SERIALIZATION AND TRACK AND TRACE FROM 3KEYS AND ADVANCO: A ROADMAP TO A SAFER, MORE EFFICIENT FUTURE

Despite the pharmaceutical sector flying the flag for the adoption of serialization and track and trace solutions, its uptake in other sectors is nowhere near as obvious.

This is the case even though the expectation that it will make significant inroads into other areas such as food, beverage and luxury goods in the coming years. Indeed, serialization and track and trace solutions are widely expected to become a commodity in these sectors – and more. Therefore, why aren't we seeing a much more proactive approach now from these other sectors now? This article explores the current state of serialization and track and trace, compares reactive and proactive approaches, and advocates for a shift towards a more proactive mindset, emphasizing the need for collaboration between solution providers, such as 3Keys and advanco, and businesses alike.

About 3Keys.

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Industry	Information Technology & Services
Services & Products	Consulting Services, Support as a Service, Kvinta T&T Saas Solution, 3Keys Connector CIS for SAP ATTP, Zero Phase Consulting
Special Expertise	Consulting Business, Product Development and Support
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The Dangers of a Reactive Approach.

Many industries are implementing serialization and track and trace primarily to comply with laws and regulations. For instance, the Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) in the United States mandates serialization and track and trace for pharmaceutical products to protect consumers from counterfeit drugs. Similarly, the European Union's Falsified Medicines Directive (EU FMD) requires serialization for prescription medicines to ensure their authenticity and traceability across the supply chain. However, the key word here is reactive. The primary focus with a reactive approach is on meeting compliance requirements, avoiding penalties, and ensuring that products can be legally marketed. While this reactive approach fulfils regulatory obligations, it often leads to a minimalistic implementation, aimed at ticking the compliance box rather than leveraging the full potential of these technologies. By adopting this reactive approach, other issues can include the following; short-term focus, limited innovation and increased costs.

The Benefits of a Proactive Approach.

In contrast, a proactive approach to serialization and track and trace goes beyond compliance. It positions companies to harness the full range of benefits these systems offer, driving business value and enhancing competitiveness.

- **Operational Efficiency:** By proactively integrating serialization and track and trace into their operations, companies can achieve significant efficiencies.

- **Risk Management:** A proactive approach enhances a company's ability to manage risks. Companies can quickly identify and isolate issues, such as contamination or counterfeiting, before they escalate into larger problems.

- **Customer Trust and Brand Value:** Consumers are increasingly concerned about the authenticity and safety of the products they purchase.

- **Data-Driven Insights:** Proactively implemented serialization and track and trace systems generate vast amounts of data, which can be analyzed to gain valuable insights into consumer behaviour, product performance, and supply chain dynamics.

Challenges and Limitations of Proactivity.

While a proactive approach has clear benefits, it also presents challenges. Implementing serialization and track and trace requires significant investment in technology, infrastructure, and training, as well as a cultural shift within the organization.

Additionally, every business has unique processes and obstacles, making the implementation of serialization and track and trace a complex endeavor.

Why Is the Proactive Approach so Rare?

Despite the clear benefits, the proactive approach to serialization and track and trace remains rare in many industries. There are several reasons for this reluctance:

- **Focus on Immediate Returns:** Many businesses operate under significant pressure to deliver short-term financial results.

- **Perception of High Costs:** The upfront costs associated with a proactive implementation—technology, training, process redesign—can be substantial.

- **Lack of Awareness or Expertise:** Some businesses may not fully understand the potential benefits of a proactive approach or lack the expertise to implement such systems effectively.

- **Risk Aversion:** Companies may be hesitant to invest in proactive strategies due to a fear of the unknown.

Coexistence of Reactive and Proactive Approaches.

A pharmaceutical company operating in multiple regions may adopt a reactive approach to comply with local regulations in one region while taking a proactive stance in another where they see strategic benefit.

For instance, consider a global pharmaceutical company that initially adopted Serialization and Track and Trace to comply with the EU FMD. Over time, they recognized the value of real-time data and integrated these systems with their global supply chain operations. This shift allowed them to reduce lead times, improve product quality, and enhance their market responsiveness, illustrating the transition from reactive to proactive.

The Role of 3Keys and advanco.

As vendors, 3Keys and advanco are committed to helping businesses make the transition to a future where proactive serialization and track and trace are the norm.

The power of both companies is even greater thanks to their ability to do the following:

- **Merge consultancy and technical prowess:** Combine the consultancy approach of 3Keys and its associated technical expertise, with the market-leading solutions of advanco's ARC platform, which together offers a range of services and solutions designed to support proactive serialization and track and trace implementations.

- **Use joint knowledge:** The joint expertise in data analysis, process integration, and technology development enables 3Keys and advanco to provide tailored solutions that meet the unique needs of each individual business.

- **Understand the client:** Both 3 Keys and advanco work closely with each client enabling them to understand specific challenges, design effective solutions, and ensure successful implementation.

However, there is a word of warning. A shift to a proactive approach requires the will and commitment of the businesses themselves. It requires a collaborative partnership where both parties are aligned in their vision and objectives. Solution providers such as 3 Keys and advanco provide the tools, expertise, and support, but it is the businesses themselves that must show the commitment and take the decisive steps towards change.

Conclusion.

The choice between a reactive and proactive approach is a choice between merely complying with regulations and unlocking the full potential of these systems to drive business success. By adopting a proactive approach, businesses can ensure compliance, enhance efficiency, manage risks, and build stronger relationships with customers. The path to this future requires collaboration between solution providers and businesses, a willingness to invest in new technologies, and a commitment to innovation.

Building on this, companies actively planning for future serialization needs or seeking further insights are welcome to contact us. Whether for an informal discussion or exploring the potential for a dedicated research and development project, we are ready to assess the specific needs of each business and the industry in which it operates, providing tailored recommendations for the next steps.

Together, we can create a safer, more efficient, and more transparent world where products are authentic, supply chains are secure, and businesses thrive.

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