



# Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Business to Business Communication (B2B)

It's time to integrate your EDI system with  
NetSuite!

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Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) has been around since the early 1980s, sponsored mainly by large manufacturers and retailers in the consumer goods sector. At the time, the expected benefits revolved around improving cycle time and reducing errors associated with the manual handling of information. By breaking down the barriers associated with data format differences and various connectivity protocols, companies began to trust EDI to become more efficient in dealing with trading partners. Since then EDI has evolved into business to business (B2B) communication tool, and generates countless benefits associated in dealing with business external partners.

Some of the most significant benefits of implementing an EDI solution include:

- The elimination of manual processes: The most important benefit of B2B communication is without doubt the removal of manual processes related to the handling of business documents flowing back and forth with trading partners. Eliminating the re-keying of information means fewer errors, less interpretation and less reconciliation on documents. Consequently, organizations benefit from cleaner data, faster cycle times and a better cash flow position.
- Shorter cycle time: Getting more accurate orders to your suppliers means quicker turnaround time between order and delivery and a reduced inventory, which requires less cash flow, less warehouse space and provides better logistics management and overall lower costs. In essence, when orders are more organized and less prone to exceptions they bring about a better overall process with your trading partners.
- Less paper, less toner: Green is in, printing is out. Efficient B2B communication helps reduce forest depletion and eliminates the need for that second printer in the office.
- Closer business relationships: It's common knowledge that B2B exchanges make doing business with a trading partner much easier. Highly organized B2B communication helps protect customer relationships in the sense that

it's much easier to order from an integrated partner; it's also cheaper in terms of supply chain process.

- Improved corporate image: Large companies have long understood the payback associated with EDIs. Most of them use some form of collaborative integration with trading partners.

Regardless of the size of your company, there are solutions available for your budget that fit your internal systems environment. Get in line with today's trends – avoid falling behind in a field that is increasingly the norm as opposed to a process reserved for the large players. B2B puts you at par with others.

- More than just a purchase order and invoice thing: From its inception, B2B communication has often been relegated to handling purchase orders and invoices. Today, more than 400 types of business documents have preset standards. Moreover, any type of frequent exchange of information, whatever the type, can be automated to eliminate manual work. If you can fax or email it, you can send it through B2B.

Tap your B2B for more value: B2B communication is too often perceived as an IT function. It's more than that – it has an enormous impact on business processes. Transactions flowing on your B2B set-up are rich in hidden value. Choosing the right B2B communication supplier can help you tap into transactions to extract the value hidden in their content. If you do B2B/EDI, you can easily execute some form of business intelligence to monitor your vendor performance or your customer activity.