

Sterling Commerce helps integrate order retrieval and processing



Location

Oakdale, Minnesota

Industry

Removable data storage media

Business challenge

More fully automate and integrate order retrieval and processing

Solution

Sterling Integrator®

Benefits

- Room to grow
- Better visibility to end users
- Maximum automation
- Better support, lower cost

Imation Corporation

Customer background

Imation Corporation, a world leader in removable data storage media, set its sights on migrating to next-generation B2B data communication and automation by leveraging its existing business process platform. The company's IT team was determined to find a quick, efficient, cost-effective way to automate global product order retrieval and create enhanced business process automation to capture and integrate data into its enterprise resource system.

Business challenge

In a rapidly growing and diversifying business-to-business online environment, Imation needed to more fully automate and integrate its order retrieval and processing, particularly in light of an increasing volume of Internet sales.

Already successfully grounded in EDI, Imation required improved business

process automation to cut down on human intervention and custom code, capture orders more cleanly and securely, handle translation and error scenarios, and present information that was more visible and usable to Imation customer sales and service associates. Finally, finished data must integrate seamlessly into its Oracle 11-I ERP system.

"We needed online order automation using Internet protocols to help reduce IT costs and increase customer service levels by eliminating batch processing and making one of our most critical business processes a real-time event," said Flo Kinzel, chief technical officer at Imation. "We also wanted to reduce maintenance costs by moving our Japanese language transformation operation away from a separate NT server over to the UNIX platform alongside our other processes."

“As a longtime Sterling Commerce customer, we’re delighted that this solution to our integration problem was handled so quickly and smoothly within the framework of our existing Sterling Integrator business platform.”

Flo Kinzel
Chief Technical Officer,
Imation Corporation

Solution

Significantly invested in Sterling Commerce solutions, Imation’s IT team was eager to give Sterling Integrator a try as soon as they heard about it. “The main reason for going with Sterling Integrator was to leverage technology we already have. We also use the Sterling Commerce VAN (Sterling Information BrokerSM) and Connect:Direct[®]—all products we want to be able to leverage,” Kinzel said.

The decision was made, and within three weeks, Sterling Integrator was installed, tested, and approved in Imation’s production environment.

The arrival of Sterling Integrator immediately solved some top-priority issues, with the potential to solve more later on, Kinzel observed. “Before Sterling Integrator, we were getting timed e-mails on orders, and we’d have to go to a URL, download a spreadsheet file and manually enter the customer data into Oracle,” Kinzel said. “Now we just get one XML file, and if there are multiple orders, Sterling Integrator parses them into separate files and puts everything into a single mailbox for customer service to handle.”

To process inbound EDIFACT orders from Japan, Imation had been using an NT-based translator. The Japanese language uses double-byte characters and the old translator couldn’t handle such character sets. The translation system offered by Sterling Integrator enables Imation to streamline its processes by not having to move files between platforms as well as eliminate the NT box, the translator software and all the maintenance costs that go with them, according to Kinzel.

Imation is anticipating that Sterling Integrator will enable migration toward a secure AS2 Internet communication standard. “We’ll be able to move data to our VANs, or to other customers or vendors in a secure method over the Internet,” Kinzel said. “Our final goal is to get rid of a lot of our custom coding.”

Benefits

- **Room to grow** – Build other interfaces and aspects
- **Better visibility to end-users** – Cleaner, error-free data
- **Maximum automation** – Fully automated XML process
- **Better support, lower costs** – Eliminates script maintenance, alleviates a multitude of EDI support issues

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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