

Onboarding time for new trading partners decreases by 75%



Location

Winston-Salem, NC

Industry

Retail/Distribution

Business Challenge

To implement an integration platform that on-boards new trading partners quickly and provides visibility and reporting capabilities

Solution

Gentran Integration Suite™

Benefits

- Improved onboarding time
- Increased visibility
- Enhanced reporting capabilities
- Improved internal customer satisfaction

Blue Rhino

Customer background

Blue Rhino, a division of Ferrellgas, is the leading brand of propane tank exchange at more than 43,000 retail locations nationwide and in Puerto Rico. The company is also a leading designer and marketer of barbecue grills, outdoor heaters, mosquito traps, and other outdoor appliances. In addition, Blue Rhino serves the paintball, portable compressed regulator, and other markets through Rhino Power, a retail-based CO2 tank exchange program.

Business challenge

In the past, Blue Rhino used proprietary integration software that required outsourced development, and the company found it difficult, if not impossible, to find external help when they needed it. This put huge restrictions on their ability to onboard new trading partners, create new maps, and add new business processes.

The EDI department supports two divisions, and each one needs different maps, processes, reports, and error handling. This requires two sets of EDI documents and business processes. There was a lack of visibility with the previous software that made it very hard to locate anything within the system and made search time tedious.

Blue Rhino began looking for a solution that would provide greater visibility and tracking of all documents, the ability to create maps and business processes internally, faster onboarding of new trading partners, and better reporting and automated processes for error document communication. This would alleviate the constant "hands on everything" approach for EDI personnel.

“Now that Gentran Integration Suite is in place, we have improved communications in both time and efficiency and are better able to leverage our people and processes. We are no longer limited by the previous software. Instead, we are able to respond faster with better business solutions to both the divisions we support and to trading partners.”

Jennifer Mehaffey,
EDI Manager,
Blue Rhino

Solution

When Blue Rhino was considering different integration platform options, they attended the Sterling Commerce Customer Connection. Jennifer Mehaffey, EDI Manager for Blue Rhino, said networking with other users at the conference gave them the opportunity to discuss their company's challenges firsthand. “We explained our different problems to other users, and they personally confirmed how Gentran Integration Suite would solve each problem,” she explained.

Gentran Integration Suite solved every one of Blue Rhino's problems giving complete visibility into all processes, which means the company knows right away if there's a problem and can address it proactively. Personnel can create maps and business processes internally—without having to rely on outsourced developers—which saves a great deal of time and money. In fact, Jennifer said the greatest improvement for Blue Rhino has been return on investment. “We decreased outsourced dollars by 52% within the first six months of implementation. That savings resulted in a 44% return on investment within the same time frame.”

Now that Blue Rhino is not relying on outsourced developers they are able to onboard new trading partners 75% faster than before. What used to take four to twelve weeks now takes one to two

weeks. Gentran Integration Suite also provides reporting and automated processes for error document communication increasing confidence among the departments they support.

Since the EDI process is now automated, personnel don't spend as much time working with the software. Tamria Zertuche, Senior Director of IT for Blue Rhino, said they can focus on other initiatives, like growing the trading partner base and the document base. “Even if we have to create three or four customized maps a week, we can easily accommodate our customers' needs.”

Key benefits

Now Blue Rhino easily locates problems and addresses them immediately because they have this visibility and the reporting tools they need.

Since personnel can create maps and business processes internally, the time it takes to onboard new customers, suppliers, and other trading partners has decreased by 75%.

Enhanced reporting and automated processes for error document communication has improved customer service levels among the internal divisions the EDI department supports. Automated processes have also freed up personnel to concentrate on other initiatives, like growing the trading partner base.

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.

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