Trax case study
Life Sciences

Trax helps ICON control logistics cost and monitor logistics performance globally

The Logistics team at ICON Central Labs faced special challenges that are common in their industry. They ship about 500,000 packages a year to clinical test sites in 80 countries around the world. The shipments contain biological samples and documents.

ICON's customers are companies in the pharmaceutical and life sciences industries who sponsor clinical trials. Shipping cost is a major contributor to the customer's total cost of clinical trials, so ICON's Logistics team maintains tight cost controls.

Inconsistent data prevented ICON from accurately tracking cost variations and transit times across projects, couriers, and countries.

In addition, it's important for ICON to monitor transit times because biological samples are often perishable. Some require lab work within 36 hours of the time they're drawn.

Poor data quality fogs visibility

Inconsistent data prevented ICON from accurately tracking cost variations and transit times across projects, couriers and countries. They found it hard to evaluate the relative performance of couriers. They also risked overpaying couriers if invoices contained errors.

To solve these problems, the ICON Logistics team sought to normalize data from all eight couriers. They wanted a single view of courier cost and performance across all locations. And they wanted all the information in a single data warehouse.

Refined data lifts the fog on cost and performance

ICON hired Trax Technologies to help solve their problem. By engaging Trax, they became the first central laboratory to use a logistics data refinery service.

Today couriers deliver test samples and paperwork to ICON's central lab in Dublin, Ireland. ICON scans this information into a company system, which merges it with elements such as time of receipt, time of delivery, and other factors.

Overview

ICON needed a way to monitor and control shipment costs for eight couriers who deliver about 500,000 packages a year in 80 countries. They also needed a way to monitor transit times and cost variations across projects, couriers, and countries.

THE TRAX SOLUTION

Trax collects logistics data, refines it, and stores it in a global data warehouse. Now ICON can track the performance of eight courier services to control costs and improve service for ICON's clients.
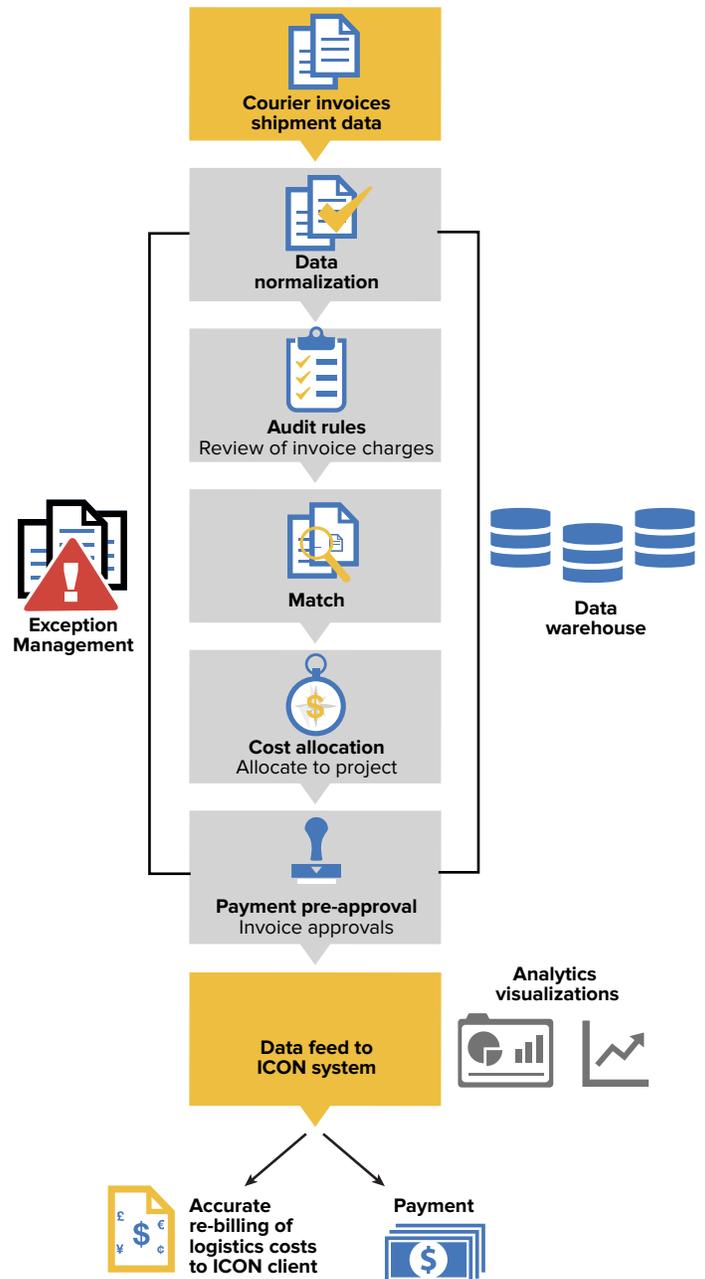
Global data warehouse stores shipment details

ICON's systems then feed the data through the Web to a data warehouse Trax operates. The Trax system captures transit times at various pickup, delivery, and receiving locations. It then calculates shipment time in hours, factoring in differences in time zones between the locations.

The new Trax solution provides more in-depth information for each invoice that ICON forwards to sponsors. The data includes such elements as shipment weights, temperatures, number of pieces, and detailed addresses.

Analytics provide global insight

Trax provides customized reports that deliver incisive information. ICON can monitor the performance of their eight couriers both within and across countries. They can track shipping cost by carrier, by trial, and by trial location. The system can identify delivery issues associated with a courier or country. It can also determine which clinical sites incur the highest shipping costs for different kinds of trials.

This information is useful when ICON's customers plan future clinical trials. More reliable big data, along with Trax's predictive analytics, helps the sponsors of clinical studies manage more efficient trials. Sponsors can understand the story behind the trends they see in their logistics data. They can factor logistics efficiencies into their plans for future studies.

Discover more ways to improve supply chain visibility.
Visit Traxtech.com/DataRefinery

Courier invoices shipment data

Data normalization

Audit rules
Review of invoice charges

Exception Management

Match

Data warehouse

Cost allocation
Allocate to project

Payment pre-approval
Invoice approvals

Data feed to ICON system

Analytics visualizations

Accurate re-billing of logistics costs to ICON client

Payment

TraxTech.com

TraxTech Worldwide Corporate Headquarters
14500 N. Northsight Blvd.
Suite 113
Scottsdale, Arizona 85260
Ph: +1 480-556-8700

TraxTech Europe Limited
24 St. Vincent Place
Glasgow
Scotland
G1 2EU
Ph: +44-141-248 8753

TraxTech L.A. S.A.
Europlaza Diursa Edificio #1
Segundo Piso
Frente Al Cenada
Barreal de Heredia
Costa Rica
Ph: +506-2239-1382

Trax Technologies Asia, Inc.
8th Floor, PIPC i2 Building
AsiaTown IT Park, Lahug
Cebu City 6000, Philippines
Ph: +63 (32) 412-6156

Trax Technologies (SG) Pty Ltd.
Level 30 Singapore
Land Tower
50 Raffles Place
Singapore 048623
Ph: +65 6632 3420

000051022130