



Global Food Redistributor Automates Inbound Purchase Orders to Narrow Digital Divide Among Distributors

Customer Overview



Name

Dot Foods, Inc.

Location

1 Dot Way
Mt. Sterling, Illinois 62353

Industry

Food & Beverage

Web

www.dotfoods.com

Challenge

Complex purchase orders entered Dot Foods via multiple channels including fax, email, EDI or flat file. It needed to streamline the purchase order process to enable salespeople to focus on the customer.

Results

Deployment of ABBYY FlexiCapture was completed within one week, and processing purchase orders was reduced from 45 minutes to two minutes. Sales representatives can now focus on customers and driving more sales.

Dot Foods offers more than 109,000 products and delivers them in less-than-truckload (LTL) quantities to distributors in all 50 states and over 25 countries. Its e-commerce department is responsible for the electronic data interchange (EDI) with customers, suppliers, brokers and groups. It is also responsible for the synchronization of electronic item data with suppliers and customers through the Global Data Synchronization Data (GSDN), including the marketing and nutritional data and images on the Dot Expressway, and for ensuring item data and barcode accuracy.

Challenge

Dot Foods works with thousands of distributors worldwide with many of them requiring manual processing of purchase orders (PO). This included several-thousand multipage POs consisting of millions of line items. Sean Ketcham, Senior E-Commerce Coordinator, at Dot Foods, Inc., was part of the team responsible for identifying a way to digitally transform the processing of POs not submitted via EDI or flat file.

“The customer service team consisted of approximately 60 salespeople who had to allot a bulk of their time to key-in orders submitted by fax, PDF or TIFF files – there are still a significant number of distributors who have not automated their processes,” stated Ketcham. “A 15-page purchase order could take 45 minutes to key into the system, whereas an automated 15 page purchase order could take two minutes or less,” to allow customer service representatives to focus on customers, the e-commerce department was charged with automating the pulling of information from POs and sending it into Dot Foods i-Series for sales to accept.

Dot Foods Company profile

Dot Foods is the nation's first and largest food industry redistributor. It has nine distribution centers serving all 50 states and over 25 countries. Family-owned and operated for more than 55 years, Dot takes pride in developing innovative solutions for manufacturers, distributors and operators. For more, visit www.dotfoods.com.

"ABBYY, along with our continued support from Todologix, has definitely helped us with our initiative to automate every purchase order that we possibly can. Without Flexi-Capture we wouldn't have had a chance to automate customer POs who can't or won't send in an EDI or flat file format."

— Sean Ketcham,
Senior E-Commerce Coordinator,
Dot Foods, Inc.

Solution

Dot Foods worked with the Todologix, Inc. support team to deploy ABBYY FlexiCapture within its e-commerce department. The solution digitized fax orders then sent automated POs to Dot Foods' sales department to accept and to quickly onboard new distributors. The deployment ran alongside existing operations without any interruption of day-to-day operations and was completed within five days. Since its initial deployment in 2008, Dot Foods has maximized its use of FlexiCapture by first onboarding the 10 highest volume distributors, then because the onboarding process is so efficient, today has more than 700 distributors automated using ABBYY.

"It is extremely easy to onboard new distributors and add definitions to the ABBYY solution – from start to finish we can add a new distributor quickly."

Sean Ketcham, Senior E-Commerce Coordinator, Dot Foods, Inc.

Results

The automated workflow for PO processing is extremely streamlined needing minimal human interaction. The customer simply sends their PO to the customer service representative (CSR) as a PDF through Dot Foods' FastFax or by email. The CSR drops the PDF into a HotFolder mapped on their computers. B2B software used by Dot monitors the folder every minute to move PDFs to a HotFolder on the server where ABBYY FlexiCapture is stationed. FlexiCapture pulls from the HotFolder every two minute to ensure timely processing.

What once required a team of over 60 customer service representatives to allot time for manually keying orders now has only four clerks to monitor verification stations. Additionally, it has narrowed the digital divide among distributors who cannot or choose not to automate their PO process.

"ABBYY, along with our continued support from Todologix, has definitely helped us with our initiative to automate every purchase order that we possibly can. Without FlexiCapture we wouldn't have had a chance to automate customer POs who can't or won't send in an EDI or flat file format," stated Ketcham. "We've freed up busy work from customer services representatives and eliminated errors in manual keying."

About ABBYY

ABBYY is a leading global provider of technologies and solutions that help businesses effectively action information.

ABBYY North America
880 N. McCarthy Blvd. Suite 220
Milpitas, CA 95035, USA
Tel 408.457.9777
Fax 408.457.9778
sales@abbyyusa.com

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