

Real-time visibility across B2B processes improves customer service

CASE STUDY: ATCHISON TOPEKA

Atchison Topeka needed to improve efficiencies in its customer order processes. The company's aim was to remove errors resulting from the manual entry of orders, while also achieving real time supply chain visibility.

Atchison Topeka made the decision to outsource their B2B electronic trading requirements to Wesupply, allowing connectivity to their customer base via a single platform. This enabled greater control of the customer ordering process and ensured 100% inventory record matching. Errors are now eliminated, before they impact upon performance; costs associated with the previous manual procedure have been reduced, and Atchison Topeka has significantly improved the quality of service their customers receive. The fully managed service also enables Atchison Topeka to be more efficient through the quick and easy addition of new trading partners, as and when required.

BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

Established over 20 years ago, Atchison Topeka is a leading 3PL company specialising in food ingredients. The company provides innovative logistics solutions to customers requiring the delivery of food ingredients into UK manufacturing centres.



Atchison Topeka has a strong customer base which includes some of the most recognisable names in the industry. Typical products handled include chocolate, bagged powdered ingredients, jams, fruit mixes and sugars. Bulk ingredients include liquid chocolates, sugars and milk.

With a large number of key trading partners, Atchison Topeka was experiencing problems with their existing manual order entry process. The time-consuming process involved dealing with large quantities of paperwork and incoming fax orders, resulting in a considerable number of errors.

For a company like Atchison Topeka, punctuality is imperative if crucial customer delivery dates are to be met. The company could not afford for order processing errors to impact on their levels of customer service.

*"Our existing B2B processes were hugely inefficient and the situation was worsening with each additional trading partner." said **Darren Cronshaw**, Operations Director at Atchison Topeka. "The order processing solution in place lacked resilience to the changing demands of our customers and it was decided that a more robust and scalable electronic trading solution was required".*

THE SOLUTION

Atchison Topeka implemented OneTime, Wesupply's fully managed B2B electronic trading solution to rapidly integrate its business processes with those of its customers. The solution was rolled-out over a six month period to the company's major customers, and orders, invoices and acknowledgements are now exchanged easily and efficiently with zero errors.

"We have customers linked via the OneTime solution, with varying levels of complexity, from simple order transfers to full SAP integration across multiple operating sites throughout Europe" said Darren. "It is our plan to roll out the solution to our entire customer base to further improve our supply chain".

Jerry Quinn, Industry Director at Wesupply commented *"Wesupply has enabled Atchison Topeka to streamline its incoming order and invoicing processes, whilst providing full visibility into the order cycle, thus reducing errors, improving stock management and increasing inventory record matching."*

"We'd been looking for a solution for some time, which would improve our visibility and that of our customers on the status of orders. Wesupply demonstrated an understanding of our requirements and provided numerous customers references. This proven track record, along with the flexibility of the OneTime solution, were important factors in our decision making process." said Darren.

BENEFITS

The Wesupply solution has given Atchison Topeka the increased supply chain visibility they required and enabled them to eliminate costly order processing errors.

"The implementation of the OneTime solution has enabled efficiencies across our customer-facing supply chain which was previously unattainable," stated Darren. *"We can now exchange real-time supply data with our customers, enabling increased efficiency and improved customer service."*

Key business benefits realised so far include:

- Elimination of order processing errors
- Automated stock reconciliation daily
- Reduced overheads
- Reduced working capital
- Reduced lead times
- Improved customer service



VIEWPOINT

"We not only needed a solution that would resolve the order entry issues we were experiencing, it also needed to be simple to use, thereby allowing us to focus on our core business without worrying about IT".

Darren Cronshaw, Operations Director, Atchison Topeka.