

CARIBOU COFFEE

Caribou Coffee meets big box retailer's EDI requirements with AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics® GP

About Caribou Coffee

Headquartered in Minneapolis, Caribou Coffee Company is the nation's second largest specialty coffee company with more than 300 stores and 3,000 employees in fourteen states. Caribou Stores have the look and feel of an Alaskan lodge, with knotty-pine cabinetry, a fireplace and soft seating.

Background

Caribou Coffee expanded its sales channel by selling coffee to retail grocery outlets. In order to establish a business relationship with these new channels, Caribou Coffee needed the ability to exchange orders electronically – a process that nearly all large retailers require of their suppliers.

Caribou Coffee's Business Development Director, Henry Stein, said "Becoming EDI compliant is necessary to conduct business in this new channel. Nearly all retail grocers ask us if we are EDI compliant."

One of Caribou Coffee's newest retail trading partners, Target, was no exception. Before Caribou could begin selling products to large retail grocer, it needed to meet Target's requirement to exchange information - like purchase orders, invoices and advanced ship notices - using EDI.

Because the two companies conducted business long ago, Caribou was listed as a current Target supplier. Therefore, Caribou was already in "production status" according to Target's system. As a result, Caribou needed to become EDI compliant in just 12 weeks.

Business Need

Caribou's first step toward EDI compliance was to develop several benchmarks to evaluate EDI providers. One requirement was that the EDI solution must tightly integrate with their Microsoft Dynamics GP accounting software.

Dynamics GP, it would be easier to support," said Pat Haberlack, systems analyst for Caribou Coffee. "Separate products are harder to support, but when you have products that are tightly integrated, it does the work for you." They also sought an EDI solution that would be aligned with Microsoft Dynamics GP in the future. "We want to be able to use this new system five to ten years from now," Haberlack said.

"The AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics GP product gives us a selling advantage we never had before. When potential trading partners in the retail grocery business ask us if we can do EDI, we can now say 'Yes!'"

- Business Development Director, Henry Stein

"We knew that if the EDI solution was tightly integrated to Microsoft

Solution

After closely evaluating multiple EDI providers, Caribou selected Accellos, who was referred to them by their Microsoft Dynamics GP provider, Business Microvar.

"AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics GP was far better than the other products we evaluated," Haberlack said. "Because their product has a tight interface with Microsoft Dynamics GP, it is very easy to learn."

Accellos' close relationship with Microsoft Dynamics GP was another reason Caribou Coffee selected AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics GP product. Accellos is a member of the Microsoft Business Solutions Advisory Board and a charter member of the Microsoft Collaborative Development Board.

"Because Accellos is tightly aligned with Microsoft Dynamics GP, we know they are going to be around in the future," said Haberlack. "It will be easier to keep up to date with our product versions knowing that Accellos will be always be concurrent with Microsoft Dynamics GP."

Another selling point was the customer support. "We had a point person at Accellos who was guaranteed to always be available," added Stein. "Having a point person gives us a level of comfort."

Haberlack concurs, stating "On a scale of 1-10, Accellos rates a 10 with regards to helping us to meet Target's needs. Accellos' project manager made sure we were on track and took care of a lot of details that could have been the customer's responsibility.

Results

As a result, Accellos helped Caribou beat Target's 12-week deadline to become EDI compliant by completing the implementation in just eight weeks. Target began sending Caribou orders immediately.

"AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics GP product gives us a selling advantage we never had before," exclaimed Stein. "When potential trading partners in the retail grocery business ask us if we can do EDI, we can now say 'Yes!'"

Stein estimates the new EDI system will generate several hundred-thousand dollars in incremental revenue in the next four months – or about half a million dollars annually.

Haberlack added "There is a time savings benefit, too. Before implementing AccellosOne EDI for Microsoft Dynamics GP, our commercial sales staff person would have to re-key the order from Target into our Microsoft Dynamics GP accounting software. Now, the order automatically integrates into Microsoft Dynamics GP, saving our staff person an average of one hour per week for each trading partner."

More information about Caribou Coffee can be found online at www.cariboucoffee.com

ABOUT ACCELLOS

Accellos is a global provider of logistics, warehouse, 3PL, transportation and mobile fleet management solutions. Accellos addresses the supply chain management and execution market with warehouse management systems for multiple environments; Microsoft Windows-based transportation management solutions; and in-field mobile resource management solutions. Accellos' powerful supply-chain execution solutions are easy to customize and implement, providing our customers with more innovation for less investment while producing significant savings and greater profitability. Through a culture of innovation, Accellos strikes the perfect balance of customer satisfaction, employee fulfillment and shareholder value, delivering greater profitability and rapid return on investment for our customers and accelerated logistics and warehousing services for the clients they serve.



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