



Sterling Commerce helps you meet every demand for EDI

Sterling Integrator for EDI

Executive Summary

To thrive in the global economy, businesses must continue to boost operational efficiencies through process automation, better supply chain integration and improved visibility. Sterling Integrator® for EDI is the unified, single platform that enables businesses to meet all EDI requirements, integrate business processes, automate and streamline trading partner onboarding and management, and take full advantage of IT assets.

In this Solution Overview, you will learn:

- How to operate more efficiently with automation
- How to integrate your entire supply chain
- How to gain real-time enterprise intelligence

Benefits of this solution:

- Attain higher operational productivity
- Shorten order-to-cash and procure-to-pay cycles
- Elevate customer service levels
- Increase ease of doing business with you
- Capture global opportunities
- Comply with mandates

EDI continues to prove its worth

EDI technology is the most mature and entrenched form of automated B2B interaction. And, it's used in most sectors. Purchase orders, invoices and ASNs are passed back and forth with such regularity that EDI has not only achieved critical mass, it's the primary way companies exchange information. In fact, over 80% of all B2B companies use EDI for the automated exchange of documents and 12-15 million EDI transactions are processed every day.

Mandates are driving use of EDI

Customers insist on more services for billing and information management and suppliers want better communication capabilities. EDI is so entrenched that it's often a condition of doing business. Vendors who will not, or cannot, meet customer mandates for EDI can be eliminated from the game. The government is also in the act, requiring electronic processes in many regulated industries.

Globalization extends EDI usage

Now that businesses have discovered new suppliers around the world, the next challenge is to communicate with them effectively. While fax machines, e-mail, and phones continue to be used in some areas, they all have severe limitations. Time zone differentials, language barriers and technology gaps between regions and countries prevent smooth communication. The most realistic and effective way to bridge those gaps is to boost EDI compliance levels across the whole value chain. This has driven development of a variety of industry and regional trading data standards.

EDI technology with built-in versatile translation capability (EDI, XML, flat file, and proprietary application data) is a necessary technology driver for ultimate supply chain integration. Today, the best performing companies monitor more events for international trading relationships than for domestic supply chains. This extensive monitoring is supported by more electronic transaction data, which in turn promotes the usage of EDI technology.

Spokes becoming hubs spreads

EDI usage

The effectiveness of EDI has not escaped the notice of tier two and tier three companies. Many have set out to achieve the same benefits that their larger trading partners have realized. Now they are establishing their own hubs for engaging and enabling their downstream SMB trading partners to exchange EDI transactions.

Additional factors driving EDI

Growing list of EDI transactions expands usage. As the value chain grows, the list of EDI transaction sets—and usage—grows with it.

Internet-based solutions coexist with

EDI. At the same time that Internet-based standards are taking hold, EDI transport costs, both across the VAN and the Internet, are falling. This accelerates ever higher levels of EDI adoption. Real-time enterprise increases EDI demand.

Real-time enterprises require better

visibility. And, visibility demands more granular information, such as status and progress information. It can only happen through electronic transactions.

The opportunity for greater profitability—due to better collaboration—is driving EDI technology and the expansion of EDI trading networks. So how do you meet the new demands, the government mandates and the opportunities to grow your trading communities? Look to Sterling Commerce, the company that helped pioneer EDI.

The Sterling Commerce EDI solution

Sterling Integrator for EDI provides a truly unified, single platform to businesses that are looking for tangible competitive advantages. Our rich portfolio of components is a thorough enabler to help businesses meet all EDI requirements, readily integrate business processes, automate and streamline trading partner onboarding and

management, and take full advantage of their existing IT assets and new IT investments.

Operate more efficiently with automation

If your objective is to boost productivity, you will very likely find ways to automate. Manual transactions such as fax, e-mail and phones are labor intensive and prone to errors at every turn. It's also a highly inefficient way to reach out to new trading partners. And siloed enterprise applications cause data reentry at multiple points and increase the likelihood of additional errors. Sterling Commerce answers every challenge. Using EDI translation with visual mapping tools, job schedulers for off-hour automated processing, automated trading partner onboarding, and integration with leading ERP systems, Sterling Commerce can help you automate every key process.

Integrate your entire supply chain

When you communicate more effectively and fully integrate with your value chain, good things happen to your business. But first you've got to get over the obstacles. Incompatible business languages. Limited capability for quickly onboarding trading partners. Primitive methods that prevent multi-channel communications. And IT infrastructure mismatches. Sterling Commerce clears every hurdle. Any-to-any data mapping and translation answers the diversity issue. You can count on a rapid trading partner onboarding process, with multi-protocol, multi-partner communications sessions to deliver easy and robust connectivity. Are you dealing with small trading partners? If so, Sterling Commerce can help you empower them with human-readable form templates and Web extensions to jumpstart their process.

Gain real-time enterprise intelligence

To work smarter, you've got to know what's happening throughout your enterprise now. Which means you must widen visibility, deepen it, and make it happen in real time. You've got to get beyond document processing that's treated in a linear fashion, capture the flow of business transactions, and use sharper reporting mechanisms for system diagnostics and trouble shooting. Look to Sterling Commerce to support you with the real-time intelligence you need. Consider what it would mean to have prioritized, scheduled and specialized processing based on trading partner relationship, time sensitivity and business significance. End-to-end EDI/XML document flow and transaction life-cycle tracking, auditing and archiving. Automatic event notification for timely exception handling. And detailed online reports for error reporting and status reporting. Now time—real-time—is on your side.

Sterling Integrator for EDI is mobile enabled

Sterling Integrator for EDI capabilities have been extended to mobile digital devices. Sterling Integrator Mobile provides monitoring and management of Sterling Integrator for EDI processes and status from a mobile digital device, including system status, database growth, and average business process wait time. This mobile application improves operational responsiveness by providing users with the ability to access and respond to Sterling Integrator for EDI process information and status anywhere.

Bringing it all together

Sterling Commerce brings all the key components together—from service to support to training—like no one else in the business:

- Multi-platform support
- Any-to-any translation (EDI, XML, Apps)
- Intuitive visual mapping
- Scalable trading partner onboarding
- Configurable communications mechanisms
- Leading ERP system integration
- Flexible process control options
- End-to-end tracking, auditing and archiving

What the business benefits mean to you

Sterling Commerce EDI solutions will improve your business performance by helping you:

Achieve higher operation productivity

By automating the exchange of EDI transactions—and eliminating paper processing and associated errors—you will increase accuracy and boost productivity. Now you can mitigate the manual data entry required to get transaction-level data into your analytical programs. What's more, you streamline operations—especially in trading partner management and onboarding.

Shorten order-to-cash cycle

Sterling Integrator enables you to use EDI to deploy scalable, closed-loop electronic order-to-cash methods for your business. It's your opportunity to improve both cash flow and working capital as you lower management costs.

Shorten procure-to-pay cycle

Sterling Integrator will help you slash transaction, labor and invoice processing costs, and shorten procure-to-pay processing cycle time. Now you can plug the "savings leakage," avoid penalties, and avoid duplicate payments or overpayments. Plus, automation and integration of invoice receipts

and payments will help you make the timeliest use of cash.

Streamline upstream integration in key areas

Sterling Integrator uses the Upstream Integration Model (UIM) to standardize business processes and data interchanges in electronic communications. Count on Sterling Commerce EDI solutions to streamline your electronic communication needs in procurement, material forecasting, inventory management, dispatches and receipt of materials, and invoicing.

Elevate customer service levels

Now you can improve customer satisfaction by providing customers what they need, when they need it. Sterling Integrator will not only improve inventory management, but you can enhance service through better availability, accurate demand information, forecasts, replenishment, production scheduling and collaboration.

Sharpen supply chain visibility

By helping you see what's actually happening in your supply chain, Sterling Integrator will boost revenue and improve profitability. Now you can take advantage of granular information and status of both spending and demand. As a result, you can filter out maverick spending, and all partners can improve performance with faster response time.

Increase ease of doing business with you

Sterling Integrator gives you every competitive advantage, so that you become known as the company with which it is easy to do business. Sellers will continue to accommodate a variety of buyer requirements, including EDI, fax, phone, XML forms or Web sites. Now you can accommodate every demand.

Expand your business with confidence

Sterling Commerce was a pioneer in EDI technology, and throughout the years we have continued to remain at the forefront of its evolution. Right now thousands of companies rely on our network services, EDI software and professional services. Every year we handle billions of customer transactions, representing trillions of dollars in trade. And most importantly to you, we continue to grow these numbers by maintaining excellent customer satisfaction ratings.

No company knows more about what it takes to succeed with EDI—and no one will take your requirements more seriously. If EDI is part of your strategy, count on Sterling Commerce to support you with solutions that are easy to implement, reliable and highly versatile.

Capture global opportunities

Competition in the global marketplace requires global sourcing and global supplier bases. But global operations are

complicated by differences in time zones, languages and technology. For both large players and small manufacturers, non-electronic means of business communications have proven inadequate to address these challenges. The best way to bridge the communications gap is to enforce better EDI compliance across your entire value chain. Sterling Integrator for EDI is a single package that enables compliance with a wide variety of international electronic communications standards, ranging from EDI to XML to proprietary data formats.

Comply with mandates

Sterling Integrator for EDI helps you meet customer, industry and government mandates on time. As a unified solution for EDI, it saves you wasted integration effort. It supports the multiple document definitions and standards used by different industries. And, it enables you to meet governmental regulations that require electronic transactions in both EDI and XML standards.

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.

Sterling Commerce
An AT&T Company

For all Sterling Commerce offices worldwide, visit www.sterlingcommerce.com

©2007 – 2010, Sterling Commerce, Inc.
All rights reserved. Sterling Commerce and the Sterling Commerce logo are trademarks of Sterling Commerce, Inc. or its affiliated companies. All products referenced are the service marks, trademarks, or registered marks of their respective owners. Printed in U.S.A.
SC0408 07/10