

Solutions for Supply Chain Network

Case Study

The Customer:

A leading innovator in supply chain solutions for the foodservice industry based out of Chicago specializes in providing cost effective supply chain solution. Its unrivaled \$15 billion Network of more than 4,000 trading partners has made it the long-term solution provider of choice for foodservice restaurant chains, distributors and manufacturers. It has helped trading partners in the foodservice industry more effectively manage their supply chains. Through its integrated technologies, shared savings business model, and the large-scale effects of its Network, it eliminates the barriers across the supply chain and redefines performance excellence for the foodservice industry. Its Network of 4,000+ restaurant chains, distributors, and manufacturers enables customers to reduce costs and increase efficiency, resulting in a 5-12% improvement to their bottom line—benefits no business could achieve on its own. It is committed to continuing to increase the value it delivers to customers by expanding its collaborative shared savings network and enhancing its technology solutions.

The Challenge:

A supply chain network requires the well connected and real time network. Economic success of a supply chain network relies more and more on superior agility and collaboration capabilities. Phone calls, faxes and emails with suppliers, distributors and manufacturers are difficult to manage, waste time and can lead to major disruptions in organizations abilities to deliver product on time. The customer wanted to reduce the turnaround time in Shipping Order, Shipment Status update, Load Tender, Bill of Lading and Invoice creation and update. At the same it has challenge to take onboard its multiple Trading Partners who uses the heterogeneous technology platform.

The Solution:

The customer leveraged the EDI messaging to communicate the real time status of shipment and to exchange invoices. It chose the BizTalk Server 2006 R2's EDI capabilities for EDI implementation. BizTalk provides integration and communication among heterogeneous platform with its suites of multiple adapters and it's capability to create new adapters. BizTalk also has inbuilt capability of Business process automation, Business Activity Monitoring and Business Rule Engine. EDI Implementation Project team at Seneca Global has shown great technical capability in leveraging BizTalk's capability to fulfill existing and new requirement.

The Implementation:

Seneca Global completed one year of engagement with the customer. During this period following Key objectives have been accomplished.

1. Seneca Global has helped to Onboard 40% of their network's trading partners to use EDI.
2. Helped the customer to enhance its Load Tender and Shipment status message capability to support new and existing Trading partners.
3. Built new solutions to support EDI transaction for Purchase Order, Shipping Order and Invoices.
4. Helped the customer to implement ad hoc request to the existing EDI solution to accept new fields in the existing edi message.
5. Helped the customer to implement the EDI AS2 for one of its trading partner. AS2 will enable secure and signed communication over HTTP and HTTPS.
6. Accomplished AS2 implementation for Shipping Order with one of its client, the customer will significantly reduce the cost of EDI VAN (Virtual Area Network). EDI VAN is an EDI service provider that transmits messages to their destination.
7. Also developed solutions to integrate the trading partners who do not support EDI based messaging such as Mercury Gate.

Team:

Team constitutes one senior BizTalk and EDI Analyst at Offshore and one Domain Specialist at onshore.

Process:

Seneca Global adopted the agile methodology as process. We write Messaging Implementation details, Technical Design, Flow Diagrams, Release and Deployment guide for new implementations as well as for enhancements. Seneca Global detail the reverse engineering to resolve an Error received for any of the existing processes. Below is the list of major process documents used for EDI implementation.

1. EDI Implementation Guides for Motor Carrier Load Tender [EDI 204], Motor Carrier Shipment Status [EDI 214], Motor Carrier Invoice [EDI 210], Warehouse Shipping Order [EDI 940] etc. This implementation has become part of standard communication with the carriers at the time of OnBoarding.
2. Technical design along with the architecture, process, flow and sequence diagrams.
3. Release and Deployment document containing the details of changes made to the existing projects, new additions. It also contains rollback mechanisms in case if deployment fails.

Technology:

1. BizTalk Server 2006 R2 for Integration and Business Process Management
2. EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) messaging standard for supply chain industry.
3. .NET 2.0 as programming platform
4. C# as programming language
5. SQL Server 2005
6. FTP, VAN and AS2 for message transfer between partners
7. XML, XSLT for message customization and enrichment
8. Active Directory for BizTalk user management
9. IIS as Web Server used for AS2
10. Visual Source Safe and Team Foundation Server for source control and team collaboration

Details:

Seneca Global receives the partner's messages in the EDI format and perform the transformation of the received message and send it to the SQL Database or to shared FTP location and return acknowledgement to the carriers. We use VAN and AS2 to send and receive the messages. The current implementation provides the EDI communication for variety of messages i.e. Shipping Order, Load Tender, Shipment Status and Invoices. The EDI Integration will provide customer the ability to communicate with their partners irrespective of their technology platforms. With 90% organization using EDI messaging standard throughout the US and World, this implementation has surely given them edge and an opportunity to start business with more and more EDI compliant partners. At the same time the current implementation provide them flexibility to implement other messaging standard such as OAGIS, Mercury Gate etc. within an acceptable timeline.

The Results:

Seneca Global team has helped the customer to leverage on IT enablement capabilities in the area of supply chain management. Seneca Global helped the customer to implement Electronic Data Interchange for Purchase Orders, Shipment Status, Shipping order, Invoices and Load Tenders, started with on boarding of existing trading partners to use EDI for Load Tenders and Shipment Status. Also developed EDI applications for Invoices, Shipping Orders and Purchase Orders. The scope of work with the customer includes the complete SDLC implementation for EDI implementation, On

Boarding of the new trading partners and enhancements to existing EDI implementations.

Seneca Global successfully implemented EDI over VAN and over HTTP using AS2 between the customer and its partners.

The Journey:

Client is extremely pleased with the support to its EDI Implementation. Seneca Global has been phenomenal in understanding requirements and then conceptualizing and delivering technical solutions to them, also helped them with EDI domain and technical capabilities which has made us a responsible partner.