



Using SAP Commerce to Simplify the Buying Process

Driving quality and efficiency in a complex SAP Commerce implementation, unlocking savings of over \$150,000/year



“Planit are a key part in our SAP journey and our success.”

*Liam Gallacher
Programme Management
Officer*

KEY OUTCOMES:

- 70% faster order entry times
- 1 second for real-time insights into years of data
- 600% faster sales reporting
- 100% positive customer feedback
- Automation saving over \$150,000 per year
- SAP Innovation Award winner – ‘Best Run’

Problem

Ballance Agri-Nutrients had developed silos of customer data across numerous stand-alone business systems. This was causing confusion for customers, employees and merchants. It was also limiting the business’ ability to leverage data insights to deliver better services.

In 2016, Ballance commenced a transformation journey to remedy these issues by leveraging multiple SAP HANA applications. Key to this was their omnichannel MyBallance platform, building their customer portal and internal customer management portal upon SAP Commerce (Hybris).

For Ballance and their merchants, this platform would provide major efficiency gains and far greater visibility across accounts, inventory and distribution. For their customers, the platform would be integral for managing their connected farms, providing a full range of functionality from placing orders, to tracking nutrient plans, to managing application across paddocks using GIS mapping.

In addition to the MyBallance project, an app for Windows and iOS was developed to also interface with Ballance’s SAP Commerce setup. The app would be primarily used by nutrient specialists to place and manage orders and inventory while on-site at clients’ farms.

Ballance’s SAP journey continued in 2019 when they upgraded their SAP ERP to S/4HANA. The move was made ahead of “End of Mainstream Maintenance” (EOMM) and provided additional benefits such as improved product content, experience, order management and personalisation.

DELIVERED:

- Testing framework
 - Test management
 - Test tool implementation
 - User acceptance testing
 - Functional testing
 - Test automation
 - Performance testing
 - On-shore / off-shore delivery
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TECHNOLOGIES:

- SAP Commerce (Hybris)
 - SAP S/4HANA
 - Website
 - Desktop app
 - Mobile app
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TOOLS:

- Atlassian JIRA
- Ranorex
- Tricentis Tosca

Solution

At the outset of this journey, Ballance selected several vendors to deliver upon different components of the implementation. Based on our strong capability, understanding of the program of work and proven track-record, Planit was chosen as their quality partner.

We started by implementing an enterprise-wide testing framework and defect management process suited to this multi-vendor environment. Next, we assembled a cross-skilled delivery team that would work alongside the development partner through the duration of the engagement.

Recognising that Ballance could realise substantial efficiencies by utilising more robust tooling, we recommended Ballance adopt JIRA to gain full traceability, from requirements, to test, to defects. We were also able to assist Ballance by centralising and standardising their test scripts.

In order to reach project goals around quality, efficiency and timelines, we designed and maintained an automated regression suite covering both out-of-the-box functionality, as well as customisations and integrations unique to Ballance's implementation. Our hybrid automated/functional team would then support regression testing to enable monthly releases, or as desired.

By complementing the on-site team with remote off-shore delivery, Ballance was able to make optimal use of Planit's SAP knowledge and expertise.

When it came time for the S/4HANA upgrade, test coverage was key given the scale of the change and the business units involved. This involved working closely with users across the business to design tests to encapsulate all functionality. As part of the test execution, we once again created an automation backlog, and used Tricentis Tosca to design a highly maintainable test suite and automation pack for S/4HANA.

Ballance's project stakeholders had full visibility throughout the course of the project thanks to detailed dashboards, clear reporting and centralised defect management. This ensured executives had the oversight they required and management could easily access information at a more granular level, such as tracking issues through to their solution.

Beyond the solutions themselves, Ballance also benefited from Planit's flexible resource model across our range of specialist consultants, as well as our robust knowledge transfer process. This process ensured the efficient and transparent up-skilling of backfill resources to ensure continuity of delivery during any periods of leave by Planit team members.

ABOUT PLANIT:

At Planit, we are experts in quality engineering and assurance. Supported by our SAP Centre of Excellence, our specialist consultants can help you achieve your platform goals by driving quality for your SAP implementation.

Ask us how we can help you unlock more value from your SAP implementation and deliver updates around 85% faster!

Outcome

The projects have been a marked success. According to Programme Management Officer, Liam Gallacher:

"The impact and value of this partnership can be seen in the benefits we receive through their testing capabilities. These include:

- *Visibility of our risk position with proactive strategies offered to address any issues.*
- *Improved customer experience based on 100% positive feedback.*
- *Increased product quality and easy access helped us gain way more business since the platform was launched, and customer uptake figures are considerably higher. We've also received strong feedback from customers saying they love the features. Receiving the global innovation award from SAP was wonderful recognition too.*
- *Planit is committed to continuous improvement, both ours and theirs. They have proven their commitment constantly and we have a high level of confidence in their ability to deliver.*
- *We plan to develop automated processes and tools with Planit's help."*

Planit met or exceeded every goal as Ballance's quality partner through their SAP journey. Each program of work was delivered on-time and to or under budget.

For the 12 months prior to this case study, we executed 7,756 tests and raised a total 2,132 defects. During this period, automated scripts have enabled Ballance to save at least \$150,000 per year. These savings are more significant when you consider that the scripts can be run repeatedly daily compared to just a single cycle of a manual test run.

As it stands, each monthly release involves running a full regression pack of 197 scripts. By automating 66% of these tests, the overhead associated with regression testing is drastically reduced, freeing up the team to work on more high value tasks.

All of this was achieved through detailed, up-front planning and estimating. This required a solid understanding of Ballance, their delivery methods, and challenges.

Transparent, open, and honest delivery was also a key success factor. Our team worked hard to establish a close relationship with business stakeholders, along with a good understanding of their individual business areas and challenges, which enabled us to deliver what was required and more.

Through the course of this SAP implementation, we have designed and implemented a testing framework, managed their testing, and supported/coordinated UAT. Our efforts span functional testing, performance testing, and test automation, delivered by both on-shore and off-shore staff.

This partnership is underpinned by trust. According to Gallacher:

"If you're looking for professional individuals, Planit's the place to go. They're a key part in our journey and our success. For those reasons and more, we're continuing with them moving forward."