CASE STUDY

EDI implementation of the most simple kind

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With i-effect®, the platform for electronic data exchange on IBM i from menten GmbH, the Austrian electrical and building services specialist Siblik communicates securely with its business partners via the AS2 protocol. The transmission costs are significantly lower than those of the previous mailbox system. Siblik's IT service provider was able to set up the system almost single-handedly - thanks to clarity and intuitive operation.

For many years, Siblik has outsourced the IT support of its client-server landscape to a service provider Net Professionals GmbH from Wiener Neudorf. Wiener Neudorf. This company takes care of Siblik's VMWare virtualized IT infrastructure of Siblik and provides system and application support for System i. for System i. Wolfgang Königstedt, Managing Director of Net Professionals: „A long time ago, we also the System i enterprise resource planning from an from an internal employee who had developed who had developed it himself. Since then, we have been maintaining and the system."

Siblik generates purchase orders, invoices and Siblik generates purchase orders, invoices, shipping notifications, enters order confirmations, etc. Recently, the company has also added the dispatch and receipt of such documents and messages - electronic communication with its business with its business partners - on a modern technical technical basis: with the EDI-Software i-effect® from menten.

Until now, another EDI product was used for this purpose. was used. The disadvantage of this product was that it did not support AS2, which has become the leading communication protocol in electronic data interchange. As version of the EDIINT (EDI over the Internet) protocol its main advantage over other EDI communication channels is that the transmission costs the transmission costs are close to zero. All, that is needed is an Internet connection. AS2 also convinces with its security: Electronic documents of any format are embedded in a kind of are embedded in a kind of „envelope", so that they can be transmitted over the Internet using the HTTP/HTTPS protocol. via the Internet using the HTTP/HTTPS protocol. Each AS2 message receives an electronic signature and is transmitted in encrypted form to the receiving side.

Previous mailbox system too expensive

The security aspect was not taken into account with the previous transmission method. - a system based on a mailbox system - was not neglected either. This is still still used by many System i users as standard. in use by many System i users. However, its use is expensive, as costs are incurred for each individual message. costs are incurred. Robert Lolei, IT manager at Siblik, says, „As long as it works and the volume is not too high you can leave it at that. However, after we had Net professionals have done the math, how much we could save with a modern AS2 solution solution, the decision to modernize was quickly made. modernization was quickly made."

The solution that was introduced to the market a long time ago also introduced to the market a long time ago was no longer running smoothly. and is no longer being developed further. In addition it could only be operated in the cloud in the future. in the cloud. But the electrical and specialist, who prefers to run his applications in-house. applications in-house.

Flexibly influence the mapping

The user interfaces of i-effect® are also well received by Net Professionals - the IT team at Siblik does not even Siblik itself does not even get to see them. „The EDI mapping can be set up in-house with a little IT savvy. with a little IT know-how," reports Wolfgang Königstedt.

The effort involved when partners of the company wish to make changes is is much lower as a result. Because although EDI is standard, but in practice everyone wants to cook their own everyone wants to cook their own soup and interpret the standard standard a little differently, according to the managing director's of the managing director.

Using the i-effect® *MAPGUI, he can now make very flexible make adjustments to the mappings, to customize the order response of one partner individualized, the next partner the invoice format, etc. Previously, such changes to the mappings had to be made by the external partner - an unnecessary additional effort, since Net Professionals, as the already knew the data very well. already knew the data very well. With the IT providers of the partners Net Professionals sits down and clarifies the mappings. the mappings.

For them, too, the new EDI platform Siblik is a simplification for them as well, since they no longer have to no longer have to worry about it as they did in the past, the data from the mailbox-based EDI solution again. again, as was previously the case. But the actual users - Siblik the actual users - Siblik and its customers/suppliers. customers/suppliers - don't even notice. The main thing is that the communication processes are running. In the background and all in the hands of the one service provider, the Net Professionals with i-effect®.

Solution pays for itself in just two years thanks to favorable

In their search for an up-to-date EDI solution for IBM i for IBM i, the IT specialists at Net Professionals came across i-effect®. „From the rich range of functions and ease of use, we were immediately and ease of use and recommended the product to our recommended the product to our customer," says Wolfgang Königstedt. Since summer 2020, the solution has been set up in the company and one connection after the other has been establ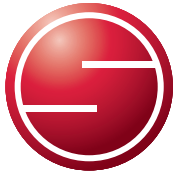ished. Via AS2, a direct now possible to connect directly to the partners. Of these, there are just under 15 - customers and suppliers -with whom communication is mainly via EDI. is done. Message types are ORDERS, ORDRSP, DESADV and INVOIC. The volume of all document types transmitted is between 2,500 and between 2,500 and 3,000 pieces. „This will investment will have paid for itself in just two years," says Robert Lolei. two years."

All IT services from a single source

The administrators at Net Professionals, on the other hand with a product that they support in addition to product that they manage themselves in addition to the more flexible. The previous EDI solution, on the other hand, was by another IT partner, the manufacturer of the program. maintained and supported by another IT partner, the manufacturer of the program. This means that Siblik now receives all IT services from a single source. The System-i platform and all hardware and software are located locally at the company's premises, managed by Net Professionals. Because of Corona, the i-effect® software was also installed completely remotely on the technical installed remotely on the technical base - in the shortest and largely smoothly. The i-effect® web interface, in which the AS2 communication is configured is configured, Wolfgang Königstedt describes as clearly simple, and self-explanatory. Even without AS2 experience his team was able to set up the connection to the first partner quickly. For questions beyond this questions, the support team at menten GmbH is quickly and competently on the spot.

The company

Siblik Elektrik is a company that operates throughout Austria. with headquarters in Vienna. Well-known domestic and and foreign manufacturers in the electrical and building services industry are closely connected with Siblik and have been exclusively represented in Austria for decades represented in Austria. The traditional company was founded in 1938 and can thus look back 80 years of commercial representation. Today Siblik Elektrik has over 150 employees at four locations, in Vienna, Graz, Vöcklabruck and Innsbruck.

Challenges

Siblik Elektrik wanted to put electronic communication with its business partners on a modern technical basis. with its business partners. This had already been done by EDI, but via a mailbox-based system mailbox-based system, which did not support the now leading communication protocol AS2 communication protocol. In the case of larger volumes, such tools high costs for the transmission of larger volumes.

Solutions

In search of a modern EDI solution for IBM i, Siblik's IT service provider, Net Professionals, came across i-effect®. of Siblik, the company Net Professionals, came across i-effect®. Both - end customer and service provider - appreciate the rich functionality and the easy usability of the menten software.

Benefit

i-effect® masters AS2 and ensures that the transmission costs for EDI traffic from Siblik from Siblik are now close to zero. With a monthly document volume between 2,500 and 3,000 documents per month, the investment will have paid for itself in two years. Since EDI mappings in i-effect® can be set up in-house with a little IT savvy, the in-house, the effort is reduced when partners of the company want to make changes. want changes.

Additional Information & Setup

For a free 30-day trial and detailed feature overview
of the modules: **www.i-effect.com**

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menten Software is aimed at medium-sized IBM Power Systems users in all industries. Since 1989, the team has focused on the development of server-based IBM i standard solutions. Service and maintenance, system technology and hardware sales flank the IT services around the server family.