



Business challenge

With rapid growth in the scope and complexity of its operations, how could chemical manufacturer Hydrite streamline its operations and continue to meet the requirements of customers and regulators?

Transformation

Hydrite worked with CFI to replace paper-based methods of tracking work orders, inventory and purchasing with an asset management platform that helps to control expenditures and facilitate compliance.



Ben Warborg
Central Maintenance Manager
Hydrite

Business benefits:

Greater
control of expenditures
with integrated purchasing
processes

Increases
visibility, facilitating
operational management
and compliance

Boosts
operational efficiency by
making it easier for sites to
share best practices

Hydrite Chemical Co. Streamlining operations and increasing auditability and compliance with centralized asset management

Founded in 1929 and headquartered in Brookfield, WI, Hydrite Chemical Co. is one of the largest providers of chemicals and related services in the United States, employing more than 850 people across 14 locations.

*“Maximo has transformed
asset management for us.”*

Ben Warborg
Central Maintenance Manager
Hydrite



CFI, a Newmark Grubb Knight Frank company



Share this



Meeting the requirements of customers and regulators

Like all manufacturers, chemical companies need to not only operate in a safe and environmentally responsible manner, but also demonstrate their compliance with current laws and regulations. This involves regular audits by regulators—and increasingly also by customers, who want to ensure that their extended supply chain complies with appropriate safety, sustainability and quality standards.

As a leading US chemical producer with a significant focus on toll manufacturing for other chemical companies, Hydrite Chemical Co. is often subject to these kinds of external audits and inspections. However, the rapid growth of its business meant that it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a clear view of assets, processes, policies and licenses across its different sites.

Ben Warborg, Central Maintenance Manager at Hydrite, explains: “All our sites had developed their own ways of managing assets, mainly using simple tools such as spreadsheets, calendar reminders and small databases. Without a consistent set of systems, it was like apples and oranges trying to compare the same thing between two different sites.

“What’s more, we were largely tracking work orders and purchasing on paper. Paper is fine when you’re a small company, but Hydrite hasn’t been a small company for a long time. We had grown beyond the point where we could effectively track maintenance and operations across all our sites with our existing methods.”

“What we needed was a new asset management platform that would enable us to standardize and modernize practices across our entire business. Our sites vary a lot in size and function, so we wanted one solution that could cover them all.”

Standardizing and modernizing working practices

After considering all its options, Hydrite decided to implement IBM Maximo Asset Management, which is part of the IBM Watson™ IoT portfolio.

Ben Warborg recalls: “We chose Maximo for a few reasons. It offered the kind of long-term sustainability that we were looking for, because we were confident in IBM’s ability to support and improve the product going forwards. It also had the flexibility to adapt to our unique business processes.

“The degree of configuration possible with the latest versions of Maximo is impressive; we were able to tailor it to our requirements purely through the configuration options, without having to write any custom code. Not only are customizations time-consuming, but they also complicate the upgrade path, since you have to rebuild them every time you move to a new version. With Maximo’s configurability, we’re completely circumventing that issue.”

Instead of reporting on assets and planning maintenance with paper and spreadsheets, Hydrite can now take advantage of Maximo’s asset hierarchy to track assets, and schedule repairs, replacements and inspections all from a single database. With a comprehensive view of inventory, equipment and personnel, Hydrite can direct its engineers in the most efficient way possible and ensure they have the right tools for each job.

Hydrite is also using Maximo to track regulatory obligations and ensure that it keeps all its licenses and permits up-to-date by creating a “compliance calendar.” Using Maximo’s planned maintenance and work order management capabilities, compliance-related tasks are automatically assigned to members of the maintenance team at the appropriate times, and all the relevant documentation is attached to each work order.

“We knew we wanted to be able to see all our regulatory commitments in a single place,” says Ben Warborg. “Our compliance team’s first idea was to print everything and keep it in one big folder at the corporate office, so they were delighted when we showed them that we could do it with Maximo instead. We now have a consolidated source for all compliance information, accessible to all of our sites.”

Additionally, Hydrite is using Maximo to ensure quality-critical lab instruments are properly calibrated. Inspectors can upload equipment readings and Maximo will issue a pass or fail based on intelligently determined tolerances derived from historical data and pre-defined benchmarks.

Ben Warborg adds: “Another really important piece of the solution is purchasing and inventory management. We have integrated Maximo directly with our JD Edwards ERP and check-paying systems, which really helps to streamline and control the process of raising purchase requisitions and orders, as well as paying invoices.”



To provide ongoing assistance with the Maximo solution, Hydrite engaged CFI, an IBM Premier Business Partner. “CFI has given us excellent support over the years,” says Ben Warborg. “All of our projects and upgrades have gone smoothly. They’re fantastic technical experts and, if we need help with business-specific issues, they can give us access to a network of experts who ensure we get the best possible assistance.”

Visibility, traceability, accountability

Now that consistent processes are in place at all of Hydrite’s sites, the chemical producer can easily gain visibility across its operations, helping it comply with regulations and demonstrate that compliance to auditors.

Ben Warborg comments: “Maximo clearly shows us what regulatory commitments we need to meet where, and when. Because everything is so well-documented, it’s easy for us to show auditors that we’re managing quality, safety and environmental impact consistently across all our sites.”

Another benefit of standardization is that different sites can communicate and collaborate more effectively. Ben Warborg explains: “Before, when there were different systems at each location, it was difficult to exchange information—the various sites were almost speaking their own languages.

“Now that the system we use is the same everywhere, we can finally make fair comparisons and understand how each site’s working practices contribute to operational performance. We can share best practices and the newer and smaller sites can benefit from the experience of the more established ones. That’s another important benefit of Maximo: it works at all our sites, irrespective of function and size.”

Visibility into inventory and purchasing is also giving Hydrite far greater control over budgets and expenditures.

Ben Warborg explains: “Our ability to control our spending is much greater than before. Because we can see what equipment and assets we have in our inventory and what purchases we’ve already made, we can make smarter decisions about what we need to buy, and when. Even better, with Maximo we can analyze spending by dollars committed, not just by invoices received. This helps us align our budgets very closely with our actuals.”

He continues: “There’s also a significant element of time saving. Since Maximo shows us what assets we have and when they were purchased, we know exactly what we have at each site, how old our equipment is, and the entire maintenance history for each asset.

“Likewise, automating the bulk of the paper-based processes has substantially streamlined operations, leaving our maintenance, purchasing and compliance teams free to work on more valuable tasks.”

Hydrite is constantly looking for new ways to leverage Maximo. Ben Warborg concludes: “Moving forwards, we’re planning to use Maximo to track accidents and incidents and all the processes that come out of that. Maximo has transformed asset management for us. We can see everything that happens at each of our sites, and share insight in ways that were never possible before. That visibility enables us to drive the business in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible—and the best part is, Maximo still has more to offer.”

Solution components

- IBM® Maximo® Asset Management

Take the next step

CFI is an all-encompassing consulting and systems integration firm working exclusively in real estate, facility and asset management. CFI integrates best-in-class technologies with cohesive business practices – creating unique solutions aimed at improving your company’s productivity while reducing its total cost of ownership. To learn more about CFI, please visit gocfi.com

IBM Analytics offers one of the world’s deepest and broadest analytics platform, domain and industry solutions that deliver new value to businesses, governments and individuals. For more information about how IBM Analytics helps to transform industries and professions with data, visit ibm.com/analytics. Follow us on Twitter at @IBMAalytics, on our blog at ibmbigdatahub.com and join the conversation #IBMAalytics.

Connect with us



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2016, IBM Corporation, 1 New Orchard Road, Armonk, NY 10504 U.S.A. Produced in the United States of America, March 2016.

IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com, IBM Watson and Maximo are trademarks of International Business Machines Corp., registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and service names might be trademarks of IBM or other companies. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at “Copyright and trademark information” at ibm.com/legal/us/en/copytrade.shtml.

This document is current as of the initial date of publication and may be changed by IBM at any time. Not all offerings are available in every country in which IBM operates. The performance data and client examples cited are presented for illustrative purposes only. Actual performance results may vary depending on specific configurations and operating conditions. THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT IS PROVIDED “AS IS” WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING WITHOUT ANY WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND ANY WARRANTY OR CONDITION OF NON-INFRINGEMENT. IBM products are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided.

The client is responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations applicable to it. IBM does not provide legal advice or represent or warrant that its services or products will ensure that the client is in compliance with any law or regulation.

Statements regarding IBM’s future direction and intent are subject to change or withdrawal without notice, and represent goals and objectives only.



ASC12390-USEN-00

