

Sterling Commerce enables e-business upgrade, traditional EDI platform



Location

Richmond, Virginia

Industry

Gas and electric energy services

Business challenge

Consolidate EDI processes onto one platform and extend advanced technology to vendors and retail clients as well as get an AS2 adapter operating with its value-added network

Solution

- Sterling Integrator®
- JDBC (Java Database Connector) adapter
- Web components

Benefits

- Flexibility
- Internet power
- Consolidation savings
- Open standards

Dominion Electric Supply Company

Customer background

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers of energy, with a diversified and integrated energy portfolio consisting of 24,000 megawatts of generation, 6.1 trillion cubic feet equivalent of proved natural gas reserves, 7,900 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline and more than 960 billion cubic feet of storage capacity. Dominion also serves five million retail energy customers in nine states. In addition, Dominion owns a managing equity interest in Dominion Fiber Ventures LLC, owner of Dominion Telecom. For more information about Dominion, visit the company's Web site at www.dom.com.

Business challenge

Dominion looked to support its strategic e-procurement sourcing and logistics plans with updated Internet and next-generation communications protocols. The company sought a tool enabling it to

upgrade electronic business processes while retaining and leveraging its traditional EDI platform.

Dominion participates in marketing energy to residential consumers of gas and electricity throughout the U.S. northeast and mid-Atlantic states. Speed-to-market, and keeping efficiency high and costs low represent critical competitive advantages.

Dominion plans to integrate e-commerce tools and processes into sourcing and commodity procedures, resulting in a more cost-effective, efficient business operating on a streamlined supply chain.

One of Dominion's most important trading communities consists of internal partners that market energy to retail companies that sign up residential customers to buy gas and electric service. "We use EDI documents to interface with local utilities'

"We're experiencing rising demand from trading partners for more advanced technologies in EDI and Internet services, so we must keep pace while maintaining dependable service to our more traditional EDI users,"

Paul J. Rodi
IT manager,
Dominion.

back-end applications. One of the first things we needed to do was eliminate the FTP file transfers and go directly to those databases," Rodi said.

From there, Dominion needed to move into consolidation of EDI processes onto one platform and extend advanced technology to vendors and retail clients, as well as get an AS2 adapter operating with its value-added network.

Solution

A Sterling Commerce customer and Gentran® user since the mid-1990s, Dominion operated on two EDI systems. "We were evaluating vendors from both systems," Rodi said.

Within a month of starting the project, Dominion was able to tie its existing Gentran system and network data in with Sterling Integrator, according to Rodi.

The result gave Dominion a rapidly constructed framework for integrating a variety of applications, including a workflow engine, adapters for many different back-end systems, and the ability to perform a wide variety of mappings for XML to XML, EDI to XML, EDI to relational databases or any permutation that seamlessly links one system to another.

"We also used the JDBC (Java Database Connector) adapter to be able to input data directly into client/partner databases instead of them having to do file transfers," Rodi said.

Dominion is using Sterling Integrator as a springboard from traditional EDI into advanced integration, according to Rodi. "This application gets us more into Internet transfers and new technology and services integration than we would be able to do with other products," Rodi said. He continued, "But we have a lot of trading partners out there that want to continue with traditional EDI, and with this we can still offer such a service."

Key benefits

- **Flexibility** – gain integration with existing applications as well as the capability to offer new technology along with the ability to use the Internet for EDI
- **Internet Power** – Sterling Integrator enables further migration toward Web-based services
- **Consolidation and Savings** – consolidating applications and using AS2 and Internet services delivers bottom-line savings
- **Open Standards** – Sterling Integrator is based on industry standards such as J2EE, so the application can run on top of existing J2EE services

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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