CASE STUDY

PLATNED STREAMLINES IFS SUPPORT AND CONSULTING FOR SUMI AGRO

Since 2016, Sumi Agro Europe has enjoyed pan-European support from IFS partner Platned. The subscription-based plan has ensured timely issue-resolution for the company's IFS users in the UK, France, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary, and provided cost-effective consulting for specific IFS technical and upgrade projects.

ABOUT SUMI AGRO

Owned by Sumitomo corporation, a leading Japanese multinational, Sumi Agro Europe, Part of Sumi Agro Group, specialises in the development and distribution of advanced agricultural products including fertilizers, seeds and herbicides, insecticides and fungicides for plant protection.

Using IFS Apps 10 enterprise software on a daily basis across six countries, the company has IFS 200 users.

Following Platned's support for IFS Apps 8, in 2020 the company upgraded to IFS Apps 10. Explains Kam Saran, Group ICT Manager for Sumi Agro Europe, "Whilst we had a managed contract with IFS for implementation and hosting, Platned was providing most of the post-go-live support and resolutions for us. We therefore decided to move all ongoing support to Platned."

Day-to-day support issues are reviewed by Sumi Agro Europe's internal first-line team, and then, if Platned technical support is needed, logged in to Synchromax, Platned's support ticketing system. "We have a contracted number of hours available each month which, if we need more, is simply charged pro-rata. It's a flexible, cost-effective support model for us," says Kam.

TECHNICAL CONSULTING

In addition to providing training for integration platform Boomi, Platned has also supported several specific technical project requests. "In 2022, to collect data for forecasting and planning, Platned delivered a Data Warehousing project for Power BI reporting," says Kam. "To overcome several technical formatting constraints, Platned was able to engineer and execute overnight data extracts for us, uploading to an Amazon storage location and allowing forecast insights to be served on IFS dashboards."

A further consulting project saw Platned implementing the IFS Human Resources module to provide functionality for absence management. "We were previously relying on Excel. The team supported set up and go live on the new module, allowing us to log, track and report all holidays and absences within IFS," he says.

BENEFITS ACHIEVED
WORKING WITH PLATNED

- Reduced reliance, delays and costs associated with vendor-consulting
- Efficient post go-live resolution of issues following upgrade
- Fast access to flexible support including immediate escalation where needed
- Training and consultancy for Boomi integration creating significant time savings
- Opportunity to unlock system access and improve SLAs with managed hosting

I've always found Platned consultants knowledgeable and thorough. Accessing technical resource is always fast and, if we do ever need to escalate, the response is immediate and effective. I've been very happy to participate in reference calls for prospects considering Platned.

Kam Saran, Group ICT Manager for Sumi Agro Europe

REDUCING TIME AND COMPLEXITY WITH BOOMI

"Following recommendations from Platned, the company has also been able to implement Boomi to integrate Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). "Before Boomi, we had data coming from multiple customers in many different formats, requiring technical changes to IFS on a case-by-case basis. Platned suggested that by using Boomi we could eliminate this support overhead and save time. And they were right: changes that were taking weeks can now be executed in days. We've also got an e-commerce platform that we will now integrate to IFS using Boomi, allowing customers to order drone surveys for planning and protecting crops," says Kam.

AN ONGOING RELATIONSHIP

The company's current five-year subscription licensing and hosting agreement with IFS for Apps 10 ends in November 2024. "I am in discussions to move the database hosting element to Platned as a managed services customer," says Kam. "We have three environments, development, testing and production, hosted in the cloud on MicroSoft Azure. With Platned we can get controlled, full access to the system, and, based on our excellent support experience date, enjoy premium service levels and SLAs at a competitive cost."

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead, Kam expects to appoint Platnet to begin an upgrade project to implement IFS Cloud during 2025, with a pan-European upgrade go-live in 2026. "Platned will run scripts that will take a copy of our live environment into the new cloud test environment. Once all six countries have tested and signed off on that, we'll go-live in IFS Cloud Europe-wide," says Kam.

What sort of challenges does Kam foresee for the business and how does he think Platned can support them? "There are a several legal changes on the horizon across Europe surrounding compliance and regulation such as electronic invoicing, where billing and order documentation will need to be submitted to the tax authorities rather than direct to the customer. I'm sure Platned will be supporting us to implement the functionality updates to IFS when that happens," he says.

FIND OUT MORE: **For further details, e-mail info@platned.com, contact your local Platned office or visit our website at www.platned.com**