



E-Commerce Solution Seals Packaging Company's Competitive Edge

Supply Chain Integration/E-Commerce

Client

A global manufacturer and marketer of flexible packaging and plastic bottles.

Situation

As customers look for opportunities to reduce costs within the supply chain, they have placed demands on the packaging sector to provide streamlined, high availability business processes via the Web. Feeling the pressure from customer demands, the client was in need of a Web-enabled order, inventory, shipping and invoicing system for its customer service operations.

The client operated its customer service environment utilizing a 20+ year-old legacy AS400 application, which would prove extremely challenging to integrate into a Web-enabled system. The client was looking for a partner to help them develop a solution within a very short timeframe that would:

- Leverage existing AS400 technology
- Enable customers to check inventory levels and place shipping requests in real time via the Web
- Communicate manufacturing schedule changes
- Improve employee productivity
- Offer customers the features they needed to manage their business
- Minimize disruption to day-to-day operations

Solution

Leveraging 14 years of technology consulting experience, including expertise bringing AS400 to the Web, RiverPoint Group developed an innovative supply chain integration solution to help the client effectively service customer requests from ordering to shipping, inventory and processing, all online.

The solution was built on the Microsoft .NET platform, providing a secure, scalable, component-based solution that fit within the client's current network architecture. RiverPoint leveraged its proven Check Point Risk Management Method™ to provide project management support and mitigate risk throughout the engagement.

The new Web-based system successfully manages information access and processing within a complicated AS400 system located at plants throughout the United States.

The Web-based system provides a simple browser interface to quickly view proprietary inventory, order, shipment and invoicing data/ transactions, without changing the client's existing business processes or business rules.

To meet the tight timeframe, RiverPoint consultants utilized their proprietary NetLeverage™ solution to build the underlying e-commerce architecture. NetLeverage is a component-based custom solution built utilizing Microsoft .NET technologies and is the building block for a secure, custom branded B2B Web site. NetLeverage components provide user subscription, data and process security, e-mail integration, XML data services and AS400 communication and file system access. Rapid application development using NetLeverage components are enhanced by XML enabled XSLT and template ASP's for customizing the final look and feel of any Web-based system.

Environment

- Microsoft® .NET platform
- NetLeverage (RiverPoint Group's custom solution)
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Enterprise Servers
- Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS)
- Microsoft SQL Server 2000
- Microsoft Host Integration Server/SNA Server
- Microsoft Transaction Server
- Microsoft ASP and HTML
- Microsoft Visual Basic

Benefits

With RiverPoint's expertise, the client transformed its legacy AS400-based customer service center into a Web-based, supply chain management solution. Benefits include:

- Enhanced customers' ability to review inventory status and create shipping requests in real time via the Internet
- Improved customer service productivity through the elimination of repetitive requests, enabling higher value-added services to be performed
- Improved communication with clients through faster, more reliable means of disseminating important order information and schedule changes
- Improved customer inventory control, flow and tracking through concise, order-specific inventory information
- Ability to make better, more informed business decisions based on improved tracking of client needs in real time