

# A PANGAEA FOR PHARMA



How on earth – quite literally – can industry learn from the gigantic prehistoric shifting of landmasses?

Scientists say that all of the Earth's continents were once united into one supercontinent called Pangaea. Natural forces then pulled this giant island apart, forming continents separated by expanses of ocean. Conversely, the life sciences industry has functioned with somewhat isolated entities for many years, but this disconnected model is no longer sustainable in a global market. The industry must create a 'Pangaea', with companies united across borders, across business areas, across regions.

Indeed, globalisation is one of the top priorities for today's life sciences companies. During a recent round-table discussion, chief information officers (CIOs) at ten top pharmaceutical companies cited globalisation as their top focus. This informal survey, however, is by no means irrefutable proof of a widespread trend. So how do we enable a truly global organisation? How do we effectively and efficiently harmonise across divides? How do we collaborate strategically between clinical and sales, Europe and China, agency and brand? Many companies are turning to technology for answers, and finding the best solutions in the cloud.

Cloud technologies are serving as conduits

for life sciences companies, which traditionally operated regionally, to harmonise globally. Companies of all sizes - throughout the industry - are recognising the tremendous advantage that comes from implementing a single global solution, which is flexible enough to support local requirements, yet maintains secure worldwide accessibility, and truly enables fast sharing of data, insights, processes and content across the enterprise.

"The emergence of the cloud as an enabler of multichannel engagement has ushered in a new wave of commercial transformation that will ultimately separate the leaders from the laggards," mused Eric Newmark, program director at IDC Health Insights.

### Enabler of globalisation

More than a software solution, multitenant cloud platforms enable global interaction – the key word being 'multitenant'. If the technology just had a hosted environment for a given location, there would still be many of the same problems inherent in the client/server-based legacy system, which can no longer keep up with today's demands. With multitenant cloud technology, an organisation can take applications that are characteristically scalable and flexible, and quickly expand them globally.

Multitenant cloud platforms eliminate the need to build a new system specific to each country and/or region. Configuration is also fast and makes it easy to account for regional requirements. Furthermore, across the enterprise, there are no more servers and upgrades to manage - freeing up the company's IT team to concentrate on capabilities and solutions to support the business strategy.

"Cloud technology isn't about cost-cutting, but rather the strategic opportunity to free up organisations from the consuming commodity business. Partnering with a cloud technology provider that has industry focus and expertise enables internal resources to re-focus on business process transformation. There's no way to replicate the economies of scale and time savings that the cloud delivers," said Behrooz Najafi, Vice President of information technology at Questcor, and now part of Ireland-based Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals.

"The cloud also levels the playing field," Najafi continued. "Small and mid-sized life sciences companies have access to the same world-class technology solutions in the cloud as their larger counterparts."

Speed and increased efficiency are two of the much-touted advantages of multitenant cloud technologies, over traditional hosted

and client/server systems. Companies can quickly share best practices throughout their enterprises, achieving rapid uptake of the most efficient and effective processes, content and intellectual capital across commercial, and R&D operations.

Additionally, multitenant cloud technology enables vendors to provide regular software updates 'behind the scenes', with zero disruption, ensuring that all users are always benefiting from the latest innovations and making the nightmare of disparate system upgrades disappear forever. This also greatly reduces the infrastructure required to manage the business.

All of this can amount to considerable savings when one considers that 70% of the money currently being spent on IT goes into system maintenance, according to Gartner Research.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the financial savings are just part of the picture. "New technologies — such as the cloud, mobile, analytics, social, sensors, and in-memory computing — offer the promise of innovation and creation of competitive advantages," said Susan Tan, Research Director at Gartner. "Traditional implementations that take months and years to build cannot be agile enough to keep up with changing technologies, or respond quickly to fleeting market opportunities."<sup>2</sup>

### Global harmonisation

Many life sciences companies are turning to multitenant commercial cloud technologies to move their businesses forward in a global economy. In many cases, the cloud is key to global harmonisation, as has been the case for a certain major organisation. This manufacturer of branded and generic products started globalising earlier this year, focusing on implementing systems to support the functions and processes that are being established worldwide. According to one spokesperson, "Technology underpins it all, whether it is a global ERP tool, global HR tool, or global procurement tool".

The company is replacing its legacy customer relationship management (CRM) systems across 45 markets worldwide, with a cloud-based solution, in order to streamline operations and enable global collaboration across both generic and branded drug commercial teams. "A cloud-based system increases efficiency by connecting commercial teams and regions that were highly fragmented," added the spokesperson.<sup>3</sup>

Lundbeck, a Danish pharmaceutical company that will mark its 100th anniversary next year, is leveraging cloud technologies as

part of its organisational shift from a Europe-centric company, with a limited product portfolio, to a truly global enterprise with several new drug therapies. The company is working with a life sciences-specific cloud technology platform that brings together data, interactions, and content, across the enterprise for global multichannel outreach.

Multichannel communication is key, cites Lundbeck, and its cloud technology platform allows the company to maintain customer interaction details in its CRM system, store and revise content, and maintain email-approved, compliant content, which is tailored to the individual customer's needs from the same system.

"The benefits of cloud technology have really removed the technological hurdles to achieving our vision," said Tim White, Lundbeck's head of Global Customer Interaction Management. "In the past, roles like mine used to focus quite a bit on building complex platforms to ideally create harmonised customer experiences. Now, with the cloud, we can focus on using the best available technologies, which are constantly developing to reach these important business goals quickly, helping us set in motion a global strategy."

Questcor has also embraced cloud technology in a strategic move to 'harmonise globally'. CRM was one of the first systems it chose to move into the cloud. "The industry is moving away from legacy, toward new cloud solutions, to better meet current business challenges; global expansion, complex customer and partner networks, and many more. The cloud, however, is doing more than just allowing companies to remain competitive. It's changing the face of life sciences IT," remarked Najafi.

Ipsen Pharmaceuticals has standardised on a multitenant, cloud-based content management solution that spans clinical to commercialisation, in order to increase agility worldwide for its more than 3,000 internal users and hundreds of external partners. Ipsen wanted one complete solution that would be easily, yet securely, accessible to all stakeholders.

"For global corporations, cloud accessibility is one of the greatest advantages, because it inherently fosters collaboration," said Malika Mir, Ipsen's CIO. Ipsen is now able to codify best practices in each area and offer cross-functionality within the cloud document repository, so users from different departments and locations can easily access and collaborate on documents. "Built-in IQ and OQ

validation also frees up our IT department, to address more strategic business priorities," noted Mir.

Meanwhile, Eli Lilly has dramatically transformed into a centralised, global organisation by adopting a cloud-based CRM with an iPad tool, along with a customer master data solution, for its 16,000+ sales reps across the world. Until this shift to the cloud, Lilly's reps were stuck using outdated technology - the problem compounded because reps and business units in different countries used varying CRM systems, making it hard for Lilly to produce an accurate, holistic view of its business.

"This led to a mountain of work each month to manually harmonise the metrics and produce standard business-level information," says Lilly CTO Michael Meadows. Now the legion of Lilly reps use their cloud-based CRM on iPads to plan calls, record and report on conversations, and analyse trends, which lets them interact with doctors, nurses, and administrators in a much more customer-centric way.

According to Meadows, this global standardisation on a cloud technology platform also provides Lilly with the potential for integration with public data, which could lead to significant insight into prescribing trends and healthcare spending across different demographics.<sup>4</sup>

### Pharmaceutical Pangaea

Cloud-based technologies have the inherent power to enable organisations to mine and share information more efficiently, work together across channels and geographies more effectively, and bring drugs to market faster and on a global scale. The cloud is finally breaking down those notorious business silos in life sciences and connecting regions harmoniously.

Done right, cloud technology has the transformative power to move the industry towards a more open, global environment, where best practices are shared, enterprise is embraced and a vast international knowledge landscape bringing more life-saving products to patients all over the world.

Sources  
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