

'Indispensable link' enables Copaco Nederland B.V. to stay ahead of competition

Fact File

The Challenge:

To implement personalized, two-way electronic exchange of orders and invoices into SAP

StreamServe ROI:

- Improved connectivity between SAP and customers' ERP systems via XML
- Automatic customer order entry into SAP improves efficiency
- Faster, more accurate invoicing with reduced manual order processing
- Personalized document delivery provides a unique differentiator
- Improved customer satisfaction as a result of more flexible document delivery from SAP

StreamServe BCP enables automatic order entry into SAP

With some 250 employees, Copaco Nederland B.V. is one of the largest distributors of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Netherlands.

One of the most important ways a distributor can differentiate its offering is by providing accurate, real-time product and price information that's tailored to each customer. Deals are won or lost on the quality of service provided, and Copaco Nederland set about ensuring its business communication capabilities were equal to the task.

The Challenge

Copaco Nederland runs its business on an ERP system from SAP® and serves customers through 'Channelstream', its Web-based e-business environment. Frank Lemmen, head of e-business at Copaco Nederland, explains: "Giving clients real-time information on stock availability and prices is crucial in this business. If they don't get the information they need fast enough, they'll look elsewhere. The same applies to ordering and invoicing – the faster the process, the better the service. That's why our e-business initiative is so important."

The traditional method of ordering products and requesting information, by fax and telephone, created a huge amount of work for Copaco Nederland's sales department, which had to input the information manually into SAP. It was slow and expensive, and inevitably some human error crept into the process.

Copaco Nederland needed an automated method of dealing with incoming queries and orders electronically, enabling its customers to connect their ERP systems with Copaco Nederland's SAP environment. At the same time, Copaco Nederland wanted to give customers choice and flexibility in the way they received critical pricing and inventory information.

"Client-specific price lists play an important role in our service. High-volume customers get discounts, for example, and we have to be able to tailor pricing information accordingly," continues Frank Lemmen.

Copaco Nederland needed a way to provide that tailored information, and to extend that personalization to let customers control the format, content and frequency of the information they receive - for example, receiving price information only for products from particular suppliers, or only on certain days of the week. Providing this service manually was extremely time-consuming, and Copaco Nederland's SAP system could not provide the whole solution.

“ Our customers can place XML orders that are entered straight into SAP, via StreamServe BCP. ”

 **STREAMSERVE**
soon all business will be done this way

COPACO



About StreamServe

StreamServe Inc. is a leader and innovator in the fast-growing Enterprise Business Communication (EBC) market, with over 4,000 customers worldwide. We are the only organization to provide an independent platform for the two-way exchange of critical business information in any channel or format. Our pioneering approach enables companies to reduce the cost of communicating with their customers, suppliers and employees. It also increases the ROI from enterprise business applications and makes all of their printed and electronic output more personalized and customer-focused.

StreamServe was founded in Sweden in 1995. Today, our solution is distributed and supported in 130 countries. StreamServe alliances include major application vendors, systems integrators and e-business providers such as IBM, SAP and Oracle.

“StreamServe BCP is an indispensable link in our e-business process.”

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The Solution

The StreamServe Business Communication Platform™ (BCP) benefits companies by providing a single 'communication hub' that enables them to output, distribute and exchange business documents in multiple formats, through multiple channels, without making significant changes to their business applications. For Copaco Nederland, that meant adding new XML capabilities to SAP to make connecting with customers easier, more flexible and more cost-effective. StreamServe BCP has held advanced interface certification for SAP since 2002.

For such a mission-critical project, Copaco Nederland required a proof-of-concept that demonstrated this beyond doubt. StreamServe was happy to comply, and quickly developed a system that generated a client-specific price list and provided the required connectivity capabilities. The proof-of-concept was a success, and the implementation began.

Now StreamServe BCP enables two-way communication between Copaco Nederland and its customers via the industry-standard XML language. The addition of XML to Copaco Nederland's SAP system dramatically enhances the company's ability to connect to a wide range of customers.

“There are many advantages to ordering via XML,” says Frank Lemmen. “Now our clients know within three to seven seconds whether a product is in stock and when it can be delivered, and they can place their orders directly. StreamServe BCP is an indispensable link in our e-business process.”

XML orders from Copaco Nederland's customers are handled by the StreamServe solution, which checks the contents of the order for consistency. The order is then forwarded to SAP and recorded by IDocs. The customer receives a response message from IDocs, via StreamServe BCP, with an order confirmation and delivery date, as well as an electronic shipping form on delivery. Copaco Nederland will also use StreamServe BCP to send electronic invoices in the near future.

The Results

Copaco Nederland's StreamServe project has produced dramatic results. Frank Lemmen explains: “With StreamServe BCP, we can easily provide our clients with the pricing information they need,” he says. “The data stored in SAP is sent to the StreamServe solution, after which the software automatically calculates the discount for the client in question. Our customers can also indicate how they wish to receive pricing information, such as an XML, CSV or PDF file. They can determine when they receive the information and how it's delivered: via email, or via incoming or outgoing FTP connections.”

“StreamServe BCP enables us to increase the speed of our internal processes considerably,” he adds. “Our customers can place XML orders that are entered straight into SAP, via StreamServe BCP. They know exactly what we have in stock. We can guarantee absolute transparency of inventory, and that's a big boost to the service we provide.”

Copaco Nederland's aim is to automate the purchase of mainstream products as far as possible, and StreamServe is a vital link in that process. At present StreamServe BCP automates the internal process of determining customer communication preferences, but in future customers will be able to do this themselves through the Copaco Nederland website. StreamServe BCP's flexibility and ease of use has also benefited the Dutch ICT distributor:

“Our own consultants were able to manage the implementation, and that makes us more flexible,” Frank Lemmen continues. “Our StreamServe and SAP specialists collaborate to create optimal communication processes, internally and with our customers. We can adapt our communication strategy quickly to suit changing customer needs.”

With StreamServe BCP and SAP, Copaco Nederland can forge ahead with its Channelstream e-business initiative and provide the highest quality service possible, now and into the future.



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