



Case Study

Quality System Overhaul Supports Torrent Photonics' Rapid Growth



Industry

Optical Components,
Assemblies &
Spectral Devices



Founded

2006



Location

Fargo, Fla.



Employees

200+





Challenge

Accommodate rapid company expansion by streamlining processes, enhancing efficiency and engaging more employees in the quality system, all while maintaining ISO 9001 and AS9100 certifications.

Solution

Search for an eQMS that offers the most scalability at the least cost.

Explore [QT9 QMS](#)

Results

- 25% reduction in labor costs amid a 400% increase in employee base
- 8% reduction in RMAs
- Improved production insight, customer satisfaction and operational efficiencies
- Increased staff awareness and buy-in of quality goals

Torrent Photonics, formerly Salvo Technologies, is a vertically integrated company whose divisions deliver high-tech optical components, assemblies and devices to the defense, aerospace, security, medical, industrial and commercial markets. The company's growth strategy in recent years has involved the acquisition of several related businesses, making them a company with a global reach and manufacturing capabilities on multiple continents. This strategy has also grown their employee base by more than 400 percent in just four years.

Tia Buchanan, Quality Management System (QMS) Director at Torrent, joined the company in 2020, before all of the acquisitions had come to fruition. The company's quality management system at that time relied heavily on folders and spreadsheets housed on a local server. In order to sustain Torrent's rapid growth plans, Buchanan recognized the company needed a better system to organize and streamline quality and compliance processes.

One-Stop-Shop eQMS

With 17 years of quality experience under her belt, Buchanan was familiar with a variety of quality management approaches. She knew that she wanted one automated solution, not a variety of programs that could only handle one or two of the tasks for which her team was responsible. She began looking for a one-stop-shop eQMS solution that would seamlessly manage documents, [inspections](#), safety records, maintenance, [calibrations](#), nonconforming products, [corrective actions](#) and more.

Her goals were to not only address efficiency, but also engage more employees in the quality system. Above all was the need to ensure they maintained their AS9100 and ISO 9001 certifications.

"My goal was to find something that is all-encompassing," says Buchanan about the company's search for an eQMS. "Most of the systems I looked at had some of the modules, but nothing had all the modules out of the box, except for QT9. It was about functionality for me, and QT9 has every module that any quality person could ever dream of having."



Regulatory Compliance & KPIs

Torrent Photonics takes advantage of QT9's concurrent licensing and, with just seven licenses, now has about 200 people who utilize QT9 QMS software, the Document Viewing Portal, Quality Link and Business Intelligence (BI) Tool. Concurrent licensing allows each license to be logged into the solution at the same time.

The company also uses almost all 23-plus QMS modules for everything from document management to tracking KPIs. One of the major efficiencies QT9 has created for Torrent involves tracking return material authorizations (RMAs) in QT9's [Nonconforming Products \(NCP\)](#) module.

Easy access to data allowed the company to quickly address a recent 10 percent spike in RMAs. Improved visibility into the process, as well as better, more accessible documentation allowed them to determine root cause and introduce corrective actions that quickly brought the aberration down to 1.7 percent.

Better Ways of Working

Buchanan explains how her team copied the link for creating a new NCP into their ERP system, so every time the team needs to reject something on the floor, they can click on the link, which takes them directly to QT9 to create the NCP and enter all the relevant information.

"We wrote a process specifically on how to create an NCP and trained everyone on it using the training module," she says. "Now everyone knows how to use it, and we are able to easily capture all our NCPs. QT9 helps us uphold the process and shows the evidence that we are doing it."

In other words, when audit time rolls around, the Torrent quality team is now able to easily show its system for capturing NCPs, as well as other key compliance proofs. The team meets once a week to review all KPI metrics, see how they compare to their targets and get a better picture of where they need to invest more effort.

"QT9 has every module that any quality person could ever dream of having."

— Tia Buchanan
Quality Management System Director at Torrent Photonics

Employee Training and Adoption

The company has also found that the QT9 [Employee Training](#) module helps with efficiency and compliance. "Anytime we do a corrective action or have something that needs to be pushed out to the team to show that they've read it, they understand it, we use the employee training module," says Buchanan. "So it lets us complete the training and automatically provides evidence that we've done what we are supposed to do in terms of compliance."



Since they've adopted QT9 QMS, Buchanan's team has had to learn to not only be paperless, but embrace the importance of the quality process to compliance.

"We don't have printed documents anymore," notes Buchanan. "As soon as any document is printed out, it is null and void. So the employees have had to learn that if you need a document or an auditor asks to see a document, you need to go pull it up in QT9. Because that is where the latest and greatest is going to be. Anything that gets printed out goes into the trash."

Efficiency, Productivity and Quality

Buchanan has been pleased with additional efficiency features built into QT9's QMS, such as the ability to export grids into Excel and to customize it to her team's needs. "It's an awesome feature that really gives you the flexibility to crunch data, and you can do it all yourself without having to have a report writer do it," she says. "I can customize it the way I want, filter down on specific numbers and export it out to a spreadsheet."

During customer visits, the Torrent quality team has been able to display the [QT9 QMS modules](#) they are using, such as calibrations, maintenance, safety, and project management, and explain how the system helps them centralize quality processes. "Once they see all of the modules – corrective actions, calibrations, everything – they are satisfied that we have a good system in place to maintain quality."

"Efficiency and productivity have definitely increased," says Buchanan. "We have grown from 40 people in 2020 to 200 people in 2024, and the scaling and management of our quality management system has only been made possible by QT9."

Growth Trajectory

As Torrent Photonics continues its trajectory of growth, QT9 QMS remains an indispensable tool, facilitating seamless quality management. QT9's scalability and user-friendly interface have empowered Torrent's workforce to embrace a paperless environment, reinforcing the importance of quality at every step of the process. The comprehensive nature of QT9's QMS has instilled confidence in Torrent's quality processes, further solidifying its reputation as a reliable partner.

Through innovative solutions and unwavering dedication to excellence, Torrent Photonics and QT9 exemplify the power of automation to ensuring quality and compliance in today's dynamic business landscape.

About QT9 Software

QT9 Software offers both quality management software and ERP job management software. QT9 Quality Management Software is a comprehensive, user-friendly, cloud-based QMS that handles ISO 9001, AS9100, ISO 13485, 21 CFR Part 210/211, and 21 CFR Part 820 FDA requirements. QT9 ERP has the modules to completely automate and run a business—purchasing, accounting, production, inventory control and sales.

* See the article on the web: <https://qt9qms.com/case-studies/torrent-photonics>