Written by Frances Donnelly, C.Q.P.A., Director of Product Development, Horizons International

## What do Excel and a 1990's era recliner have in common?

We are so comfortable with both of them that we have a hard time getting rid of either, even when we know they have outlived their usefulness.

We build our business processes with the best tools we have available at the time. As new problems or needs arise we extend the original solutions and rarely go back for a rethink or a redesign. Too often that means that we continue to rely on old solutions and miss achieving performance and cost improvements that come with new tools.

If your current quality management systems are heavily dependent on paper or spreadsheet based tools then it is possible that your operation is missing out on the efficiency and accuracy benefits that can be found in Quality Essentials Suite. Below we have identified the top 5 problems that our solution solves for our customers. If you see any of your quality control challenges here then maybe it is time you retired your spreadsheet based quality control processes and gave us a call. We'd love to be your next favorite quality management solution.

# Enabling accurate and timely generation of <u>Certificates of Analysis</u> to accompany shipments.

If you are an ingredient manufacturer, whether those ingredients are supplements, flavorings, chemicals or other tight tolerance products, who has to provide Certificates of Analysis with you shipments then you already understand what a challenge this task can be. Not only do you have to collect the needed data that appears on the certificate but you also have to make sure that the data is presented on the document in the layout required by your customer. Not all of your customer's want the same data and they certainly don't all want it with the same layout. You may even be a co-packer or support drop shipping in which case you have to be able to support your customer's documentation



requirements for their customer's. Failure to include the right documents can result in refused shipments and other penalties. Our functionality supports these tasks as well as others that can bring needed efficiency such as emailing certificates directly to customer addressees and using COA data for shipping labels and other documents too.

#### Affordable pricing based on unlimited user access

Switching your solution from spreadsheets or a proprietary or custom solution can be difficult if the perception is that those tools are free. So first we have to understand what free is really costing us. We have to be clear about the gaps in performance and the cost of those gaps to our organization. Quality Essentials was designed from the ground up to support the creation of a complete quality record and to make sure that everyone participates in the quality mission. Achieving total participation is really difficult if you have to pay for every user that accesses the data, so we don't price the product based on user counts. Our solution is sold with unlimited user access which means the tasks of quality can be dispersed throughout your organization in the way that best supports your procedures.



## Spreadsheet style calculations with audit capability

Not all the data collected for quality control is discrete data. Often what we need is to run a calculation against a data string and evaluate the result against tolerances or other parameters. Most quality departments love spreadsheets because they can create complex formulas and reliably obtain results without having to grind through all the math manually. There are however a few problems with the spreadsheet approach, most notably the lack of audit capabilities and the restrictions on simultaneous user access can cause bottlenecks and data entry delays. Calculations and formulas are often very industry and business specific so locating tools that can provide the same calculation flexibility as spreadsheets while also supporting the needed audit trail tracking all within budget can be challenging. With Quality Essentials Suite end user organizations solve these challenges and so much more. When a step up in control and security is required our solution provides user management control, audit trails and formula calculations all without limiting the feature set required to support business operations.

#### **Statistical Process Control** Including Capability Calculations

One of the most effective tried and true methods of maintaining consistent performance in manufacturing is through the use of statistical process control techniques. Deploying and utilizing such techniques brings a whole new set of challenges to the IT department and Quality Essentials Suite can help. Results from data collected can be viewed immediately in control and capability charts

specifically developed for this purpose. Users can opt for touch screen supported data entry forms to support real time data collection at work centers, receiving docks or other production locations and eliminate the need for transcription from paper records. A built in dashboard tool provides additional flexibility for spotting trends, reporting on periodic results or simply keeping an eye on real time operations.

## Out of the box integration between data entry, reporting and analysis tools

What is the most significant cost to the quality department? It's not the cost of failed products because those costs are applied to the manufacturing operations, no, it is the time spent transporting data from silo to silo and the data entry error risks associated with those efforts. Quality Essentials Suite is an integrated quality management solution that provides customizable data entry forms and then provides the tools users need to analyze and expose that data for reporting and performance purposes. All of this is achieved without having to move data from one document to another or having to import or export data between spreadsheets and databases. The quality control analyst can be a data analyst without having to be an IT whiz too.

If you are ready to formalize your organization's commitment to quality and all the benefits it can deliver, we would love to share more about the problems our products deliver. Talk to us soon by calling 800 287 8014 ext. 811 or email sales@QualityEssentialsSuite.com. @P