

Handle your business transactions with the premier e-business platform

Gentran:Server for Windows

Executive Summary

Gentran:Server® for Windows is a versatile, high performance e-business solution, designed to assist with the exchange of EDI and other types of data. Gentran consists of several logical components: a data store, process, communication controllers, and user interface clients. Gentran is a point product intended to address one need—the translation of inbound and outbound B2B files and messages

In this Solution Overview, you will learn:

- How to lower costs, improve quality of service, and maintain competitiveness
- How to deploy systems more effectively
- How to improve communications across the board

Benefits of this solution:

- Support versatile business challenges with open architecture, gain maximum control over your e-business environment, and enhance your partner relationships
- Perform easy mapping and accelerate data translation
- Optimize your archiving capabilities and avert problems
- Communicate globally or locally and exchange documents securely
- Extend your business processes to the enterprise and build a framework for the future

The pressure to succeed is mounting

Decision makers like you are facing increasing demands to lower costs, improve quality of service, and maintain competitive excellence. As your company evolves, there is a constant need to keep up with technology, standards, and processes.

Of course, there are also some practical issues to consider: How important is it to be technologically savvy but unable to deploy systems effectively? What is the benefit of being the standards bearer if you cannot communicate with suppliers? What good is it to have processes in place if they prevent you from conducting business effectively?

Sterling Commerce offers a powerful and flexible e-business solution that has been a benchmark for business-to-business commerce for over 30 years. In addition, we continue to help enterprises address their business needs and the needs of their partners.

Sterling Commerce delivers solutions that meet your unique business challenges.

We provide a mix of software, service and support that enables your company to rapidly integrate and deploy business processes—within your organization and with your external business partners—so you can lower costs, provide excellent customer service, sharpen efficiencies, and strengthen your competitive advantage.

Support versatile business challenges with open architecture

Gentran:Server for Windows is a versatile, high-performance e-business solution for the Windows client/server environment. With Gentran:Server for Windows, you can build upon your investment over time, adding more capabilities as your e-business requirements evolve.

Gentran:Server comprises open standards. This architecture permits your IT personnel to install and configure components using common features and functions. Your business will appreciate this value differently because of the Gentran:Server capability to extend processes across the enterprise. It has

a number of components that leverage Microsoft standard technologies fully including support for a completely distributed processing environment.

By leveraging Microsoft's development technologies, we have created business objects that work together to solve your business pains. The major components are the Process Control, Mapping Utility, Translator, Trading Partner Setup and Maintenance, Archive, Audit Logging and Notification, Document Browsers, Communication Service, Executive Service, and Mailbox Service. Although separate components, the design and architecture provide users accessibility with using a common desktop interface, while the administrative functions enable system administrators to, for example, provide control and security levels for all user accounts.

A critical piece to the Gentran® success, the database layer provides the ability not only to store, but also to manage data coming across the network. Sterling Commerce currently supports two leading database server products for Windows environments, the Microsoft SQL server and the Oracle RDBMS.

Gain maximum control over your e-business environment

Process Control

It is critical that all business documents be delivered; however, not all documents need to be delivered simultaneously. You will need to decide how you, your partners, and your company support e-business activities given current infrastructure and business considerations. For example, your volume of purchase orders may be so high that it creates problems for your network during normal business hours. You need to have a way to control when, where, and how documents are processed. With Gentran:Server, you set up the system to match your unique infrastructure and business requirements.

Specifically, the Process Control Service directs data to areas inside or outside your enterprise, and provides scheduled or event-driven messaging. This control function supports your unique processing needs, based on commerce partner or message type, making it easy for you to manage processes and data flows.

Perform easy mapping and accelerate data translation

Mapping Utility and Translator

Implementing business processes is an evolutionary procedure. At its foundation are the core practices that make a business operate and that enable that business to collaborate with others. Part of the work required to accomplish process integration is creating maps that enable companies to pass business data back and forth in whatever format suits their needs. Gentran:Server not only allows users to trade documents seamlessly but it does so automatically when the process has been perfected.

The Gentran mapping utility provides broad standards and supports an intuitive GUI for data mapping. Gentran displays your application or standard data schemas side-by-side on your screen. It allows customers to simply point-and-click establishing any-to-any mapping relationships—a function that used to take extensive time and training.

Enhance your partner relationships

Trading Partner Setup and Maintenance

Sterling Commerce manages and supports one of the largest systems of interconnected buyers, suppliers, banks and carriers in the world. We are in the business of building and supporting relationships with our customers. This dedication to supporting customers is no different with our software products. With Gentran:Server for Windows, we offer flexibility in establishing new trading relationships. Enhancing your

partnership relations enables companies to trade complex documents, based upon XML, that incorporate not only graphics or non-EDI formats, but also business rules that enable further integration across the enterprise.

Optimize your archiving capabilities and avert problems with immediate action

Archive, Document Browsers and Audit Logging and Notification

Your business requires you to handle high transaction volumes, and to address partner questions and problems quickly. Gentran:Server offers outstanding auditing, tracking, and archiving capabilities.

In managing your e-business systems, it is important to have a clear view of where documents are transmitted, received, and stored. Gentran:Server offers document browsers that provide a graphical user interface to the document storage system. The browsers show the user documents (or transactions) that are inbound, outbound, in error, and stored in the system's database and file system. They also offer the functionality to reprocess, delete, and correct previous transactions.

When problems arise, it is important to have tools that enable a view of the current state of the database.

Gentran:Server has excellent auditing and tracking capabilities that assist in resolving inquiries about the system and about message processing.

Moreover, the selective archiving feature can store your critical data based on specific rules and timers. Because these features make Gentran:Server highly accountable, you'll maximize both your service levels and your productivity.

To balance this, Gentran:Server offers outstanding tracking capabilities. The document browsers offer viewing and tracking capabilities that enable users to track a document's history and provide exception management reports.

**Communicate globally or locally
Communications Service**

Sterling Commerce has spent years planning, developing, building, and supporting multiple communications options. This flexible offering enables customers to exchange data with business partners globally. Using standard Microsoft technologies, the Communications Service controls data flow to and from the system, allowing for communication over a variety of protocols.

For customers, the Communications Service provides the ability to manage resource-intensive operations across distributed platforms. It operates in the background until it receives your communications task. By leveraging Gentran's distributed-processing architecture, the Communications Service may be placed on multiple machines connected to the primary controller. This arrangement allows resource-intensive communications to be distributed across multiple machines.

The Communications Service incorporates a robust scripting language. This enables customers to connect to major value-added networks (VANs) and key business partners in vertical markets such as the automotive and retail industries. The scripting language is intuitive and enables users to create custom communication scripts.

Exchange documents securely and reliably via store-and-forward mailboxing

Executive and Mailbox Service

The Executive Service is a Windows service, provided by Gentran:Server. Its purpose is to monitor the activity of the entire Gentran:Server system. It is written to take advantage of low level remote procedure call mechanisms, allowing clients to 'spawn' processes, such as start programs. This allows the client to communicate with the server, as well as provides one central controlling mechanism within Gentran:Server.

The central gateway for all information that flows through the Gentran:Server system is its Mailbox Service. While the Process Control Service and Data Translation function handle the routing and conversion of data, the unique combination of Executive and Mailbox Service connects these system elements to the Communications Service, as well as to your external mail systems, external file-processing systems, and the Internet.

Extend your business processes to the enterprise

Gentran:Server allows you to create and test document maps, establish

communications with a host system, and transmit data back and forth with customers. To further extend your business integration, Gentran:Server offers an application extension that integrates seamlessly with SAP.

Build a framework for the future

Sterling Commerce offers a set of complementary products that support your enterprise applications. They provide you with the ability to move documents to your enterprise business applications. Once documents are received, they most likely need to be translated into other formats that support accounting, sales, engineering, and resource planning activities. Gentran:Server for Windows supports all major industry standards and continually works to refine or add additional support as part of its maintenance program.

Gentran:Server for Windows includes an Advanced Data Distribution option. This option enables host-mode communications for your commerce community. In addition, it provides a framework for future communications and connectivity enhancements.

About Sterling Commerce

Sterling Commerce, an AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) company, helps companies optimize and transform their Business Collaboration Network quickly, easily and securely so they can accelerate revenues, reduce costs and protect their enterprise. Sterling Commerce provides more than 30,000 customers worldwide with applications and integration solutions to connect, communicate and collaborate with their customers, partners and suppliers. Learn more at www.sterlingcommerce.com.