

## Sterling Integrator from Sterling Commerce gives Imperial Sugar a state-of-the-art EDI solution



### Imperial Sugar Company

#### Location

Sugar Land, Texas

#### Industry

Manufacturing

#### Revenues

Revenue for the first nine months of fiscal 2006 was \$706.5 million, while net income for that same time period was \$34.3 million.

#### Business challenge

Implement a new EDI system that was state-of-the-art and easy to use, while also requiring very little time to get trading partners online, coupled with a migration to a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system

#### Solution

Sterling Integrator®

#### Benefits

- Streamlined business processes throughout supply chain
- Increased savings through automation and tighter coordination of business processes and systems
- Integrated seamlessly with legacy systems
- Improved customer service by quickening all processes
- Enabled customers to be more efficient

#### Customer background

The Imperial Sugar Company is one of the nation's largest processors and marketers of refined sugar to grocery customers, food manufacturers and food service distributors. Imperial Sugar has been recognized and trusted in the food industry for more than 150 years, as the company's history dates back to the mid-1800s. With packaging and refining facilities across the Southeastern United States, the company markets products nationally under the Imperial®, Dixie Crystals®, Holly® and Wholesome Sweeteners™ brands.

#### Business challenge

When Imperial Sugar decided to move from a mainframe environment to PeopleSoft's ERP system in February 2003, it also needed a new EDI solution that was state-of-the-art, easy-to-use and quick to implement. In addition, the company wanted a system that would take very little time integrating its trading partners online.

George Muller, vice president and chief information officer for Imperial Sugar, looked to Sterling Commerce and its competitors for solutions.

"Based on the functionality, ease of use, implementation time and price, we chose Sterling Integrator," he said. "Sterling Commerce had a fundamental willingness to help us succeed in this conversion implementation process."

#### Solution

Imperial Sugar has found Sterling Integrator to be easy to implement and use, while requiring very little time to integrate its trading partners online. Simply put, Sterling Integrator consolidates the flow of the company's EDI purchase orders across the enterprise to multiple back-end systems. Then it updates inventory and creates invoices directly from the new data. In addition, it securely exchanges multiple transaction sets with trading partners over the Internet and monitors transfers in near real-time.

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*“Sterling Commerce’s commitment to make us successful, their support and their service complement the strength of their products.”*

George Muller  
Vice President and Chief Information Officer,  
Imperial Sugar Company

Not only did the ease of use and functionality within Sterling Integrator enable Imperial Sugar to convert approximately 150 EDI customers quickly, it also enabled the company to develop new transaction sets to trade information with its third-party outside warehouses.

For example, now customers send Imperial Sugar an electronic purchase order via Sterling Integrator to PeopleSoft®. If the product requested is to be shipped from one of the warehouses, Imperial Sugar sends an EDI transaction to the warehouse to let them know. Once the product has shipped, the warehouse sends Imperial Sugar an EDI transaction, which goes back into PeopleSoft, resulting in the creation of an invoice sent electronically to the customer.

“More than 50% of our orders come in via EDI,” Muller said. “We do about 6,000 to 7,000 orders a month. If we had to process those manually, the number of people involved and potential human errors would be very high. Sterling Integrator gives us an automated process that runs smoothly and complements our migration to a new ERP system.”

That’s because Sterling Integrator complements, not disrupts, critical legacy systems by smoothly merging its powerful business integration capabilities, robust security infrastructure and innovative visual management tools with current workflow. This also opens pathways to emerging business and communication standards.

### **Key benefits**

Sterling Integrator has reduced the cycle time of the entire supply chain process. Now Imperial Sugar takes advantage of new EDI transactions that the company had never used before, like being able to send and receive transactions to the third-party outside warehouses.

Sterling Integrator was a contributing factor when Imperial Sugar consolidated its two customer service departments. Once the company brought its customers and transactions online with Sterling Integrator, the customer service process became more efficient and cost-effective.

When Imperial Sugar receives a request from a new customer that hasn’t used EDI in the past, it is now easier and quicker to bring them online. Historically that process was measured in weeks, but now it’s measured in days.

### **About Sterling Commerce**

Sterling Commerce, an AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) company, helps companies optimize and transform their Business Collaboration Network to accelerate revenues and reduce costs. Sterling Commerce provides more than 18,000 customers worldwide with applications and integration solutions to connect, communicate and collaborate inside and outside their enterprise. More information can be found at [www.sterlingcommerce.com](http://www.sterlingcommerce.com).

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