising the BOMs, they're the ones seeing the most significant improvement. They're raising BOMs quicker, they're duplicating BOMs quicker—their day-to-day experience has been massively improved." He adds that more efficient creation of BOMs is likely to translate into fast delivery of new products to market, not least because it frees up staff time.

The remote access that comes with a cloud-native solution has also proved to be a game-changer. All relevant staff can now access the system remotely, which has removed the headaches around remote desktop access and means that resources are more efficiently used. "We're literally working freely on our own computers on a cloud-native system and there's never any issue in terms of access. It makes everyone's life a lot easier," says Chris.

An evolving system

While Ansell Lighting is quick to acknowledge the benefits of its SDMO implementation, the team also appreciates that it will take time to understand and deploy the full scope of that system. Chris explains that when the company bought SDMO, one of its intentions was to expedite and streamline processes so that key staff members could do their main jobs of management and supervision, rather than sitting at computers for eight hours a day. Another driver was the need to streamline data flows. Those having been achieved, the further benefits of SDMO will unfold as the company scales and extends its use, and as the software itself develops.

Thus, maximising the benefits of SDMO is a work in progress for Ansell Lighting, for Datel and for Sage. "I'm seeing changes all the time. Every time we log in there's something different and something else that's making our lives easier," says Chris.



“Creating BOMs quickly with SDMO will let us bring products to market faster.”

Chris Squire

IT Project Manager, Ansell Lighting

Looking ahead

Despite the inevitable stresses of deploying a new system and working through change management, Chris says that he would recommend SDMO to other manufacturers. He already has plans for Ansell Lighting to further leverage SDMO, for example by implementing stock location tracking in the operations area, deploying read-only access points across the production floor to improve access to information, and streamlining BOM creation for new products via bulk imports. After all, with business booming the time is right for Ansell Lighting to deploy the power of SDMO. “We are continuing to grow—things aren’t slowing down anytime soon!” says Chris.



Sage



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