

CUSTOMER STORY

ORDER MANAGEMENT

Automating Order Management to Support Customer Service & Growth

Esker Order Management proved to be Valrhona's secret ingredient — helping improve efficiency and deliver a premium customer experience on a global scale.



ESKER®

Valrhona

-  **Food and beverage manufacturing**
-  **Founded in 1922**
-  **Headquartered in Tain-l'Hermitage, France**
-  **900 employees**
-  **5 international subsidiaries, with a presence in more than 120 countries**
-  **ERP: SAP**



Challenges

Optimizing growth & customer relationships

As a leader in premium chocolate manufacturing with a rich, 100+-year history, Valrhona understands the ingredients that go into maintaining strong, long-term customer relationships. So when Valrhona began noticing the negative impacts of its manual order management process, the company knew a recipe adjustment would be indispensable.

Prior to Esker, Valrhona was processing nearly 90% of its orders manually. This tied up its customer service team in repetitive, low-value-added tasks, particularly involving the re-entry of information already present in forms or files provided by customers — resulting in a significant operational burden coupled with a greater risk of errors.

Additionally, the highly seasonal nature of the chocolate industry was made more complex against a backdrop of the group's continuous growth. This involved:

- 100,000 direct orders per year — 80% received by phone and 20% by email — for nearly 20,000 active customers in France and Europe
- 8,000 orders per year for international sales — covering 120 countries through 280 distributors, handled exclusively via email

These challenges were further compounded by a multi-brand structure, which involved managing a broad portfolio of brands and products, making it even more imperative that Valrhona rethink its existing order management processes.

Objectives

- Eliminate low-value-added tasks and reduce manual data entry.
- Increase efficiency and reliability of order processing without hiring additional staff.
- Free up time to strengthen customer relationships, support, and advice.
- Offer premium customer service consistent with the brand's positioning.
- Improve business management through greater visibility into processes and key metrics.
- Have a solution tailored to all subsidiaries to standardize practices.

Solution

A transformative order management solution delivered via collaborative implementation

To automate its order management process, Valrhona chose Esker Order Management — an AI-powered solution built for complex order environments — which was already being used with the Savencia Group (Valrhona's parent company) and recognized for its user-friendliness and seamless integration capabilities with SAP®.

From the start, Valrhona and Esker developed a joint approach centered on scoping workshops, workflow analysis, and prioritization of needs — with the central priority being eliminating data re-entry while ensuring reliable data transmission.

Valrhona and Esker agreed on an approach focused on:

- Automatic recognition of written orders using AI
- Review and approval by account managers
- Automatic entry into SAP, without manual intervention for eligible cases

“From the very beginning, Esker really listened to us and was able to adapt very quickly to our needs. The workshops were smooth and straightforward, and we made progress together without wasting any time.”

Perrine Guironnet

FSP Customer Services Manager, Valrhona

A rapid, structured, & widely adopted rollout

The implementation took place over 6 months, thanks to clear organization and the involvement of several key stakeholders in the project:

- 4 key customer service users
- 2 managers
- An IT project manager
- An executive committee sponsor
- Two Esker consultants dedicated to project management and iterative execution

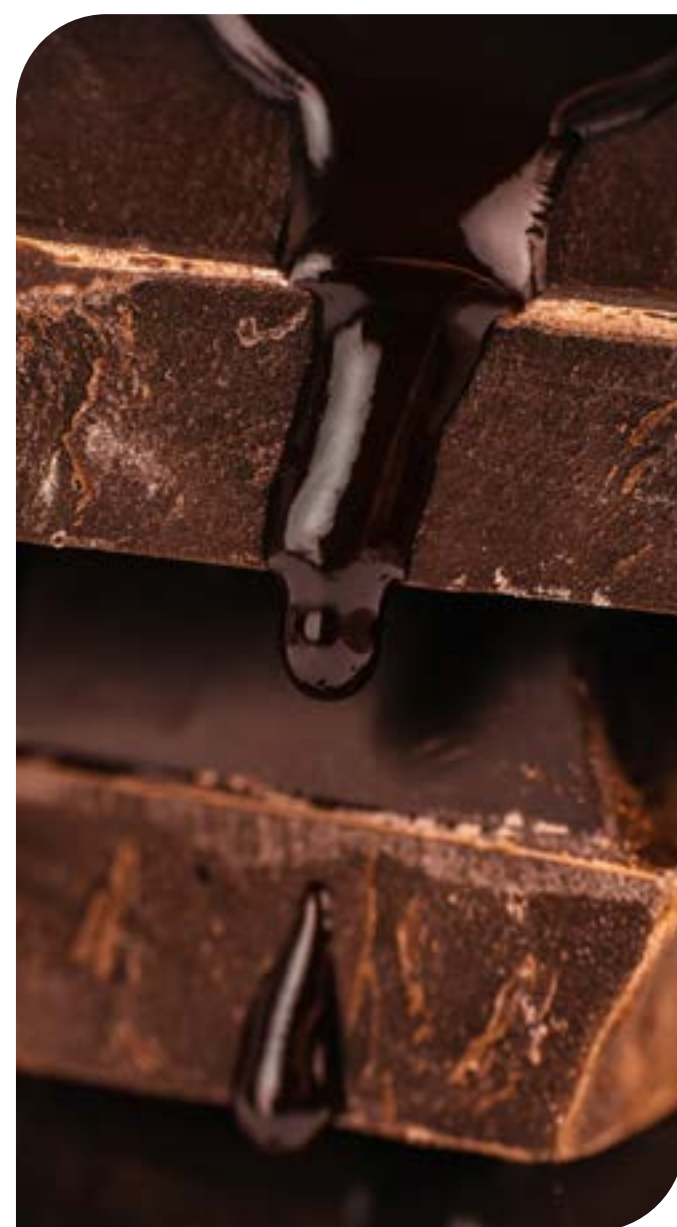
Valrhona then replicated this model for international rollout — U.S., Dubai, Japan, and more — with internal capacity-building to provide local training and support.

The solution's intuitive design, combined with strong team engagement (testing sessions, workshops, etc.), led to almost immediate adoption and a rapid transition to production. Today, 65 people use Esker Order Management.

“The solution is very user-friendly and intuitive. When we started testing the prototype, everyone immediately understood how to use it, which made the onboarding process extremely fast.”

Perrine Guironnet

FSP Customer Services Manager, Valrhona



“We’ve seen fewer disputes since implementing Esker Order Management. As the main point of contact, I centralize and escalate any issues that arise. This process has worked very well for the past four years, helping us resolve issues quickly and efficiently.”

Perrine Guironnet
FSP Customer Service Manager,
Valrhona

Key benefits

- 3x faster order processing speeds (from 2–3 mins to 45 seconds)
- 15% increase in productivity in France, with a 35% increase in export markets
- 95% order automation rate thanks to AI-driven data extraction and ERP validation
- 4x fewer data entry errors (from 2% to 0.5%)
- Implemented rapidly and rolled out internationally and independently by internal teams

Results

More responsive, reliable, & proactive customer service

By automating its order processing operation with Esker Order Management, Valrhona has seen significant gains in operational performance.

For example, processing orders 3x faster has led to an increase in the number of orders processed per account manager by 15% in France and by 35% for international orders. The time saved also allows its team to focus on higher-value activities, such as follow-up calls, detecting inactivity, supporting premium customers, and preparing for peak periods.

Esker has also enhanced the reliability of the company’s end-to-end process. By replacing manual data entry with AI-powered data validation, Valrhona has reduced data entry errors by a factor of four, directly contributing to fewer disputes and more secure operations.

Lastly, the project stood out for its ease of adoption and ability to be deployed at scale. Within one month, the entire customer service department was automated, thanks to an intuitive solution and collaborative workshops. This rapid adoption simplified the standardization of practices across teams, helping to facilitate a fully autonomous international deployment.

Valrhona now has a consistent and replicable model — strengthening operational consistency and overall business management.

“Esker’s solution has allowed us to be much more proactive: We now use the time we’ve saved to anticipate needs, follow up with customers, reassure them, and better track their activity.”

Perrine Guironnet
FSP Customer Services Manager, Valrhona

Want to transform your order management process like Valrhona?

Our team is at your service.

About Esker

Esker's Agentic AI Suite for the Office of the CFO combines proven automation with AI agents that turn data into action across source-to-pay and order-to-cash processes — improving working capital and cashflow, scaling productivity, and strengthening financial performance. This blend of expertise, trusted technology, and continuous innovation enables greater autonomy across workflows while keeping people in control of the decisions that matter. Headquartered in Lyon, France, Esker has 1,200 employees across 15 global locations.

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