ITO EN

Case Study

The PartnerLinQ Impact:

ITO EN Adopts an Integrated B2B API and EDI Platform for Sustainable Growth

PartnerLinQ
Connect Possibilities.

The Company

ITO EN is a multinational beverage company first established in Japan in 1966, specializing in green tea, and is today the largest green tea distributor in Japan. The vertically integrated company markets packaged and ready-to-drink tea production, focusing on the distribution and sales of its products. Successfully entering the American beverage market in 2002 with the launch of ITO EN (North America) INC., the ITO EN Group has established a global presence beyond Japan to include Indonesia, Australia, and China. As a global leader in green tea, ITO EN's portfolio includes award-winning brands like Oi Ocha, Teas' Tea Organic, and Matcha LOVE.

The Challenges

Siloed Systems Impacting Process Efficiency

ITO EN has enjoyed spiraling growth in recent years, with an increasing number of warehouses across the US and Canada. These warehouses, outsourced to and managed by the company's third-party logistics (3PL) partners, were servicing demands from some of the world's largest and most recognizable retail operators like Amazon and Wal-Mart.

ITO EN's legacy ERP system did not support integration with its warehouse management and warehouse-to-retailer communication tools. Their network included EDI and non-EDI trading partners; with each partner requiring different modes of integration to ITO EN's systems, communication required a large degree of manual intervention, exposing the supply chain to transmission errors and inefficiency. In addition, each warehouse required dedicated employee resources for servicing, further reducing supply chain efficiency and increasing costs.

Third-Party Logistics

Third-Party Logistics (3PL) is a challenge under the best of conditions, and more so when growth, opportunity, and siloed systems collide. ITO EN's 3PL operations involved largely manual processes, with a smattering of electronic exceptions like email messages and PDF pack slips. These complications threaded through multiple product categories, including bulk and packaged tea products, as 3PL solution providers also handled much of the company's packaging operation in the US. ITO EN had long held a legacy of effectively adapting to change and recognized the need for a digital connectivity tool that integrated natively with an agile and flexible ERP system. While PartnerLinQ provided ITO EN with the tool, Visionet provided the ERP system that ITO EN was looking for.

The Solution

Integrated EDI-ERP Platform to Automate Workflow

Visionet replaced ITO EN's ERP system with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central and deployed PartnerLinQ – its proprietary digital connectivity solution – to ensure a streamlined and scalable enterprise integration solution. Designed to natively integrate with Dynamics 365, PartnerLinQ's Azure-native distributed connectivity engine established a seamless communication channel between ITO EN's production, warehousing, and distribution channels. Within weeks, the deployment team helped onboard 8 warehouses and 12 distribution partners through PartnerLinQ and Business Central. The PartnerLinQ solution can now validate the ERP data, transform it in keeping with ITO EN's business processes, and leverage a new 3PL transaction design backed by EDI standards to transfer business-critical documents according to pre-set timelines and schedules. And all of this was designed, deployed, and delivered in a very short time.

Automated Digital Connectivity Solution

The Results

ERP-EDI Integration

PartnerLinQ's seamless integration with Dynamics 365 Business Central facilitated efficient transaction processing and ease of use. The PartnerLinQ solution quickly and conveniently converted data between ERP and EDI formats and incorporated business rules, alerts, and messaging – all of which helped automate processes that had been largely manual, laborious, and costly.

Transaction Automation

PartnerLinQ's infinite scheduler allowed ITO EN to configure and send Warehouse Shipping Orders to its third-party operators without manual intervention, helping avoid missed or delayed shipments. This ensured business-critical data was sent on time every time, increasing process efficiency and saving time, resources, and costs.

Easy Trading Partner Onboarding

Armed with an EDI-optimized business rule engine and an extensive pre-configured business rule library, ITO EN could begin focusing on trading partner onboarding. PartnerLinQ made trading partner onboarding easy, allowing the company to add partners regularly. Instead of defining each partner's business rules from scratch, ITO EN could now select an existing set of rules from the extensive rule library and quickly customize them to conform to any partner protocol, transaction, or business process.

E-commerce Support

PartnerLinQ also automated ITO EN's integration with its e-commerce platforms like Shopify. This allowed the company to shift seamlessly between API and EDI-based transactions by leveraging the solution's built-in common processing workflow.

The Future

End-to-End Digital Connectivity to Drive Sustainable Growth

Within weeks of onboarding PartnerLinQ's modernized B2B/EDI platform, ITO EN addressed thousands of purchase orders, shipment documents, and e-commerce transactions with an end-to-end automated workflow. The beverages giant now plans to shift its entire warehouse and distribution network to the PartnerLinQ platform, which can handle millions of transactions powered by a scalable Azure-based architecture. Having established a reliable and integrated supply chain, ITO EN can now concentrate on growth by establishing new supplier and customer relationships. It can keep track of delivery schedules, meet and exceed customer expectations, and take on the predicted growth trajectory in the beverages market.

Tools & Technologies

About ITO EN

PartnerLinQ delivers resilience through simplifying visibility and connectivity. PartnerLinQ's Native App Ecosystem adds business context to traditional integrations, minimizing the impact of disruption. With capabilities for intelligent hyper-automation, multi-channel integration, and real-time analytics, PartnerLinQ seeks to seamlessly connect multi-tier supply chain networks, channels, marketplaces, and core systems worldwide to deliver unified connectivity for the future.

PartnerLinQ - an Innovative, Cloud-Native Supply Chain Visibility Platform:

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About PartnerLinQ

PartnerLinQ is a highly scalable cloud-native multi-tenant multi-geography hyper-scalable high-performance SaaS B2B API & EDI platform that integrates natively with partner ecosystem & e-commerce channels with native solutions for meeting B2B API & EDI challenges. Reimagine control, visibility, and transparency across your global supply chain and e-commerce. Unify channels, boost loyalty, gain visibility, and accelerate order fulfillment. Manage global supply chains, material planning, package sourcing, and omnichannel retail, drive growth powered by cutting-edge technologies, and unlock valuable insights with Visionet products.

Drive exceptional business outcomes with our committed team across our 14+ offices globally.

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