

Switching EDI Systems Helped Cottage Gardens Boost Efficiency and Reduce Costs

Objective

- Replace old EDI system with an EDI solution that will integrate with existing Sage MAS 200 ERP software, lower costs and boost efficiency.

Solution

- Implement simple and affordable end-to-end EDI solution from TrueCommerce.

Results/Benefits

- Implementation, from inception through partner testing, was completed in approximately two weeks.
- Time required to process orders reduced from days to minutes.
- Realized a 50% reduction in monthly networking costs.
- Upgrading to user-friendly, flexible and customizable translation software further increased efficiency, saved money and added to overall customer satisfaction.

“TrueCommerce was already online with our trading partners, and they have good working relationships with them, so it was fairly simple to make everything work together quickly and smoothly.”

Sheryl Tischer,
Sales Manager
Cottage Gardens, Inc.

BACKGROUND

Inefficient and costly system necessitated a fresh approach to ordering and data management.

Cottage Gardens, Inc. is a wholesale nursery with more than 1500 poly-houses stretched across 750 acres in Ohio and Michigan. They provide more than 200 varieties of retail-ready plants to garden centers and large retail and home and garden improvement customers. These plants are custom-tagged, and can be unloaded, un-sleeved, and sold directly to the end-customer, resulting in quick turnover and profits for the retailer. Several years ago, a review of their business practices identified processes that were more inefficient and costly than necessary, including their existing Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system.

ADDRESSING THE ISSUES

Replace existing EDI system with TrueCommerce EDI solution meant less time-intensive data entry and better utilization of employee resources.

Each season, Cottage Gardens receives numerous pre-orders from some of their larger customers. Typically, they consist of a 10 - 12 page spreadsheet that requires manual entry into both their Sage MAS 200 system and their existing EDI system. “Our systems didn’t talk to each other,” said Cottage Gardens’ Sales Manager, Sheryl Tischer. “This meant manually entering the SKU number, UPC code and price for each item ordered into both systems, one at a time. We had situations where nearly 1,000 data points had to be manually entered for one order, which typically took three days to complete with two people working full-time.”

Centerprise Information Advisors, Cottage Gardens’ authorized Sage MAS 200 reseller, suggested they switch to TrueCommerce’s EDI solution, which offered better integration with their MAS 200 system, eliminating the need to manually key data. “These days, if you want to work with the big trading partners, you have to have compatibility between both your business management and EDI systems,” Tischer said. Centerprise and TrueCommerce worked together as a team, integrating the systems, mapping data and testing everything with our trading partners. They handled everything for us, and we were up and running within a couple of weeks, partly because TrueCommerce was already online with our trading partners, and they have good working relationships with them, so it was fairly simple to make everything work together quickly and smoothly.”

BENEFITTING FROM THE INITIAL RESULTS...

TrueCommerce EDI solution resulted in substantially lower costs and far more resource productivity.

The results after the initial implementation were dramatic, according to Tischer. "TrueCommerce's EDI is a wonderful product," she noted. "We can now do in 10 minutes what used to take us three days. It works beautifully! Now I can spend my time selling products over the phone."

In addition to the substantial increase in efficiency, Cottage Gardens has also realized a 50 percent savings on their monthly networking costs by using the TrueCommerce Network, (TC.Net). "Our main objective was to save both time and money and TrueCommerce certainly helped us do both."

...AND STILL SEEING THE BENEFITS!

Cottage Gardens continues to be impressed with updated translation software capabilities and willingness to work with her on company issues.

Several years later, Tischer supports the decision to work with TrueCommerce, especially since upgrading from TrueCommerce's original translation software, Integrator™ to Transaction Manager™. "We were getting checks and invoices in data transfers that were up to 10 pages long," she said. "One of the reasons we decided to upgrade to Transaction Manager was so that we could export that check copy into an Excel spreadsheet, add columns and make notes that allowed us to handle the check processing more efficiently with less room for error."

Furthermore, Transaction Manager helped them easily and conveniently export product data activity reports and other inventory management tools into Microsoft® Excel. "We chose the basic Transaction Manager package as our initial upgrade, and it has turned out to be very user-friendly with features that filter massive amounts of data in ways we need, saving us even more time and money. Its ease of use, customizability and flexibility have us considering adding other Transaction Manager features in the future."

Over the past few years, Tischer has willingly made referrals to TrueCommerce, both to MAS 200 users interested in TrueCommerce's EDI capabilities as well as other business owners unhappy with or in need of an EDI system. "I tell them to look into TrueCommerce because they've done a good job for us. They've never failed to listen to me and I believe they're committed to helping us come to a satisfactory resolution on any product challenges we may have as our respective products and business needs change. I trust that they'll keep my company's best interests in mind."



We Make EDI Painless.

TrueCommerce provides everything small to mid-tier companies need to fully implement EDI from one source.

Since 1995, our mission has been to make EDI painless by providing a comprehensive, end-to-end EDI solution that is easy to use, robust, and affordable.

TrueCommerce customers use our award-winning solution to exchange tens of millions of EDI transactions annually within a variety of industries including retail, banking, healthcare, and government.

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