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Electronic Commerce Group

Project White Paper

Project Name: EDI Mapping and Customer On-Boarding Team Staffing

Client Profile:

Client is a national food service supplier providing food and related products and services to 250,000+ customers, including restaurants, hospitals, hotels, schools and governmental operations. The client employs more than 25,000+ associates and operates more than 90 distribution centers.

- **Industry:** Food Service Distribution
- **Location:** Midwestern US, serving North America
- **Products:** Food and food related products
- **Technical Environment:**
 - **Hardware(and OS):** Unix
 - **Software(and version):** GIS 4.3
 - **Communications software:** GIS (AS2), VAN
 - **ERP:** Proprietary
 - **Relevant to the project...**
 - **Number of Trading Partners:** 70+
 - **Maps:** Varying based on client customers meeting client specifications or client customers requiring their specifications be met
 - **Other Software:** TIBCO, PRIME, Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW), Product Information Management (PIM)

Business Case (strategic, business area related):

- Project goal was to increase the number of customer business documents processed by EDI to result in reduced processing costs, reduced data errors, and increased efficiency
- With increased electronic integration, faster inbound PO's (etc.) were to speed the order to cash cycle
- There was difficulty in making progress on implementations as new customer integration opportunities were being presented to the company faster than current staff implementation levels would allow

Situation (technical, IT area related):

- Client was understaffed in terms of GIS mappers / business process developers
- Client was understaffed in terms of EDI data integration and implementation coordinators
- Client wanted implementation coordinators capable of working effectively with customers that had a mature EDI knowledge base and infrastructure, as well as those with the demonstrated ability to assist customers with integrations where



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customer knowledge of EDI, required infrastructure, and implementation techniques was not strong

- There was an extremely high degree of implementation complexity in the client environment due to different systems, a variety of divisions (acquired through acquisition), and a variety of customer / specification types

Solution / Deliverables:

- Created two EDI integration teams to increase integration capacity and reduce backlogs
- Each EDI integration team consisted of one person to perform EDI mapping, testing, and GIS BP development
- Each EDI integration team consisted of three people who worked directly with client customers to perform specification review, data integration and gap analysis, and coordination of testing/problem resolution/go-live
- Based on large scale EDI implementation and integration efforts for other clients, use best practice and lessons learned from other projects to consult with client and arrive at the most effective strategy for aggressive on-boarding given the complexities of the client environment

Integration team implementations were divided into categories where on one end of the spectrum they required lesser development given the requirements of the customer, and the other end where there was a large amount of development required given customer requirements. Those integrations with the least amount of development (eCommerce system and business systems) were completed first, moving on to those that required the most amount of development. In the course of determining customer requirements, many procedure flows and documentation were developed to allow implementations to funnel to the right developer/analyst/department at a faster pace.

Outcome:

- 70 integrations were completed in 2.5 months with the new team and structure (with more integrations to come), as opposed to 92 integrations for all of 2008
- Much needed documentation has been completed and circulated throughout client departments to aid in awareness of various eCommerce processes
- Projects are being handled more timely and efficiently as a result of these implementation teams