

Seamless data exchange with suppliers and customers: The Alnatura Produktions- und Handels GmbH

Since its start in 1984, Alnatura's goal has been to create natural products that are „meaningful for people and the planet“. Today, Alnatura has over 65 natural supermarkets that supply customers with over 1000 different Alnatura products. Such a success story created the need for Alnatura to optimize the workflow between suppliers and customers. That's why, in 2003, Alnatura decided to work with stratEDI.

The first step in the process was the exchange of classic messages – ORDERS, DESADV and INVOIC – with business partners dm-drogerie markt, tegut and Dohle. Next came the integration of GLOBUS stores and the brand Coma and Cactus. Moreover, the EDI system was integrated with Alnatura supermarkets. Here the job was to introduce ORDERS, DESADV (with SSCC/NVE) and INVOIC to a variety of suppliers. In order to further increase the EDI quota, a WebEDI solution was specially tailored for Alnatura and implemented for the suppliers at no cost. Alexander Hawranek, Head of Data Process Management at Alnatura: „A partnership was formed since the very first time stratEDI and Alnatura made contact. This is one of the reasons why we decided to work together. Furthermore, it quickly became clear that stratEDI is an extremely competent and reliable service to have on our side.“

Choosing EDI can be a difficult challenge, unless you immediately find the right provider. Alexander Hawranek said: „Many providers promise to connect partners within six weeks, but the reality of the situation is completely different. It has been our experience that stratEDI has always provided time horizons that have withstood the test of reality. This is particularly important in our business.“

What's the difference? Understanding the customer's processes is first and foremost. Processes with vendors and suppliers must be established and interfaces should be defined and implemented. This requires a partner who is not only reliable and has an understanding of EDI, but is also familiar with supply chains and logistics. This is just another reason why stratEDI and Alnatura have been working together for more than nine years.

The cooperation is strengthened further: In the first quarter of 2010, the warehouse management of Alnatura's logistics service provider at their Lorsch distribution center was fully integrated with EDI technology. The following EDI messages have been introduced: INVRPT, INSDDES, PARTIN, PRICAT and RECADV. A secure communication with AS2 followed.

Another milestone was reached in 2011: CashEDI arrived. This involves the electronic exchange of information in business relationships between the Federal Bank and other financial service providers (single information, change orders, payments, etc.).

Nearly 100 percent of all goods covered by system orders are processed via EDI or WebEDI. This has created more than 280 partner message links over the past years. With the introduction of the Alnatura WedEDI portal in the beginning of 2012, the company was also able to connect around 90 other vendors whose ERP systems do not permit the reception of classic message type ORDERS in the traditional way. Alnatura has sent over 130,000 ORDERS over a year* and in return has received about 210,000 electronic messages (DESADV and INVOIC) from their partners. A volume of about 665,000 records per year, all message types included, could not be achieved without the extremely high degree of automation by stratEDI.

*As of 06/2012