

## MEDICAL DEVICE

# ILLUMINA FORTIFIES SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS WITH ETQ RELIANCE



## QUALITY JOURNEY:



**Manual quality control processes were inflexible and unscalable**



**Integrated suppliers into its quality processes**



**Streamlined SCAR, Supplier Audits & supplier investigations**

ILLUMINA'S MISSION — TO IMPROVE HUMAN HEALTH BY UNLOCKING THE POWER OF THE GENOME — FOCUSES ON SEQUENCING GENETICS, DEVELOPING BOTH GENOME SEQUENCING MACHINES AND THEIR CONSUMABLES. BUT THE COMPANY'S PREVIOUS MANUAL QUALITY CONTROL PROCESSES WERE INFLEXIBLE AND UNSCALABLE.

ILLUMINA IMPLEMENTED THE ETQ RELIANCE®'S SUPPLIER, MATERIALS, AND CHEMICALS (SMC) MODULE, INTEGRATING ITS SUPPLIERS INTO ITS QUALITY PROCESSES. THIS HAS STREAMLINED SUPPLIER CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS (SCAR), SUPPLIER AUDITS, AND SUPPLIER INVESTIGATIONS AND HAS EFFECTIVELY STRENGTHENED SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS.

## Challenge

IN THE HIGHLY TECHNICAL LIFE SCIENCE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, MANUFACTURERS RELY HEAVILY ON SUPPLIERS DELIVERING HIGH-QUALITY, SPECIALIZED MATERIALS AND ILLUMINA WAS NO EXCEPTION. BUT THE COMPANY'S MANUAL QUALITY CONTROL PROCESSES WERE INEFFICIENT AND TIME-CONSUMING.

FOR EXAMPLE, TO CREATE A QUALITY REVIEW, ONE EMPLOYEE HAD TO SPEND 20+ HOURS EACH WEEK CONTACTING SUPPLIERS AND STAFFERS, MANUALLY AGGREGATING THE INFO AND UPDATING AN EXCEL SPREADSHEET — HARDLY A SCALABLE PROCESS.

## Medical Industry – Case Study

With a growing list of suppliers, Illumina's quality team realized it needed a more effective way to track quality consistency, empowering them to react quickly when a quality dip occurred.

"It's critical for us to keep strong relationships with our suppliers. For example, if we have single points of failure, we have some specialized materials that, ultimately, we work closely with our suppliers to define. So that relationship is really important to us to ensure we're continuing to see a consistent level of quality and being able to react promptly when we do see dips within that," explained Michael Farrell, IT Manager, Illumina

## Solution

Illumina kicked off its quality journey with ETQ Reliance by integrating its suppliers into ETQ's SMC module – and its quality team's first task was to create supplier change notifications. Because many of Illumina's materials are custom, anytime suppliers needed to change those materials, Illumina wanted that system immediately updated so that appropriate stakeholders and teams could be notified of the change. With ETQ Reliance, suppliers can now directly create supplier change notifications, quickly alerting Illumina staffers to any material changes.

ETQ Reliance allowed Illumina's quality team to easily set up supplier profiles and push information about changes into the quality management system. This action significantly reduced many of the issues Illumina had been facing, leading to a win-win situation for both Illumina and its suppliers and serving as a springboard for the company's supplier collaboration journey.

In addition, ETQ's SMC module also effectively created a simple API that Illumina could easily integrate with its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system,

gathering material and supplier info into a centralized location. This provided Illumina with a streamlined quality database, allowing staffers to identify the quality contacts at each supplier easily.

Building upon its early success, Illumina's quality team expanded its use of ETQ Reliance to include SCARs supplier audits and supplier investigations; over the past several years, Illumina has built out each of these areas with its supplier quality engineers to provide direct collaboration with its suppliers. "Whenever we have a supplier audit, the supplier can respond directly when it comes to the audit that took place and any nonconformances or follow-up action items that are required as a result of that audit," explained Michael.

When Illumina's ERP generates nonconformances, ETQ Reliance's highly configured workflow allows staffers to collaborate directly with the supplier. Reliance allows administrators to configure specific workflows that provide highly customized, granular processes that many other quality management systems don't offer.

Michael continues, "As someone that manages multiple tools at Illumina, the ability to migrate changes from lower environments to upper environments is very efficient and built within the tool itself. So that's a huge benefit to someone like myself that's in it where, previously, server management was required before the SAS model was there. But even in the current SAS model, end users can promote those configurations."



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Additionally, ETQ empowers Illumina's quality teams to get the information they need, allowing them to improve relationships with suppliers by collaborating to understand the root cause of reported issues clearly.

## Results

Working with ETQ Reliance to streamline and centralize its supplier quality management, Illumina has realized numerous benefits – and one of the biggest is real-time monitoring of in-process records, which allows it to control production processes and maintain quality more effectively.

Additionally, using ETQ Reliance has allowed Illumina to abandon its previous manual Excel-and-email process, giving the company a single source location for monitoring quality issues. ETQ Reliance® also provides Illumina with a one-stop audit trail, allowing the company to quickly and easily access information necessary for internal and external audits.

Having a single platform with everything in one location – SCARs, supplier audits and numerous other areas of supplier quality – has helped streamline Illumina's quality processes. And ETQ Reliance's flexible workflow engine provides Illumina with valuable insights into when things were due, how and when they were completed.

“One of the big benefits of Reliance, being that it is a workflow engine, is you truly get incredible insights as to when things were due, how they were completed and when they got completed. So, the face tracking and monitoring of those records is powerful and something that we've leveraged significantly,” Michael said.

ETQ's analytics have also empowered Illumina's quality team to effectively drive supplier strategy, determining how the company interacts with its suppliers. Tracking

and monitoring these records has helped Illumina develop key supplier performance metrics or KSPMs. Using Reliance, Illumina has created supplier scorecards to track how the company scored on subsequent audits and how many SCARs the company had against non-conformances.

Reliance allows Illumina to make informed decisions about suppliers. With ETQ, team members can now see the supplier's entire performance history across multiple quality records – something impossible before suppliers were embedded in Illumina's quality process. This helps Illumina determine if it wants to continue working with a specific supplier or find another supplier.



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**Ready to truly integrate suppliers into your quality processes? ETQ can help.**

[Contact us today](#)

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### About ETQ

ETQ, part of Hexagon, is the leading provider of quality, EHS and compliance management SaaS software, trusted by the world's strongest brands. More than 600 customers globally, spanning industries such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, heavy industry, food and beverage, and medical devices, benefit from ETQ to secure positive brand reputations, enable higher levels of customer loyalty and enhance profitability. ETQ Reliance offers built-in best practices and powerful flexibility to drive business excellence through quality. Only ETQ lets customers configure industry-proven quality processes to their unique needs and business vision. ETQ was founded in 1992 and has main offices located in the U.S. and Europe. To learn more about ETQ and its various product offerings, visit [www.etq.com](http://www.etq.com).

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