AliMed Rediscovers the Power of Delta & ECS

AliMed

Automated EDI processing frees up IT staff to focus on strategic endeavors.

"The whole EDI process is now extremely efficient. AliMed is now planning on adding more EDI trading partners." ~ MIS Manager

Executive Summary

AliMed is an American manufacturing company and supplier of high quality health care products – everything from pre-formed orthoses, alarms for fall management, cushions, diagnostic imaging and operating room accessories, orthopedic rehabilitation equipment, ergonomic workplace solutions and emergency preparedness. For over 35 years, they have served a broad range of manufacturing and service industries including all segments of the healthcare market...hospitals, nursing homes, HMOs, outpatient clinics, private medical practices and consumers.

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Challenges

AliMed had been working with 20 trading partners and had about 70 documents mapped and transmitted using the OpenText Delta & ECS software for EDI integration. This process was fully automated so no manual steps were needed to create and send the data required for the outgoing EDI documents. On the incoming side, the documents were received and updated into their ERP system with no keying or manual steps.

In 2009, AliMed switched to a new ERP system, Microsoft Dynamics AX (now Dynamics 365), and went along with the recommendation of their ERP vendor for a new EDI system. A year after implementing the new ERP and EDI systems, AliMed's MIS Manager realized that only a small handful of the trading partners and documents were sent/received via EDI, and a number of manual steps were needed to accomplish the task. Rather than going back to Delta & ECS, he tried a second alternative EDI solution. "We tried two different EDI vendors with integrated solutions for AX. Both approaches failed to meet our expectations as far as support and performance. We were never able to get EDI working without many hours of manual effort every day. We were never able to get all of our trading partners implemented after 18 months. I wanted a solution that was easy to use and could run the transactions unattended. That is why I thought of Delta/ECS and GraceBlood – and how well that combination worked for me prior to AX."

How Delta/ECS & GraceBlood Helped

AliMed contacted GraceBlood, their former EDI consultants, with the request to return to the Delta and ECS platform. Working closely with AliMed's AX partner, a proof of concept was designed and implemented for one trading partner and document. AliMed was pleased that the proof of concept was executed quickly and the end result was an automated process that would eliminate the manual tasks that the staff was currently having to process to obtain the EDI data. It was unanimously agreed that using Delta and ECS would allow AliMed to quickly bring up the multitude of trading partners that had requested documents be transmitted via EDI. In addition, the ability to automate the EDI process would free up the IT staff to devote time to other projects.

Results

AliMed's MIS Director summarizes his experience by stating, "The switch back to Delta and ECS has gone smoothly. The whole EDI process is now extremely efficient. AliMed is now planning on adding more EDI trading partners. Delta/ECS is very easy to use. It is easy to check the status of a batch or document. It is easy to make edits and resubmit batches. I am thinking of using it to feed content to our websites and other dealers who sell AliMed products on their websites. We can extend our investment in these tools to also send our clients up to date items, prices, inventory balance information to various persons on a timed schedule. I am extremely satisfied with the software and the assistance I receive from GraceBlood."

AliMed truck traveling to next delivery. Photo above courtesy of AliMed, Inc.

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