



# Focused on the cure:

## How a leading pharmaceutical company alleviated its supply chain challenges

**A US-based pharmaceutical company is dedicated to achieving one of the most ambitious goals of 21st century medicine: curing cancer.**

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This mission is at the heart of everything the company does, including its supply chain transformation. A leader in engineered T-cell therapy, the company is changing how cancer is treated with what is potentially the biggest breakthrough since the introduction of combination chemotherapy more than 60 years ago. Today, following huge international growth, it continues as a leader on the international stage for T-cell and personalized therapy.

A personalized treatment plan called for a personalized supply chain that could meet that goal. This pharmaceutical company was ready to make that happen, but being a pioneer can be difficult.



## The challenge

Starting small and growing into a global presence isn't something that can happen overnight. "We're going from a very small network to one that has many permutations and possible movements," said the company's Senior Manager of Planning Business Processes & Systems.

Preparing for the next stage meant finding new ways to manage an international supply chain with more manufacturing plants and strategic partners. "The rules change as these new technologies are introduced." The company needed a supply chain that was both powerful enough and flexible enough to meet its needs.

The company's flagship product is a highly personalized cancer treatment that varies from patient to patient, whereas traditional pharmaceutical supply chains are characterized by wholesale processes backed by years of proven best practices. "We have a process that begins with the patient and ends with the patient," said their Senior Supply Planning Manager. While a patient-to-patient model can create a shorter supply chain and better outcomes, there's a substantial increase in the responsibility on the company. Every member in this chain— from the apheresis sites where the blood is treated to the hospitals delivering therapy— must be certified to ensure safe outcomes. Otherwise, "if the wrong blood gets to the wrong patient, they could have a rejection and it could be deadly."

Although clinical trials were completed, they had taken place on a small and local scale. A larger population needed to be reached quickly, accurately, and safely. But in order to do that, the company needed a type of supply chain that didn't exist yet.

## Benefits of using Kinaxis

- **Reduce** reliance on Excel
- **Support** personalized supply chains
- **Manage** the complexity of a global market with confidence
- **Improve** patient and end-user outcomes

## From Excel to supply chain maturity

The solution this company found was one that let it move at its own pace. The steady approach began with phasing out Excel workbooks for a more modern solution. By rolling out RapidResponse® at the small scale, the company was able to begin optimizing its supply chain step-by-step. “We’re starting from scratch. A lot of things are just paper processes at the start.” In 2017, it began implementing RapidResponse into materials planning and chose a select group of supply chain managers to compare RapidResponse’s results with those of pre-existing Excel models. This allowed the team to grow a familiarity with the tool from the bottom to the top.

In 2018, the company began utilizing RapidResponse in its sales and operations planning (S&OP) and material requirements planning (MRP). Creating a new supply chain from scratch is never perfect, nor is it easy. That meant the company had to find an ERP that allowed for decisions and discussions to happen across teams. It replaced its Oracle ERP system with RapidResponse and SAP ERP to align teams, empowering it to react to obstacles in real-time while also proactively planning for what’s coming ahead.

RapidResponse was able to improve forecast accuracy, as well as the aggregate demand for buyers – an especially important aspect given the personalized, robust nature around its T-cell therapies. And when

the company began expanding across the world, RapidResponse was there to meet the demand for new manufacturing sites while it made its foray into European and Asia-Pacific markets.

Starting small meant the team could grow to scale by giving its supply chain experts time to familiarize themselves with a new tool. Planners can quickly build prototypes, and the manager can validate them to ensure they work across the company before being implemented. “You’re getting solutions from the people dealing with the problems day-to-day,” said the senior supply planning manager. “The beauty of that is they get the things that they need to do their job, and they’re empowered because of that.”





## Results that Matter

RapidResponse has grown to end-to-end supply chain planning. Ensuring the patient receives the right treatment at the right time is the most vital aspect of the company's supply chain. Accurate results and consistent healthcare outcomes place confidence in partners and patients by knowing the right treatment gets to the right person. Here's how RapidResponse delivered:

Building a tailored solution for a complex and emerging supply chain was no easy feat – but the business leadership team now has the ability to collaborate with various teams to see how their decisions can affect back-end results and determine complicated if-then situations with speed and accuracy. RapidResponse aids supply chain managers with assessing and communicating risks like expiry on key treatment ingredients right back to key stakeholders. As a result, the company saw improved planning efficiency and shorter planning cycles.

The company has come a long way from its original solution as a pioneer in cell therapy and supply chain endeavours. It will continue to find new ways to fit RapidResponse into its future. "As our products and processes become more mature, we'll look at new ways to use RapidResponse."

## About Kinaxis Inc.

Navigating supply chain volatility takes agility. Why? Because plans are never perfect. Kinaxis® is the authority in empowering fast, confident decision-making across the supply chain so people plan better, live better and change the world. Trusted by top brands, we combine human intelligence with AI and concurrent planning to help companies plan for any future, monitor risks and opportunities and respond at the pace of change. Powered by an extensible, cloud-based platform, only Kinaxis delivers industry-proven applications so everyone can know sooner, act faster and remove waste. Don't believe us? Ask us to prove it. Learn more at [Kinaxis.com](https://www.kinaxis.com).



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