Sopharma Trading relies on GK CLOUD4RETAIL

Healthy business with omnichannel processes in a single platform

GK

Quick Facts

About Sopharma Trading

Sopharma Trading is one of the largest companies in Bulgaria offering complete solutions in the healthcare sector. The specialist company researches, develops and produces pharmaceuticals and health-related products, and supplies medical facilities in Bulgaria and Serbia with arange of over 20,000 items and trades via its own channels. From three distribution centres medicines, medical devices, and dietary supplements are delivered nationwide within four hours.

In addition to an online pharmacy, Sopharma Trading operates more than 210 SOpharmacy stores in Bulgaria. At these locations, the company's qualified pharmacists dispense medicines to customers and offer expert advice on all health-related issues.

Challenge

Introduction of a future-proof POS solution for Sopharma Trading’s physical SOpharmacy stores and its online pharmacy

Efficient implementation into the SAP architecture

Interaction of POS platform with the live SAP system already in the pilot environment

Flexible integration of third-party solutions

Constantly changing requirements of state regulatory bodies and local tax authorities

Solution

Increased efficiency – by introducing the highly flexible GK CLOUD4RETAIL commerce platform, all store processes could be optimized

Time saving – the standardized Fast Deployment System Integration GK Model Company has significantly accelerated implementation time into the SAP landscape

Security – Sopharma Trading was able to test and optimize the IT architecture from GK CLOUD4RETAIL in interaction with the live SAP ERP system in a protected pilot environment

Flexibility – with App Enablement, a plug-in interface for easy integration of external web applications into the GK CLOUD4RETAIL, healthcare-specific solutions from third-party providers can be integrated quickly

Overview

The pharmaceutical industry is subject to enormous government regulations that make a significant impact on business processes. To enable Sopharma Trading to operate in full compliance with all regulatory requirements, the introduction of a flexible, future-proof and highly powerful POS platform was crucial. By adapting GK's out-of-the-box platform GK CLOUD4RETAIL, third-party solutions can be quickly integrated via GK's App Enablement plug-in now and in the future. The collaboration with local SAP partner IBM and consulting company ScaleFocus helped to deliver a one-stop solution that complied with local regulations. Sopharma Trading used the GK Model Company as a project accelerator.

Like all companies in the pharmaceutical industry, Sopharma Trading is facing enormous challenges: Cost pressure, escalating requirements from government regulatory bodies and the desire to always get the right medicine or medical product to its patients quickly. The healthcare specialist has to make its processes in the rapidly-growing pharmacy network more efficient along the entire supply chain. In addition to the reliable operation of IT systems, this also includes the seamless supply of data between the ERP system and brick-and-mortar stores, online pharmacy and warehouse, as well as between the ERP system and third party solutions, such as its systems for invoicing health insurance companies.

Sopharma Trading initially used a POS solution for its physical pharmacies and online store that was unstable and far too slow and inflexible for the complex POS processes in Sopharma Trading's rapidly-growing pharmacy network. This had a substantial negative impact on the healthcare company's overall performance. It quickly became clear that a future-proof, high-performance IT architecture needed to be set up. Sopharma Trading chose POS retail specialist GK for this task. The project to link GK's high-performance POS solution with Sopharma Trading's SAP architecture began in the fourth quarter of 2020.

"Before starting the project, we looked at many technology vendors during the initial screening phase. None of them could fulfil our specific requirements, tailored to the challenging healthcare market, as effectively as GK," says Iliyan Tishevishki, Technology Support Manager at Sopharma Trading.

The first step was for all project managers to develop a shared understanding of the existing IT landscape within the organization. Together, a clear vision and strategy for the future POS processes for the SOpharmacy stores and the online pharmacy were developed. Workshops were held entirely online during the period of government measures for infection protection.

The roll-out of the GK solution version 5.17 was completed in June 2023 and is closing the data gaps between the ERP system and the SOpharmacy stores. The future-proof IT landscape is controlled centrally and ensures that merchandise management processes in the SOpharmacy stores run smoothly. It has enabled a significant increase in the level of automation in the store and permanently improved the quality of inventory data. This reduces expensive data gaps between the SAP system and the stores.

Iliyan Tishevishki is convinced by the GK solution: "It was the biggest IT project in our organization to migrate all 213 SOpharmacy stores to the GK platform. We overcame challenges as a project team until the figures for each individual store were mapped in our systems. Today we are reaping the rewards. For our business, the GK CLOUD4RETAIL commerce platform is the best solution I have seen so far."

Sopharma Trading uses the GK CLOUD4RETAIL to manage and control all peripheral devices in the store – including POS process-critical equipment such as scanners and printers for label and poster production as well as content on the digital touchpoints in the stores. The close technological collaboration and ongoing coordination of the product roadmap between SAP and GK ensures that Sopharma Trading can keep pace with ever-increasing security requirements via local protected storage and authentication services.

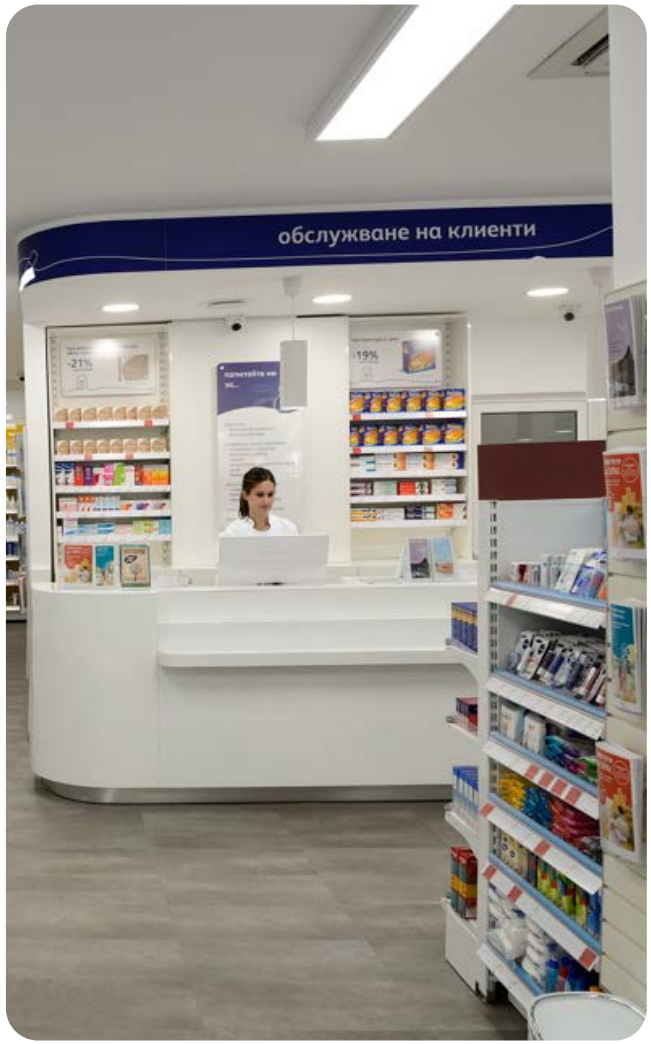
Solution

GK's highly flexible POS solution strikes the target: Sopharma Trading's IT landscape get fit for the demanding healthcare market

A key success factor was the customer's commitment to the project and the partnership with local partners IBM and ScaleFocus, which complemented the GK solution by developing all parts related to local regulations and pharmacy requirements. The teams from Sopharma Trading, ScaleFocus, IBM Bulgaria and GK worked closely together in all phases of the project. Changes were implemented instantly and reliably.

“Thanks to the support of Sopharma Trading's management, we were always able to make crucial decisions promptly and therefore move forward much faster. The project team from Sopharma Trading, IBM, ScaleFocus and GK has grown together so well that we jointly overcome all hurdles,” says Iliyan Tishevishki.

Using App Enablement, a plug-in interface for easy integration of web applications into the GK CLOUD4RETAIL application, healthcare-specific solutions from local third-party providers were and are able to be integrated quickly and seamlessly, without the need to run new release or product updates of the productive systems.



With its Model Company, GK offers standardized mapping into the retail SAP landscape proven to significantly reduce the implementation times of in-store solutions. This standardized approach, based on best-in-class process integration, has enabled GK to quickly map its in-store solutions into Sopharma Trading's SAP-based ERP system. This helped Sopharma Trading to quickly set up test environments with its live SAP system at the beginning of a project.

“In a prototype environment presented to us before the start of the project, we were able to see perfectly what the target process would look like using GK's Model Company,” thinks Iliyan Tishevishki.

“By utilizing GK OmniPOS, we were able to increase the effectiveness and timeliness of our pharmacy services. This strategy also includes working with GK to lay the groundwork for our omni-channel strategy, which will improve the customer experience and produce a seamless online and offline buying experience.”

Iliyan Tishevishki
Technology Support Manager – Sopharma Trading

Next Steps: Self-Checkout, Store Inventory Management and Digital Receipts

Sopharma Trading is already planning the next steps with GK: the introduction of a self-check-out process aims to offer customers a rapid checkout option in its SOpharmacy stores. The GK team has already worked on the proof of concept for this process. To further optimize the efficiency of business operations, Sopharma Trading is also considering GK's Store Inventory Manager, which enables an end-to-end integration of all merchandise management processes at store level with the central ERP system. The roadmap for 2024 also includes a test phase and the introduction of e-receipts to improve customer service and fulfil the company's green agenda.

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