

Sterling Commerce helps EMJ implement a secure and flexible integration platform



Location

Lynwood, CA

Industry

Distribution

Business challenge

Implement a secure and flexible electronic integration platform that would bring current and prospective suppliers into production mode quickly, while also establishing efficient and effective data communication

Solution

Sterling Integrator®

Benefits

- Increased revenue by expanding the number of suppliers in the production cycle
- Decreased time needed to integrate suppliers onto the electronic platform
- Reduced internal costs once the process was automated
- Improved customer service because data communication is now more efficient and effective

Earle M. Jorgensen Company

Customer background

Earle M. Jorgensen Company (EMJ), headquartered in Lynwood, California, is one of the largest distributors of metal products in North America with 40 service and processing centers. EMJ inventories more than 25,000 different bar, tubing, plate, and various other metal products, specializing in cold finished carbon and alloy bars, mechanical tubing, stainless bars and shapes, aluminum bars, shapes and tubes, and hot-rolled carbon and alloy bars.

Business challenge

When EMJ wanted to implement a secure and flexible integration platform that would bring current and prospective suppliers into the production mode more quickly, they called Sterling Commerce.

Don Krueger, senior systems engineer, said EMJ already used EDI solutions from Sterling Commerce, and his team knew first-hand how easy, reliable and incredibly versatile they were. "We went to Sterling Commerce first because of our success

with EDI," he explained. "That solution was relatively bullet-proof, so they already had a very good track record with us."

The electronic integration platform EMJ currently used involved a great deal of programming to make the connection with suppliers. "It was a tedious process that took a long time from inception to actually getting online with the suppliers," Krueger said. "It took too much custom code to make this happen. We needed a flexible platform to comply with the technologies our current and prospective suppliers have."

Krueger added that EMJ deals directly with mills, so sometimes the electronic sophistication is top-of-the-line, while other times it's not. "We needed something that allowed us to go from an STP environment to an HTTPS environment—with secure connections."

“Sterling Integrator greatly reduces the amount of effort required to support our B2B platform because it allows us to respond quickly to any production cycle change involving our customers.”

Don Krueger
Senior Systems Engineer,
EMJ

Solution

Sterling Commerce recommended EMJ implement Sterling Integrator, an end-to-end integration system that supports multiple protocols, technologies and business applications.

Now EMJ can bring a supplier into its production cycle almost immediately, while also establishing efficient and effective data communication. Not only does Sterling Integrator support a wide variety of formats and protocols, it also works seamlessly with legacy systems.

“We process purchase orders, purchase order acknowledgements, purchase order changes and ship notices with a legacy system that doesn’t have a common interface,” he said. “However, Sterling Integrator takes this data from the legacy system, formats it, and sends it out to the supplier or receives it from the supplier and passes it back to the legacy system. Sterling Integrator works well, even with a multilevel arrangement using different technologies.”

EMJ developers no longer spend countless time customizing code for each new supplier. “This isn’t a full-time job anymore,” Krueger said. “It’s mostly a part-time job now, which frees up our associates to focus on other important issues affecting the bottom line.”

With Sterling Integrator in place, EMJ has greatly expanded the number of suppliers in the production cycle. “Before, it took quite a while to get a single supplier tested and implemented,” Krueger said. “The whole process has been shortened tremendously because of the ease of Sterling Integrator. Before we implemented Sterling Integrator in 2004, we had four suppliers online. Our goal is to have every supplier (nearly 20) online by the end of 2006, and we’re right on track to meet that goal.”

Key benefits

Improved revenue generation: Sterling Integrator has allowed EMJ to rapidly respond to new business (suppliers), thus improving sales.

Reduced internal costs: Since the production cycle is automated now, EMJ can capture data instantly and determine the history of each product, thus saving countless hours of human tracking.

Minimal technical expertise needed: The strong process modeler in Sterling Integrator simplifies automation, integration and exception handling without requiring EMJ associates to write one line of code. These built-in services handle otherwise complicated programming tasks and require a minimal amount of technical expertise. For example, Sterling Integrator makes it possible for EMJ suppliers to do business using the communications protocol of their choice.

Improved customer service: Since EMJ processes purchase orders and other data in a more timely manner, customers appreciate the automated process. In fact, if customers don’t receive a certain product on time, they don’t pay for it.

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.

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