

## **Company overview**

The Sonova Group (“Sonova”) is a Swiss publicly listed company specializing in the design, development, production and global distribution of technologically advanced wireless and hearing systems under the Phonak and Unitron brands. Sonova offers a complete range of digital hearing instruments, along with high tech specialty products and complementary wireless communications systems, distributed through multiple distribution channels and subsidiaries. With over \$1 billion in annual sales and 3,400 employees worldwide, the Sonova Group is one of the technology leaders in the industry.

## **Situation**

Sonova processes thousands of shipments per day from multiple production centers in the US and Canada. Until their recent implementation of SAP, Sonova used a variety of carrier-supplied systems, web sites, third party systems, and manual processes to prepare shipments for UPS, FedEx, DHL, Purolator, ICS and LTL. Most of those systems were not integrated with Sonova’s old ERP system.

### **Situation Summary**

- Lack of transportation visibility and control
- Disparate, inefficient shipping processes
- Manual international export processes
- Fragmented carrier cost accounting

Each system required additional operator training to ensure proper navigation of user interfaces that were designed to meet the needs of each carrier - not Sonova business requirements. In addition, Sonova lacked uniform visibility and control over transportation and fulfillment processes.



Sonova ships internationally and must comply with global trade regulations. All of these processes were manual under the old ERP system. Sonova realized it needed to implement an automated, end-to-end process in order to improve shipping speed, exercise reasonable care and reduce regulatory risks. Sonova built its excellent reputation on customer service. So, efficient and speedy outbound visibility was an absolute requirement on the customer service side in order to eliminate call backs and long hold times.

Sonova embarked on a comprehensive search for shipping software which could be integrated with SAP and fulfill all its operations and service requirements. After this evaluation, Sonova chose AgileElite as the solution they believed would be most able to meet their needs.

## **Capabilities Required**

Sonova identified the following key system requirements:

1. One enterprise platform to automate rating, routing, and shipping within SAP for multiple carriers.
2. Ability to automate and comply with international export requirements
3. Automate shipment tracking and PODs, with drill down on customer, shipment, and item status
4. Improve financial visibility and control over transportation costs and automate bill reconciliation

## Solution

Agile-Network, LLC, is a knowledge network of logistics systems integrators located throughout the US, Canada, and Europe who specialize in multi-carrier shipping and global trade solutions. Agile-Network's local office in St. Louis ("Agile") studied Sonova's requirements and collaborated with Sonova's IT personnel and SAP consultants to design an integrated solution.

Agile installed AgileElite, an SOA enterprise shipping platform, behind the firewall in Sonova's corporate IT center. AgileElite is configured to service SAP R/3 transportation and international compliance requests through remote function calls (RFCs). Using this "black box" interface, Sonova's IT staff is able to control information flows, security, and user access to processes from inside SAP, leaving it to AgileElite to manage messaging with carriers.



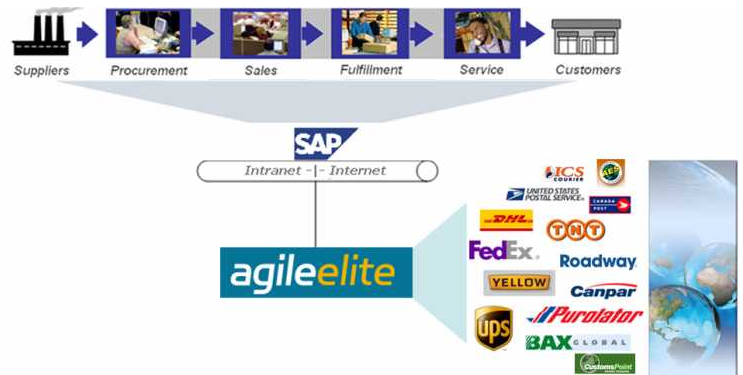
Order entry personnel do not have to make routing and rating decisions. Shipping personnel simply confirm shipments within SAP which then directs AgileElite to generate compliant labels, bills of lading and export documents as part of SAP's post goods issue process. AgileElite digitizes and stores all carrier and export documentation in a central database for tracking, archival and reporting purposes. AgileElite returns confirmation of shipment and tracking information to SAP for invoicing.

Sonova also has access to the full suite of AgileElite shipping, routing, and visibility solutions. Operators use AgileShip for processing exceptions, non-order related shipments, and Ship With Other Goods (SWOG) which enables grouping of orders within a single shipment. All shipping transactions are stored in the same database as those processed through SAP. Adding new subsidiaries and ship-from locations is easy:

AgileView provides role-specific, composite views of transportation information. Customer service can track individual hearing instruments by order#, client#, or other fields. AgileView enables drill down from customer to shipment to carton to item level detail. Sonova has multiple subsidiaries and AgileView limits visibility to only those shipments process by each subsidiary. Managers have a real-time, global view of all transportation across their entire enterprise.

## Results

- Visibility and control over global transportation
- Reduced errors, improved fulfillment efficiency
- Reduced global trade compliance risks
- Secure integration with SAP R/3
- Real-time tracking of detailed shipment status



## Results

Phonak's IT Director: "By implementing AgileElite, Agile has helped us establish visibility and control over all our transportation processes. As a result, we have improved efficiency, tight integration with our SAP system, a single interface across multiple carriers, reduced training requirements and flexible decision support to enable our employees to meet our customers' delivery requirements."

## For more information:

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[www.agile-network.com](http://www.agile-network.com)

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