Paul Aschmann		8th January 2008
Project Brief		

Project:	EDI System
Company:	AKsys USA, Inc.
Role:	Project Manager
Project Length:	4 Months

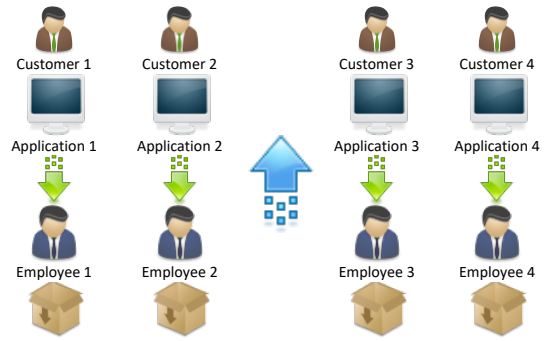
EDI
Electronic Data Interchange

About the Customer

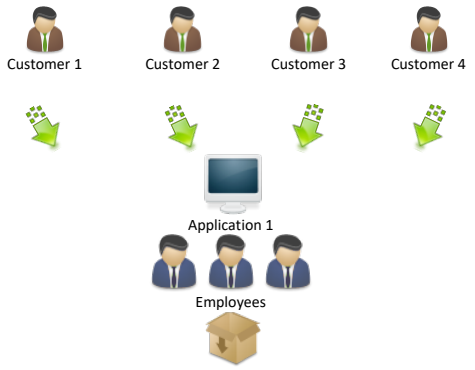
AKsys USA, Inc. is a major global automotive supplier in the Acoustic, Sound Deadening and Structural plastics market. The midsize company has a global annual turnover of $300 Million, has 17 manufacturing plants in 7 countries and a workforce of 2500 people.

Project Overview

EDI within the Automotive space is one of the most important tools for Customer to Supplier relations and ensures that products are delivered on time and per the customer's requirements. Due to dispersed subsystems and such a wide array of customers (15 OEM's) at AKsys USA, Inc. a decision was made to consolidate and centralize not only the Edi translator – or "interpreter" – but to also create a single interface for all the functions pertaining to the 2 way communication, labeling, printing and handling of products from order through to fulfillment for all the customers.



Old Order Fullfillment Flow



New Order Fullfillment Flow

Project Role

My role in the project was to scope, define and implement the project from start to finish. Once the requirements documents were defined using the SDLC methodologies we decided to outsource the project to a development shop in Greenville. With the developers we decided to build the application using .Net Technologies, a SQL Server Backend and Web Services to integrate tightly with our ERP. Having 15 different customers all having different requirements and specifications made the project a challenge but at the same time, having such a large customer base at the foundation ensured that all possible scenarios would be covered and the application would have a "heterogeneous" model. This would allow us to have minimal new costs when acquiring new customers since nearly all options were exhausted.

Some challenges throughout the project was managing an off-site development team, ensuring that proper testing methodologies were adhered to in a distributed environment and that customer communications were still maintained during rollout.

Tools Used

Microsoft .NET technologies, Microsoft SQL Server, XML Web Services, Trustedlink.

Project Outcome

The project is and has been in use since 2007, because of the web service model we were able to interface this system with very minor changes during our recent SAP Implementation. This saved a considerable amount of time and money, proving that building open solutions and having a broad vision of the future landscape can be very beneficial.