

Signals Notebook Delivers Unexpected Dividends for a Growing Swedish Pharmaceutical Company

By Revvity Signals

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Introduction

Camurus, a publicly traded biopharmaceutical company based in Lund, Sweden, has recorded an enviable track record for innovation. Its primary development is FluidCrystal®, a technology that provides a unique way of encapsulating and releasing active ingredients like small molecules, peptides, and proteins. Available as injectable depots, FluidCrystal®, encapsulates a drug compound in lipid liquid crystalline nanostructures, enabling sustained drug release and therapeutic drug exposure over weeks to months following a single injection.

The company found particular success in applying its patented delivery technology to health issues such as opioid dependence, cancer, and rare diseases that include acromegaly and neuroendocrine tumors.

Camurus' total net revenue for fiscal year 2021 was SEK601 million, or about US \$56.4 million, an increase of 79 percent over the previous year. Net revenue projections for the 2022 fiscal year are close to SEK1 billion and the company has during 2022 entered into profitability — this while increasing the significant investments in its late-stage pipeline.

That's an impressive outlook and performance for a company with some 170 employees, and it illustrates the type of year-over-year growth Camurus has experienced as it has formed new commercial alliances and extended its reach into new markets.



Identifying a Need

The company was building a strong foundation for continued growth, but when Nils Ove Gustafsson arrived in 2018, to take on the role of Vice President of Late-Stage Development, he found that it was somewhat challenging to locate details of specific lab work. Signals Notebook Delivers Unexpected Dividends for a Growing Swedish Pharmaceutical Company.

“When I joined,” says Gustafsson, “we didn’t have any electronic laboratory notebook (ELN) system or the like. We had a fully paper-based system for documentation of all our work in the lab.” He says the dependence on commonly used software like Microsoft Word and Excel made searching for data related to experiments tedious, and a lot of time was spent on copying, archiving, and scanning various documents. Still, the company was making strides because of its continuing focus on R&D, and Gustafsson says there was no indication that the lack of an ELN was hampering its ability to scale up.

“Camurus is an R&D-based company (with about 60 people engaged in R&D, versus some 30 formulation and analytical scientists in the lab) so things were being done as they always were.” Still, recognizing the need for better lab documentation management, Gustafsson initiated a project to source an effective ELN — a search that began with sending a request for proposals to 19 suppliers. Seventeen of those expressed interest, and after the number of applicants was reduced to a short list of six, Revvity Signals Notebook emerged as the winner.

Integration is Key

Looking back at the selection process, Gustafsson says those judging mostly gravitated to one primary feature of Signals Notebook: “The single best thing was the way it integrates with Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint, and other programs like that. It’s really embedded with the software in a way that many of the other ELNs were not.”

Broader integration — with the other applications in Camurus’ technology stack — has also impressed Gustafsson since the company first turned on Signals Notebook on January 2, 2020.

Only a few of the scientists in Camurus’ lab had any experience with an ELN, so the company found itself embarking on something entirely new. While they engaged in some pre-deployment training, Gustafsson says the fact that Signals Notebook is a cloud-native SaaS system made a huge difference in flattening the learning curve. That, combined with how intuitive the ELN is, made for quick uptake.

With 40 licenses currently in-house, Gustafsson says that the system is working smoothly; so much so that Camurus hasn’t had to rely on Revvity Signals for any post-implementation assistance. After almost three years working with Signals Notebook, he has some observations about how the solution has changed operations at Camurus.

Structured Data Enables Collaboration

“The major thing that has changed,” he says, “is the ease of finding what you have done in the lab, what others have done. Now, you suddenly have one solution that collects everything like an Excel spreadsheet or a PDF of an article. And you have a full overview of experiments, everything is linked, and it’s really easy to find information you need.”

As a result of what could now be accomplished inside the lab, Gustafsson says a lot of other routines began to change.

“What we did after implementing Signals Notebook was that we changed quite a lot of how we worked — not just in the lab — but all around it. We knew we should be able to discuss, for example, how to do an experiment. Before the ELN, that involved writing up a plan, having it approved, sending it around, and then doing an experiment, writing up a report, and so on.” He says much of that work didn’t add value, and that chasing all the paper around was counterproductive.

“Both the formulation and analytical scientists work more efficiently now because they can start on an experiment in the formulation side, then that links to the analytical side. They do their work with the analytical results and feed them back to the formation side in one or more linked experiments.”

Measuring Positive Gains and Value

Gustafsson has no doubts that the new workflows enabled by Signals Notebook have resulted in positive change. “From a subjective perspective, I see that we’ve changed our way of working and that it’s going very smoothly. We also see that new people who come into the company really, really appreciate this way of working because it’s very intuitive and very easy to add things into an experiment.”

Another subjective observation Gustafsson has made relates to value, and he has advice for those who are still using a paper-based lab system. “You could always think that it’s too big a hurdle to introduce this kind of system. But by introducing Signals Notebook you can get value back very, very quickly. A fairly small effort (regarding procurement, training, and implementation) and this is highly rewarding.

In addition to his advice for other biopharma companies to look past the initial work involved in sourcing and deploying an ELN, Gustafsson has strong views regarding SaaS products like Signals Notebook.

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If asked, I would say, 'Go for this kind of cloud-based SaaS solution.' I think that's where the business is heading because when I looked at the tailor-made systems. I had a feeling they were quite complicated and demanded a lot of effort from us as a customer.

- Nils Ove Gustafsson

Vice President of Late-Stage Development / Camurus

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The Cloud-Native

Signals Electronic Lab Notebook (ELN)

Signals Notebook is the only cloud-native electronic laboratory notebook (ELN) that covers a comprehensive set of scientific use cases, spanning biology, chemistry, formulations, analysis, and more. It enables you to improve productivity and data transparency through enhanced collaboration, improved workflows and lab automation. It drives informed decisions by optimizing the reuse of data and is positioned to be at the epicenter of any scientific digital transformation strategy. Driving digital transformation Because Signals Notebook has a modern user interface like the ones on all your personal apps, the need for training is negligible. You will be up and running in no time. That's part of the reason Signals Notebook is the ELN of choice for many companies, from those with a team of four research scientists to those with large lab staffs spread across the globe.

You will quickly benefit from features that include:

- Intuitive, drag-and-drop user interface
- Massively scalable capability with Google-like search performance
- Social collaboration features including chat and notifications
- APIs and interfaces for integration
- Robust, rule-based access control model, including support for CROs
- Template management with table and form design
- Structured data capture with processing and analytics

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