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CASE STUDY: TOP HEAVY DESIGN
EDI IMPROVEMENT WITH DICENTRAL

Top Heavy Design, located in Temecula, CA, is a t-shirt design and licensing firm specializing in private label development for the young men's screen print market. Top Heavy is the recipient of the 2000 Target Vendor Award of Excellence and 2002 Sears Partner in Progress award. They are currently trading with JCPenney, Sears, Walmart, Kmart, and several other major retailers.

THE CHALLENGE:

Top Heavy owned separate EDI systems running various aspects of their EDI processing and decided it was time to find a single source solution where all EDI could be combined. The complexity of their EDI requirements was increasing while their transaction volume was growing; changes had to be made.

An important component of the new solution needed to be a process driven tool for handling JCPenney's Transportation Management System (TMS) requirement, improved label printing and packing processes, and a deeper level of customer support that allowed Top Heavy to better serve large customers.

JCPenney Transportation Management System (TMS): Their largest customer was JCPenney and they represented one of Top Heavy's most important EDI scenarios. In order to correctly schedule trucks for pickup per JCPenney's requirements, JCPenney Retail vendors must send the EDI 753 Routing Request and receive EDI 754 Routing Instructions. In the old system it meant a "line by line visual review process" according to Mike Reynolds, IT Director at Top Heavy, and "had many chances for error."

Previous solutions:
GXS Desktop ASN & EDIsoft Merchant Integrated to Custom Order Management System

Needed To Improve EDI to Ship Process: The impact of having a sound UCC128 label creation, sorting, and printing process is often overlooked. This "last mile" of the process is vital to the overall success of the process. With the previous solution there was an EDI translator software that was mapped to a label software and thermal printer. With Top Heavy's EDI volume this architecture required three PCs with EDI software to be connected to three PCs with Printer software so they could print over 14,000 labels at a time for large orders. This process was time consuming and lacked the flexibility needed in a busy warehouse. Labels were not printed in any order that matched the shipping configuration because "the software did not support grouping labels by item, SKU, or by shipping configuration," says Mike Reynolds. "Every style on every PO across 13 to 1300 POs was individually and manually submitted for printout."

Customer Support: Bringing in an EDI provider that had enough customer support experience to help get through issues was important to Top Heavy. "Previous providers did not have the depth of experience regarding how the retail shipping process mixed with the EDI process," says Mike Reynolds.

THE SOLUTION:

Mike Reynolds, IT Director at Top Heavy, knew exactly what he was looking for in a solution. He needed to streamline the JCPenney TMS process, improve order and UCC128 label processing, and improve customer service levels.

DiCentral Solution:
DiIntegrator Pro with JCPenney Transportation Management System Module, Custom Reports, and Label Sort and Print Module

JCPenney TMS Problem Solved: DiIntegrator comes with pre-programmed paths for each retailer's order fulfillment process. Top Heavy elected to go with the JCPenney TMS Module add-on. This includes built in work flow for the 850 Purchase Order, 753 Routing Request, 754 Routing Instructions, 856 ASN, UCC128 Label, and 810 Invoice processes. "Two of the main benefits DiCentral delivered were time savings and order accuracy in the JCPenney TMS process," says Mr. Reynolds.

EDI Process Improvement - Delivered: DiIntegrator is built and managed by DiCentral and controlled by the user(s). It comes with built-in EDI workflow so your team can follow the EDI requirements of large trading partners from day one.

DiCentral's team quickly installs DiIntegrator and trains your team so you can provide better service to your customers. According to Mike Reynolds, "Top Heavy was able to re-purpose two employees who did manual entry with the old EDI systems into higher value activities for the company. This represented a 66% savings in our EDI program from a resource standpoint alone."

> *"DiIntegrator has a label output sort feature that has eliminated most [80-90%] of the man-hours that used to go into pre-shipment label handling. Not only can we print labels by the TMS truckload, but we can sort down to the UPC or SKU level so that the picking/packing department can work with one SKU at a time. We love the sort feature!"*
>
> —Mike Reynolds
> IT Director, Top Heavy Design

DiCentral Support Team Collaborates to Provide Solutions: In order to better serve Top Heavy, DiCentral's DiIntegrator support team designed custom reports that they use to organize product packing by style in the warehouse. This report also dictates the order by which the UCC128 labels are printed from their thermal printer. The warehouse team can immediately match the group of UCC128 labels to the correct cartons because it is all directed by the report generated by DiIntegrator.

"Since DiIntegrator is all built by DiCentral, we have a single source provider to call for support issues," says Mike Reynolds. "In addition, our web based interface with DiCentral allows for total data visibility. We can see all inbound and outbound data, as well as whether it was sent/received successfully."