

HANDS-FREE ORDER-TO-CASH SOLUTION SUPPLIES TENFOLD PLUS ORDER GROWTH IN LESS THAN ONE YEAR

Challenge

Corporate Express Document & Print Management (CEDPM) had many manual steps in their order-to-cash process. This affected their entire organization and limited both CEDPM's order capacity and their pursuit of new revenue opportunities. Their systems lacked scalability and capabilities for real-time transactions and automated error handling. And the precariousness of the process itself increased their risk of potential Sarbanes-Oxley violations.

Solution

Implement a hands-free order-to-cash process using the Integrated Service and Supply (ISS) workflow with webMethods Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) platform and webMethods Trading Networks. Now, customer and supplier electronic transactions are automatically handled in real-time. In addition, sales, production and purchase orders are seamlessly integrated across backend systems and suppliers.

Benefits

- Enabled hands-free order submission from multiple front-end sources
- Eliminated all manual steps in order-to-cash process
- Significantly increased transaction volumes from 150,000 to 2 Million annually
- Remarkably improved system scalability—up to 30 Million transactions annually
- Strengthened relationships with business partners



Corporate Express Document & Print Management (CEDPM) provides document and print management, business form, label, direct mail and fulfillment solutions. CEDPM is a division of Corporate Express US Inc., one of the world's largest business-to-business suppliers of essential office and computer products and services. Headquartered in the Netherlands, Corporate Express has operations in 21 countries, a distribution network that spans North America, Europe and Australia, and more than 18,000 employees worldwide.

Get there faster.™

“With webMethods technology and our ISS platform we can quickly plug in new customers and suppliers without having to replicate code. Now our sales force can go out and sell the products plus the services and implementation our customers want.”

Michael Bailey | VP Information Systems | Corporate Express Document & Print Management

Manual steps slow entire organization

Corporate Express Document & Print Management (CEDPM), a business unit division of Corporate Express US Inc., is a leading provider of document and print management, business form, label, direct mail and fulfillment solutions, with seven U.S. manufacturing plants. CEDPM was hampered by their slow, manual order-to-cash process involving siloed systems, hard-copy orders and invoices, and batch entries across hundreds of customers and third-party suppliers. A single-threaded integration infrastructure hindered transaction processing, which prevented the company from pursuing customers with larger volume needs.

CEDPM's order handling limited their abilities to handle more customers, more complex orders and seek out new revenue opportunities using innovative solutions. Their processes were complicated, not standardized across the supply chain and required a great deal of manual intervention.

For instance, CEDPM received customer orders from various sources—in person, over the telephone, email, via EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) or from third-party providers and suppliers—not in itself an issue. However, the order formats were not standardized—some were verbal, others paper-based, and the rest were in varying electronic formats. And adding to the complexity, orders entered into the CEDPM order-to-cash process at various points and in varying stages of fulfillment.

Order routing and notifications were not any better, as orders were routed from a wide variety of sources to either a CEDPM plant for production via a batch file, an appropriate supplier or some combination of the two, depending on the order itself. And finally, invoicing and customer billing processes were still more convoluted and involved a varying number of manual steps, depending on how the order was placed and who had produced and shipped it.

CEDPM relied heavily on their manual processes to ensure transaction flow and control, plus detect and resolve errors. “We had an operation with large complex customers but our order-to-cash process was very functionally intensive. We needed a lot of internal communications and manual activities,” explains Michael Bailey, VP Information Systems at CEDPM. These numerous manual interventions necessitated by the order-to-cash process negatively affected the efficiency of the entire organization from Sales, Purchasing and Manufacturing all the way through to Accounts Payable and Receivable. In addition, even though CEDPM exchanged some data electronically via EDI, this method was neither real-time nor scalable. Even more critical, despite their best efforts the precariousness of the process increased Corporate Express' risk of potential Sarbanes-Oxley violations.

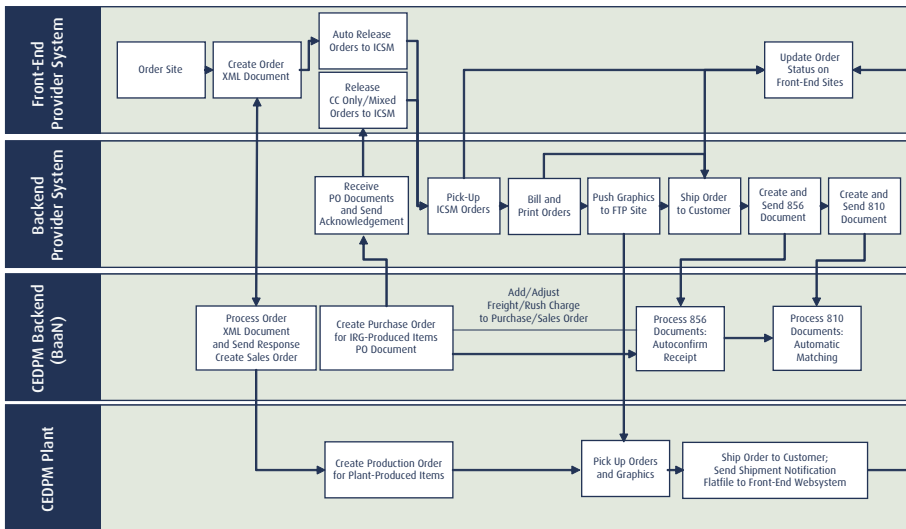
Goal: order-to-cash that is real-time and hands-free

CEDPM's main objective was to become a one-stop solution for their customers' business supply needs. This demanded an automated solution which could handle transactions in a real-time environment, where orders could flow in a hands-free manner throughout the order-to-cash process. For this they needed to seamlessly integrate their back-end Baan ERP system with, for example, order routing, shipment notifications and receipt of supplier invoices.

CEDPM's IT group initiated the ISS (Integrated Service & Supply) project with the goal to completely automate their entire order-to-cash process. Working in conjunction with webMethods Professional Services, they designed the CEDPM ISS Integration Workflow and framework to support a “no manual intervention required” approach. Using webMethods technology, including webMethods Trading Networks and webMethods ESB, they were able to realize a completely hands-free process.

webMethods Trading Networks is an enterprise-class B2B gateway that enables a robust real-time B2B information exchange with trading partners and provides extensive support of industry standards and data formats such as XML, EDI and flat files. The foundation of webMethods Trading Networks is webMethods ESB: a comprehensive, scalable solution for application, partner and services-based integration.

CEDPM ISS Workflow



Goal achieved: One-stop shop

Corporate Express Document & Print Management leveraged webMethods to reinvent its order-to-cash process, allowing them to scale their business significantly. Within a period of one year, electronic transaction volumes have grown almost 13 times while at the same time CEDPM has achieved significant cost savings, improved accuracy and on-time delivery. "Within the business we have to be fast to market, flexible to offer what the customer wants and we have to do so with a fair and low price. The ISS systems have to offer flexibility, quick implementation and not raise the price in doing so. With webMethods technology and the ISS platform we are doing just that," notes Michael Bailey. Corporate Express Document & Print Management has become a one-stop solution for business supply needs — for businesses of any size, in any location.

Now CEDPM's orders flow freely from customers through third-party suppliers and back via a real-time order-to-cash process. Besides the real-time integration, the realization of ISS provided CEDPM significant benefits and key competitive advantages:

- No manual steps are required to complete the order-to-cash process
- Sales can now target bigger and higher transaction volume customers
- Suppliers are now treated as true business partners, by including them within the ISS "electronic fence"
- Orders can be received from multiple front-end sources and routed to different suppliers based on product-supplier relationships
- Additional supplier charges are automatically adjusted on the appropriate purchase and sales orders
- Transaction volumes have increased dramatically from 150,000 to 2 Million annually

- Infrastructure scalability is ready for significant growth: up to 30 Million transaction lines annually
- Greatly improved order accuracy and pro-active error handling have resulted in measurable increases in customer satisfaction
- The standardized framework and process reliability have helped ease compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley requirements

"With ISS the customer service rep can now see what is going on and is able to proactively contact the customer with the order status and information, rather than being in a reactive mode. This has resulted in a much higher level of customer satisfaction," states Rajesh Shetty, eBusiness Solutions Manager at CEDPM "webMethods Trading Networks helped us get there faster — and without additional costs."

KEY COMPONENTS

webMethods Trading Networks

webMethods Trading Networks enables a robust real-time B2B information exchange with trading partners.

webMethods ESB

webMethods ESB is a comprehensive, scalable solution for application, partner and services-based integration and is the foundation for Trading Networks.

ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

Software AG is the world's largest independent provider of Business Infrastructure Software. Our 4,000 global customers achieve measurable business results by modernizing and automating their IT systems and rapidly building new systems and processes to meet growing business demands.

Our industry-leading product portfolio includes best-in-class solutions for managing data, enabling service-oriented architecture, and improving business processes. By combining proven technology with industry expertise and best practices, our customers improve and differentiate their businesses – faster.

Software AG – Get There Faster

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