



CASE STUDY

# C.E. Smith Company



## C.E. Smith Company Saves Time and Money and Improves Order Accuracy by Integrating Both the TrueCommerce EDI and eCommerce Platform with ERP

### Background

While already benefiting from integration between its high-performing EDI and ERP solutions, this forward-looking manufacturer wanted to further increase automation by integrating their ERP with an eCommerce platform.

C.E. Smith Company, Inc. is a contract manufacturing firm producing precision metal stampings, fabrications and assemblies for a range of industries. Under the SMITH™ trademark, they are a recognized leader in the manufacturing and sale of replacement and add-on parts for boat trailers, with a reputation for value, product selection and service. Marine distributors and retailers, as well as other sporting goods retailers, stock and sell a wide variety of SMITH parts. The company also sells direct to consumers online.

C.E. Smith has extensive experience with electronic data interchange (EDI) for business-to-business (B2B) transactions. According to Scott Noyes, Purchasing Manager, they moved to TrueCommerce EDI in 2005 after “lots of difficulties” with another EDI provider.

The manufacturer initially implemented EDI to comply with the supply chain requirements of major retailers like Bass Pro Shops, Cabelas, Academy Sports, West Marine, Tractor Supply, Northern Tool and Amazon.com. At the time, “they pushed us to EDI,” Mr. Noyes recalls.

“We frequently get orders that have 200 to 300 SKUs,” Ms. Smith describes. “These would take forever to enter by hand—now they’re done in a few minutes, and we don’t have to worry about making errors while we’re typing all those addresses, numbers and other items.”

**Lisa Smith**  
Account Manager,  
C.E. Smith Company, Inc.

## Benefits

**01**

Single-vendor integration ensures robust functionality and simplifies support interactions and upgrades

**02**

Time and effort saved by integrating key order channels with ERP eliminates the need to hire four to six account staff

**03**

Straightforward integration between the Nexternal eCommerce platform and Global Shop Solutions ERP saves time and money and eliminates errors associated with manually rekeying online orders into ERP

**04**

The Nexternal eCommerce Platform is easy to configure and manage, and features a user-friendly customer interface

**05**

TrueCommerce EDI provides a comprehensive feature set to automate order management processes, improve order accuracy and seamlessly comply with the diverse EDI requirements of major retailers

“Nearly all of the major retailers we do business with now mandate EDI for their suppliers,” echoes Lisa Smith, Account Manager.

A top reason for C.E. Smith’s choice of TrueCommerce EDI was its ability to integrate with their Global Shop Solutions manufacturing ERP system. Integrating EDI with ERP eliminates the redundant entry of order data and associated time, effort and labor costs, while also maximizing order accuracy.

In 2016, C.E. Smith sought to further streamline its order processing by automating the input of business-to-consumer (B2C) orders received from its website into Global Shop Solutions ERP. Their eCommerce platform at the time had no integration with EDI or ERP, so orders placed on the website had to be entered into the ERP system by hand.

Once again, TrueCommerce had the answer—this time through its Nexternal eCommerce platform.

## Objective

Eliminate redundant data entry and ensure maximum order accuracy by integrating both EDI and eCommerce channels with Global Shop Solutions ERP

## Solution

Move from standalone retail web store to the TrueCommerce Nexternal eCommerce platform for seamless integration with Global Shop Solutions ERP over the TrueCommerce Network, complementing a longstanding ERP integration with EDI

## Making the Most of Single-Vendor Integration

C.E. Smith now enjoys the benefits of best-in-class EDI and eCommerce solutions that are integrated with their ERP and supported by a single vendor.

Seeking to save time and money by eliminating the need to manually enter B2C orders received from their web storefront, the decision to move from a standalone eCommerce platform to an integrated solution proved to be an easy one.

“The ability to integrate eCommerce with our ERP system was the key factor in our decision to move to the TrueCommerce Nexternal eCommerce Platform,” Mr. Noyes explains. “At HighJump’s Elevate 2016 user conference, we saw everything the Nexternal eCommerce Platform was doing and that really convinced us.”

All online orders captured in the Nexternal platform are now sent to TrueCommerce Transaction Manager so that they can go through the same process and workflows as EDI orders.

The next step for C.E. Smith will be to expand its use of Nexternal to include the many orders they transact with independent sporting goods retailers and other B2B trading partners that do not use EDI.

“We’re in the process of setting up B2B customers so they can order off the website and utilize Nexternal as well,” Mr. Noyes states. “This will move their orders right into our ERP without manual data entry.”

The ability to automatically import and export documents back-and-forth between ERP and EDI or eCommerce drives significant time and cost savings.

“We frequently get orders that have 200 to 300 SKUs,” Ms. Smith describes. “These would take forever to enter by hand—now they’re done in a few minutes, and we don’t have to worry about making errors while we’re typing all those addresses, numbers and other items.”

## A Better eCommerce Experience

The configurable and feature-rich Nexternal eCommerce platform means a better journey for both customers and the IT team

Moving from a standalone, custom-built storefront to the robust, feature-rich Nexternal platform has been a positive experience not only for C.E. Smith’s retail customers, but also for its IT staff.

“It’s great not having to worry about updating any of the components,” offers Mr. Noyes. “Also we don’t have to worry about fixing bugs or dealing with performance issues.”



## The ability to integrate eCommerce with our ERP system was the key factor in our decision to move Nexternal.

**Scott Noyes**

Purchasing Manager,  
C.E. Smith Company, Inc.

C.E. Smith was enthusiastic about an array of useful Nexternal features, including picture galleries, innovative credit card processing capabilities, and different shipping options.

A particularly useful feature for C.E. Smith is the eCommerce platform's ability to let consumers choose the shipping carrier for their order, including FedEx, UPS or the US Postal Service.

"This helps ensure that the shipping cost we quote them is the rate they're actually going to be charged," clarifies Mr. Noyes. "We're not trying to make money on shipping, but we do need to make sure we get paid for what it costs us."

### Scalable, Reliable EDI

TrueCommerce EDI takes the worry out of meeting the EDI requirements of major retailers.

C.E. Smith receives approximately 250-300 EDI orders per week from its major retail trading partners. A growing number of these are cross-dock orders, creating additional pressure on the supply chain.

TrueCommerce EDI handles the growing order volume and various shipping complexities with ease. "When we add a new trading partner we just find out what they want and take it from there with TrueCommerce," Ms. Smith says. "The whole process usually moves very quickly."

Another benefit Ms. Smith notes regarding TrueCommerce EDI is that it automatically checks pricing on invoices against prices in Global Shop Solutions ERP, and generates an alert if there is a discrepancy. This proactively eliminates even more potential errors and further ensures order accuracy.

### Responsive Support

TrueCommerce lives up to HighJump's reputation for outstanding customer support.

As far as customer support is concerned, "TrueCommerce is great—they do what they say they're going to do," Ms. Smith relates. "I like their support website; it's an easy and convenient way to enter a support request."

The support team on the eCommerce side of the house also lives up to its promise.

"Customer support for the eCommerce platform is very good also," offers Mr. Noyes. "They're easy to contact and very knowledgeable about the platform, and the online help is a great resource for us when questions come up."

## Rapid and Sustained ROI

Both TrueCommerce EDI and the Nexternal eCommerce platform are strategic investments that pay significant dividends to this competitive manufacturer.

Though the company is still a new Nexternal user, Mr. Noyes estimates that the solution paid for itself within the first six months.

“Integrated EDI continually puts cash in our pockets because we don’t have to hire people to do data entry, and our current staff can do more high-value work with their time,” says Mr. Noyes. He estimates that without integrated EDI, C.E. Smith would need to “double account staff” by adding an additional four to six people.

Additional ROI comes from reduced infrastructure management hours, fewer abandoned shopping carts, improved customer experience and other advantages.

I don’t know how we’d do business without EDI today,.

**Lisa Smith**  
Account Manager,  
C.E. Smith Company, Inc.

