SUCCESS STORY | method people against dirty

OPENTEXT™



Method Creates a Clean Path to Growth with OpenText B2B Integration

World-class method plant and distribution center secures reliable, scalable B2B integration with OpenText™ B2B Managed Services

Method is a manufacturer of non-toxic and biodegradable naturally derived cleaning products. Together with its sister brand Ecover, method offers a portfolio of products that includes laundry, home cleaning, hand and body wash, and air care products. The company's mission is to run its business in a values-driven manner, building social and environmental benefit into its products and everything it does.

Addressing B2B Challenges of First Manufacturing and Distribution Facility

People Against Dirty Manufacturing, the organization formed by method, regards its manufacturing plant and distribution center in the Pullman Park District of Chicago as a tangible realization of the company's commitment to sustainability and community. The 'South Side Soapbox' meets strict Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) benchmarks for ecological facilities. It is the only LEED-Platinum certified plant in its industry and only one of two in the United States. It also supports revitalization of an area rich in manufacturing history by being the first new factory to be built on the South Side of Chicago in nearly 30 years.

Among other standout features, the facility is surrounded by solar tracking trees and a refurbished 230-foot wind turbine that generates half of the building's annual electricity consumption. Additionally, more than half of the 150,000-square-foot facility is topped with a commercial scale greenhouse, the world's largest hydroponic rooftop farm, equipped to produce up to one million pounds of produce every year for local stores, restaurants and markets.

Priorities for B2B Experience

People Against Dirty Manufacturing professionals focus on the production, warehousing and distribution of planet-friendly, design-driven home-care products. To help keep that focus, they needed an experienced partner to integrate electronic data interchange (EDI) for efficiency in line with the plant itself and overall company mission. "We've never had our own distribution center, so we had no existing systems to leverage," says method EDI Analyst Susan Karr. "We were looking to find a vendor with EDI capabilities to hit the ground running and make the transition as seamless as possible."

INDUSTRY

Consumer packaged goods

CUSTOMER

method

CHALLENGES

- *Lack of EDI experience and infrastructure for new, high-efficiency plant and distribution center*
- *Four-month turnaround from introduction to production*
- *Need for scalability to match strong potential growth*

SOLUTIONS

- *OpenText™ B2B Managed Services*
- *OpenText™ Trading Grid™*

BENEFITS

- *Established tools and expertise for reliable B2B transactions*
- *Connections completed ahead of schedule*
- *Confidence for global expansion*
- *Customers are offered seamless deployment and upgrades*

Priorities for Reliability, Speed and Scalability

A partner for its distribution center needed to be quick and steady-footed – agile enough to handle the first deliveries within months while large enough to grow with future capabilities, as the U.S. plant merged capacity with Ecover resources on a global basis.

For method, an incomplete or incorrect advance shipping notice (ASN) can result in swift and painful fines. Working with a reliable partner, however, was not just about avoiding fines but also a way to accelerate its business and maintain positive relationships with retailers. "The fact that OpenText is already doing ASNs with some of our major retailers - already has that communication set up and has that relationship established – gave us a lot of confidence in what OpenText could bring to the table to get the project going," adds Karr.

Established B2B Presence

The South Side Soapbox is now connected to a global trading community in the OpenText Cloud through B2B Managed Services and OpenText™ Trading Grid™, the world's most powerful B2B integration network. B2B Managed Services combines comprehensive technology, people and processes for automating and streamlining e-commerce transactions.

Method selected OpenText for its e-commerce expertise, readiness and cost-effectiveness. "OpenText understood our business model and already had the tools in place to execute this project. It is a really good partnership," says Karr.

For instance, B2B Managed Services has mapped to more than 200 e-commerce standards and enterprise application formats, building a 4,000+ map library. "The fact that OpenText already had library maps was amazing. It wasn't starting from scratch for the major retailers – since it does the same ASN mapping for other manufacturers, we were able to benefit from its expertise," notes Karr. The project also moved quickly, clocking in a week ahead of deadline.

Reliable, Cloud-based Global Reach

Together, method and Ecover form the world's largest green cleaning company, shipping to thousands of retailers. With world-class data centers and an award-winning mapping and translation engine, B2B Managed Services ensures trading transactions are handled securely and efficiently, supporting service to retailers and releasing manufacturing professionals to focus on company initiatives.

Trust and reliability

For dependable, timely transactions with retailers, the People Against Dirty Manufacturing place trust in the B2B integration experts at OpenText. "I felt very confident in OpenText," says Karr, noting prior experience with the technology leader developed her expectation for "stellar customer service."

Judging further from the Pullman plant project, Karr reports OpenText knows B2B, attributing success—in part—to high-quality mapping. "Compared to other centers, in terms of the accuracy of the ASN out of OpenText versus other systems, it's been better. We have a lot more confidence in the document."



Though issues often arise in the back-end system once a company goes live with a new B2B system, Karr says experience and OpenText's established relationships gave method a head start. "When you're using a map that's already going to a retailer like Target and you're dropping in data from our distribution center, you're not taking the risk of having the wrong information tied," Karr notes. "The expertise that OpenText provided in getting the output document from the distribution center and getting the right information into the ASN has helped us stay on track and efficient."

Speed and scalability

From the outset, Karr and her team knew they needed a partner with long-term viability and short-term turnaround, specifically four months from introduction to plant production at the South Side Soapbox. They found both speed and scalability with B2B Managed Services. "OpenText finished its work and was ready for the next step even faster than we were," Karr notes. She attributes project speed to cohesive, seamless teamwork between OpenText and method.

Proven tools provide flexibility for expansion

B2B Managed Services taps the Trading Grid for on-demand cloud-based services that support market readiness and agility. "We were looking for a partner to grow with us and we see a lot of potential to build on the model with OpenText to connect with several additional trading partners, as well as combine some of the systems and merge our capacity with Ecover on a global basis," says Karr. "It feels less daunting to know we have a partner in OpenText to help us pull this off."

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