Case Study:
SoftTouch Labs
Turn Up the Order Volume

EDI Solution Enables Medical Device Maker to Meet Fortune 500 Retail Demands

SoftTouch Labs LLC.

The Challenge

For years, hearing aids were only available through prescription and required highly trained audiologists to perform complex tuning of the rice-sized speakers used in the devices. Over time, as patients became more educated on hearing aid solutions, consumers began to weigh the cost-to-benefit of prescription devices. SoftTouch Labs, formerly General Hearing Instruments, Inc., recognized this trend early in 2008 and began offering an affordable, over-the-counter option tuned for average hearing loss.

The addition of direct-to-consumer (DtC) hearing products required an equally progressive approach to the supply chain and order fulfillment processes. Prior to partnering with TrueCommerce, SoftTouch Labs employed a team of as many as 10 people to manually log into several disparate retailer websites to process the hundreds of orders it received each day. This required more time andmanpower, and created an increased risk of human error in the ordering process. The need for an EDI solution was made urgent when the company expanded to supply multiple Fortune 500 retailers.

"Hearing loss patients now have the option to order an affordable hearing aid from an online retailer. We then receive the order through TrueCommerce before shipping it to their doorstep," said Robert Artigues,
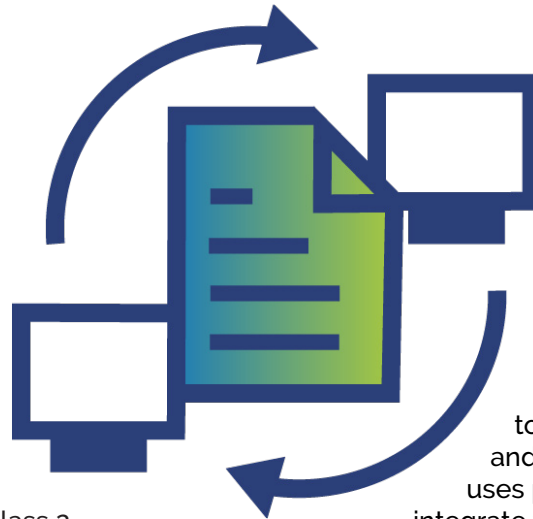
> "TrueCommerce is exactly what we needed, providing flexibility and relieving stress in the order entry process."
>
> - Robert Artigues,
> Vice President of Operations at SoftTouch Labs

TrueCommerce™

www.truecommerce.com

Vice President of Operations at SoftTouch Labs. "Now they're able to buy it, try it, and return it directly to the brick-and-mortar location, if necessary."

Additional supply chain implications included the stringent compliance requirements of HIPAA and the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). The retail hearing aids are Class 1 medical devices, and the prescription hearing aids are Class 2 medical devices – each subject to a thorough quality assurance program and specific manufacturing requirements. The difference in order volume for retail versus prescription products justified the investment in a scalable EDI solution.

orders were consolidated into one location. TrueCommerce is exactly what we needed, providing flexibility and relieving stress in the order entry process."

While most EDI providers outsource ERP integration to third-party vendors, often leading to delayed projects, increased costs, and lost revenue, TrueCommerce uses proprietary ERP adapters that integrate with over leading ERP, WMS, and accounting systems. SoftTouch Labs uses the TrueCommerce EDI platform to process orders across its distribution chain from a single dashboard while TrueCommerce's ERP integration eliminates the labor costs and errors due to manual data entry.

Scalable Solutions

SoftTouch Labs required a singular EDI platform to receive the exponentially increasing order volume from retailers. TrueCommerce provided a cost-effective, flexible, cloud-based EDI solution that could scale with the company's growing need to integrate with retail giants. Working together, TrueCommerce and SoftTouch Labs developed a customized EDI system that functions as a centralized hub, consolidating all orders into one location while simultaneously integrating with the company's existing proprietary ERP.

"We used to have to log onto the individual websites for each customer," Artigues recalled. "When we began working with the biggest name in retail, we knew we needed a centralized hub where all the

The Results

By deploying the TrueCommerce EDI solution, SoftTouch Labs has been able to leverage technology and supply chain efficiency to improve operations and increase order output. This allowed the company to reinvest resources that were historically expended on manual order process into product development and bring their innovative hearing aids to a much larger customer base. Today, SoftTouch Labs can offer listening aids to those who may not have been able to afford them previously.

"Customers can evaluate the cost-to-benefit ratio of hearing aids without such a significant investment," said Artigues. "And if they have any problems, we're just a phone call away. TrueCommerce helps make all that possible."

ABOUT TRUECOMMERCE

TrueCommerce is the most complete way to integrate your business across the supply chain, integrating everything from EDI to inventory management, to fulfillment, to digital storefronts and marketplaces, to your business system and to whatever comes next. That's why thousands of companies across various industries rely on us.

THE TRUECOMMERCE TEAM IS HERE TO HELP!

If you have any questions regarding TrueCommerce, or how our solutions apply to your business, our passionate, customer focused team is here for you.

Call us today at 888.430.4489

www.truecommerce.com