



INDUSTRY

Pharma

CHALLENGE

Complex and costly mix of document archiving service suppliers resulting in uncertain document retrieval processes

SOLUTION

Consolidation of off-site document management and storage

VALUE

- Faster, more reliable service with 3,000 active users
- 20 document retrieval requests each day
- Archiving costs reduced by €200,000 per annum

CASE STUDY

SANOFI

IMPROVED ACCESS TO RECORDS AT 20% LOWER COST

QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE ARE PARAMOUNT

Global healthcare company Sanofi is the principal pharmaceutical business in France and one of the industry leaders worldwide. Its portfolio includes a diversified range of human vaccines, patented medicines, and generics, as well as consumer healthcare and animal health products.

Sanofi has grown substantially over the years, mainly through merger and acquisition, and incorporates well-known laboratories such as Rhône Poulenc, Hoechst and Synthelabo.

The pharmaceutical industry manages a huge amount of information, much of which is paper-based, and Sanofi is no exception. As well as its corporate records, the company needs to safely retain a vast array of information on activities such as drug development programmes and clinical trials. This allows it to meet internal business needs, such as requirements for quality management, and comply with strict and comprehensive regulation.

GREATER CONTROL, ECONOMIES, AND COMMONALITY

These substantial archives require careful management so that the company can meet its obligation to find critical documents whether relating to clinical matters, technical developments or financial, legal and regulatory needs.

As Sanofi had grown and evolved over the years its document archives had spread to 12 different storage companies. This list of suppliers was reduced to three well-known service providers. However, that was still not enough.

In setting out to fully integrate and consolidate its archives with one main service provider, Sanofi's objectives were to improve control of and access to stored material, derive economies of scale, and lay the foundations to define common standards for the management of its records worldwide.

PRECISE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Iron Mountain® was already managing the archives of some Sanofi departments and was selected to centralise the archives. "Iron Mountain was chosen for the excellent quality of its previous services, its capacity to manage complex projects, and for its global capability," says Hervé Bousquet, of Group Archives, Sanofi.

The project involved the uplift of files from previous storage suppliers, cataloguing, consolidation, and transportation of around 60 linear kilometres of documents in around 100,000 fifty-litre boxes or containers. It was scheduled at a rate of six linear kilometres (10,000 boxes) per quarter and involved the transfer of files in 155 fully-loaded articulated vehicles. Additional van shipments catered for smaller lots.



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In conjunction with the physical relocation of the boxes, two people were assigned on a full-time basis to update the Sanofi archive database; a highly-critical task requiring the ultimate precision and accuracy.

COMPLETED ON TIME, WITH NO MAJOR ISSUES

The project was completed on schedule within a two-year timeframe against very tight parameters. For example, transporting documents from their existing location to the Iron Mountain records management centre was to take one day only, and all documents needed to be available again for retrieval within two days of transfer.

A project team that included project managers from Sanofi and Iron Mountain met once a month to monitor progress and help accelerate decision-making. There were no major incidents throughout the transition and today the archiving system is entirely under control.

“The physical transfer and the database update were perfectly managed by Iron Mountain. The project was a real success,” says Hervé Bousquet. So much so that Sanofi has now signed a reference contract for Iron Mountain to extend its services to the group around the globe.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS PLUS SAVINGS

Today, Sanofi document archives in France are stored in a safe, secure environment and access to records has been greatly improved. Around 3,000 active users of the archive management software issue an average of 20 document retrieval requests to Iron Mountain each day, for delivery with a half-day or two-day service. This is a significant improvement as previously document retrieval requests could take up to a week.

Sanofi is saving money too. Archiving costs have reduced by around €200,000 annually, which represents a saving of about 20 per cent. “Reliable archiving, quick collection, physical safety of the documents, and budget savings mean that the project has met all of its targets and satisfied everyone,” confirms Hervé Bousquet.

The extension of Iron Mountain records management services to other Sanofi locations worldwide remains a prime objective, enabled by the reference agreement and Iron Mountain's global footprint. This capability will deliver further improvement to Sanofi archive services.

Iron Mountain also provides Sanofi with an on-demand scanning and digitisation service. Although there are no plans at present to extend this activity across the total archive this capability is expected to grow in importance in the years to come.

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ABOUT IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain operates in major markets worldwide, serving thousands of customers throughout the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Asia Pacific and Latin America. For more information, visit our website at www.ironmountain.co.uk or at www.ironmountain.ie

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