CASE STUDY:

Motivational Fulfillment and Logistics Services improves EDI processing and transaction visibility with DiCentral

COMPANY PROFILE:

Motivational Fulfillment and Logistics Services (MFLS)—located in Chino, California—is a logistics company specializing in comprehensive fulfillment administration. The company provides a complete in-house menu of services, such as inventory management, individual order processing, track-n-trace, data management, and standard and custom reporting. MFLS was founded in 1977 by Hal Altman and Geoff Landon who still operate the company today.

THE CHALLENGE:

Cheryl Nataren, vice president of logistics at MFLS, found that the company's retail expansion required that its EDI solutions meet the new growth. With the increase of just-in-time fulfillment, there was no room for delays and a fully integrated EDI model was required. MFLS reached out to DiCentral requesting an EDI solution that would take care of their present needs, as well as allow for future growth.

BUSINESS MODEL REQUIRES MORE FLEXIBILITY:

EDI solutions are typically single-enterprise applications; however, many 4PL providers—including MFLS—hardcode them to provide services for multiple clients, each with their own set of trading partners. Inevitably, this system constrains the 4PL, creating a snowball effect and forcing the company to apply unique code for every problem rather than utilize a reusable solution. MFLS found that the system had limitations and didn't ensure the flexibility that their business model required.

TECHNOLOGY CONSTRAINTS:

Is it unreasonable to shrink a company's technology footprint and boost overall productivity, while increasing growth potential? With MFLS' existing technology, this was not a possibility: merging EDI data from outside trading partners with multiple WMS & OMS applications was simply out of the question. MFLS wanted to escape this paradigm and find a way to simplify and enhance its EDI workflow using SaaS architecture.

A PROVIDER THAT HAS MFLS' INTERESTS IN MIND:

MFLS needed an EDI provider that could be trusted to accurately administer its EDI system, thus allowing the company to invest more time and energy into what it does best: being a leading logistics provider. As such, MFLS was looking for a provider that would maintain a trusting relationship that would be mutually beneficial for both parties. Also important was bringing in an EDI provider that had enough customer support experience to quickly and efficiently help the company get through any issues that arise. According to Cheryl, "Many of our clients are new to EDI, and need extra attention during setup." Having an EDI provider that can be trusted to deliver great customer support to both kinds of customers—those new to EDI setup and those who are experienced—was essential to MFLS.

PROVIDING CUSTOMERS VISIBILITY INTO THE PROCESS:

MFLS' objective to "take the lead" in providing an all-inclusive service, while also offering a central point of control, required a better way to share data with customers. Because of the sheer volume of transactions

DiCentral Solution:

DiIntegrator Enterprise: Multi-Tenant, Localized Solution managed from the SaaS Network

Integration Capability to back end systems while managing heavy UCC128 label creation & printing

DiClarity: Multi-Tenant, Visibility Portal Used By MFLS Customers to Track Activity of the 4PL with data feeds from WMS

DiCentral SaaS Network: Multi-Tenant Network with Transaction Visibility and Event Management

that MFLS processes on a daily basis, many that require PCI compliance, it proved challenging to provide the necessary level of visibility while maintaining flexibility. In offering customizable customer reports, role-based accounts, visibility for both partners and customers, the need to provide on-the-fly information became a top priority. The company understood that better visibility would provide a number of advantages, especially the advantage of a much better customer service experience for their many clients.

THE SOLUTION:

With its combination of software and services, DiCentral's solutions proved to be a good fit.

DICENTRAL'S SOLUTIONS PROVIDE THE FLEXIBILITY THAT MFLS NEEDS:

MFLS deployed DiCentral's DiIntegrator Enterprise, a localized EDI integration platform that allows the user to perform the tasks of multiple parties from one system. In addition, the DiIntegrator Enterprise greatly simplifies the administration and maintenance of multi-party EDI relationships by partitioning data into customer profiles and adding the preconfigured trading partner rules and maps to each profile.

This platform enables MFLS to simplify the multi-faceted EDI conundrum that so many logistics providers find themselves in after years of providing EDI services to their clients. Once DiIntegrator Enterprise was deployed—with its plug-and-play simplicity and ease of use in a local environment—MFLS was able to continue serving its current clients' needs without interference, as well as allow for growth with new clients. All in all, this gives MFLS the ability to continue its 34-year legacy of excellence as a logistics company offering consumer and retail end-to-end fulfillment.

LOWER COST GROWTH THROUGH SCALABLE TECHNOLOGY:

3PLs that ship to retailers need a simplified EDI system that provides the capability to grow at a lower cost. Being set free by scalable technology enables companies like MFLS to grow at a faster pace. Additionally, using preconfigured solutions that require less maintenance and cost less to deploy means lower overall operational costs. DiIntegrator Enterprise is securely connected to DiCentral's internet framework, which simplifies the implementation, maintenance, and customer support by providing its customers and DiCentral visibility into the system via the new software model.

A WORRY-FREE EDI SYSTEM:

DiCentral's expertise is not only in designing efficient and easy to use solutions, but in making sure that customers are able to reap the benefits of EDI without the worry of maintaining and administering those solutions. After launching DiIntegrator Enterprise, MFLS was able to spend more time focusing on growing its business and continuing its success in providing streamlined and affordable logistics services, while leaving the management and upkeep of the solution to DiCentral. And to make it even better, DiCentral's customer support department is available to answer any questions that MFLS may have and to provide the support necessary to keep operations running smoothly.

GREATER VISIBILITY GIVES MFLS EDGE WHEN DEALING WITH CUSTOMERS:

In addition to DiIntegrator Enterprise, DiCentral offers the DiClarity web portal. DiClarity provides a centralized portal which allows users to monitor the status of orders every step of the way—from order fulfillment, transportation of goods, order matching and invoice history. Built on Microsoft .Net technology, DiClarity unlocks data typically trapped in ERPs and legacy warehouse management systems, enabling customers to share information across boundaries—thus providing a substantial competitive advantage.

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