

## Sterling Commerce helps move proprietary data through various gateways



# GUILFORD

#### Location

Greensboro, North Carolina

#### Industry

Textile design and production

#### Business challenge

Due to a rapidly growing and diverse trading community the company needed a solution that could provide the flexibility to handle all types of data, in all types of formats, including the movement of proprietary data through various gateways

#### Solution

- Sterling Information Broker®
- E-community development services

#### Benefits

- Return on investment
- Support for proprietary data
- Intelligent interface

## Guilford Mills

#### Situation

A leading designer and producer of value-added fabric for the automotive, apparel, and technical textile industry, Guilford Mills is connected to more than 100 trading partners to help manufacture and send its products to market. As transactions increased, the company sought ways to bring more economy, efficiency, and business partner participation to its electronic commerce systems.

#### Business challenge

Guilford Mills is one of the nation's leading automotive body cloth and headliner suppliers and also provides specialized fabrics for clothing, medical, and home textile products. The company had a rapidly growing and diverse trading community and needed a solution provider that could provide the flexibility to handle all types of data in all types

of formats including the movement of proprietary data through various gateways. Guilford Mills saw the ability to move proprietary data as a way of bringing more non-compliant suppliers and customers into the e-commerce fold.

"One of the main requirements for any service provider that we're going to use is versatility," said Mark Henderson, EC/EDI project manager, Guilford Mills. Henderson said, "Being able to act as a gateway to a private Internet site and support for movement of proprietary data are important because not everything we do is EDI formatted."

EDI-challenged suppliers were underutilizing the system, prompting Guilford Mills to try to find a way to embrace all partners into its electronic commerce community.

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*"Our existing relationship with Sterling Commerce and its Gentran solutions made the choice of Sterling Information Broker a practical one because integrating with our existing EC infrastructure was more seamless."*

Mark Henderson  
EC/EDI Project Manager,  
Guilford Mills

## **Solution**

Once Guilford Mills identified its needs, Henderson set about finding a solution from a provider he viewed as having "staying power" and a reputation for supporting multiple platforms.

"We were definitely looking for a provider with a reputation for support, product enhancement, and development, and on those issues Sterling Commerce was on my short list," Henderson said. As a Gentran:Server® customer, Guilford Mills was familiar with the reputation of Sterling Commerce and viewed implementing the network solution, Sterling Information Broker, as a more seamless way to integrate into its electronic commerce foundation.

After the decision was made to go with Sterling Commerce, Guilford Mills was assigned a project manager to review the situation, according to Henderson. "The Sterling Commerce project manager and I assessed our existing platform, what we were doing, where we wanted to go, and defined the timeline for how we were going to get there," Henderson said.

Sterling Information Broker implementation required about three weeks to complete, including bringing

all 100-plus trading partners on board. "Everything was implemented with stellar results and best of all it was transparent to our trading partners," Henderson said. A phased approach was used to bring all the partners on board, giving the company time to evaluate how things went, and to make any necessary adjustments for the next phase.

Sterling Commerce E-Community Development Services, which builds, manages, and services e-communities, also offered a big advantage in the implementation process, according to Henderson. The Sterling Commerce ECD team contacted all trading partners and performed conversion testing with them, if necessary. "Having Sterling Commerce take care of that enabled me to allocate my time to the development work that had to be done for the project, as well as to my other day-to-day responsibilities. "The ECD team even took care of getting interconnections established to a private Internet site for some important automotive customers, according to Henderson. "A lot of that legwork would have had to have been done by me if the Sterling Commerce ECD group had not been involved at the level they were."

## **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 to accelerate revenues and reduce costs. More than 30,000 customers worldwide use Sterling Commerce applications and integration solutions to connect, communicate and collaborate with their customers, partners and suppliers so they can drive growth, adapt to change, enhance performance and protect the enterprise. Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, Sterling Commerce has offices in 24 countries. Learn more at [www.sterlingcommerce.com](http://www.sterlingcommerce.com).

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