

ECbridges Success Story: QAD EDI ECommerce Implementation

Bridging IT Value with ECommerce Business Objectives

RBX Industries first try at implementing QAD's ECommerce module was time consuming, costly, and disappointing. The consulting firm they had hired knew how to install hardware and software. However, laments RBX ECommerce Manager Marilyn Custer, "I had to spend all my time explaining to them how EDI works at our company and in the auto industry. They had a steep learning curve and I didn't have the time." With the Virginia based automotive supplier's EDI initiative stalled, Custer turned to ECbridges for help.

The EDI Experts

For ECbridges, Custer's request was business as usual. For over a decade, ECbridges has been installing and implementing ECommerce systems at medium and large businesses throughout North America. The company has earned the reputation as "The EDI Experts" thanks to industrial strength knowledge of EDI in numerous verticals including automotive. The project plan for RBX included industry standard translation software from Sterling (Gentran) and communications software from Cleo. Since ECbridges has been using Sterling and Cleo for years, the installation and configuration project went smoothly. The project manager was intimately familiar with the special requirements of RBX's trading partners: Ford, Chrysler, Orchard Supply, and Home Depot among many. As a result, the translation maps (EDI/SNF) and transformation maps (QAD DB) were completed quickly and accurately.

Breaking the Cookie-Cutter Mold

ECbridges unparalleled knowledge and experience with EDI surpassed all expectations. What really impressed Custer was how they were able to leverage knowledge of the current EDI environment to foster a smooth transition to the QAD ECommerce Module. Prior to ECommerce, RBX was using ECbridges' Total-EDI for MFG/PRO solution. As a result, the ECbridges implementer knew RBX's trading partner configurations, business practices, special case MFG/PRO processing logic, and IT environment.

The shared history between the two companies allowed ECbridges to go beyond the "cookie-cutter" approach taken by the other consulting firm. Only because the ECbridges team knew the current environment inside out, was it able to perform a truly useful gap analysis between the present and proposed environments. The project manager understood which business logic would carry over to the ECommerce module and which would not. For problematic areas he was able to create workarounds when necessary. Consequently, RBX didn't need to alter its business practices to accommodate the new technology.

"ECbridges was a natural fit. They were proactive in finding solutions to my problems. Everything went so smoothly."

***-Marilyn Custer
RBX Industries***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Company

RBX Industries
Foam, rubber, & silicone manufacturer

Problem

Stalled ECommerce migration

Solution

ECbridges Consulting Services

Results

Accelerated implementation completed successfully

Lessons Learned

EDI expertise needed to bridge IT value with business objectives

No other consulting firm could have transferred the business logic between the two environments as well as ECbridges did. The complex information contained in Total-EDI's adapter maps— trading partner specifications and EDI processing logic specific to RBX business practices — was outside of the other firm's expertise. The history RBX had with ECbridges ultimately proved to be invaluable to the smooth transition to ECommerce.

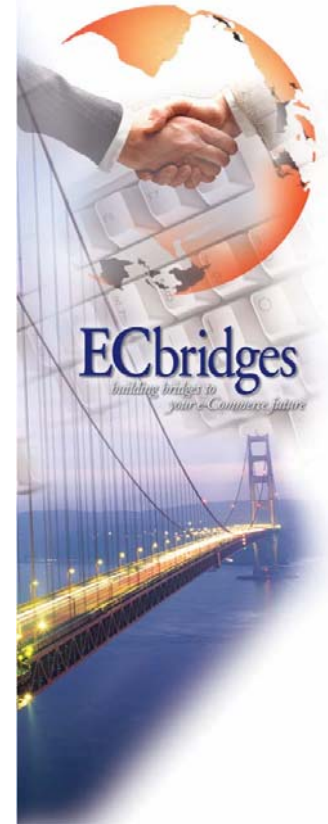
Although Marilyn Custer had always raved about ECbridges' service and support, she was initially unsure of their familiarity with QAD's ECommerce solution. Her concerns were put to rest upon learning that QAD itself had trained the ECbridges implementers on the ECommerce migration process. Furthermore, the ECbridges project manager assigned to the RBX migration was himself a Progress developer with nearly a decade of experience working in MFG/PRO.

ECbridges Delivers Value and Convenience

Custer appreciates the value ECbridges has delivered, "Unlike the other firm, ECbridges hit the ground running." Although their rates were the same, RBX saved money by using ECbridges consulting and implementation services. The expert knowledge and shared history allowed an appreciably faster install than otherwise would have been the case. Custer's time and budget were not wasted in training consultants. To illustrate, she explains that ECbridges' personnel, uniquely, understood how RBX used cumulative calculations specific to the auto industry and how this logic is implemented in ECommerce.

Custer values how ECbridges offered recommendations to make her environment cheaper and more efficient. They proactively suggested using a VAN communication configuration which saves RBX money every month.

Upon reflection, Custer is glad RBX turned to ECbridges for all three parts of its new EDI system. The Gentran translation maps and trading partnerships piggybacked on work already done. The ECommerce transformation maps inherited logic from ECbridges' adapters. The communications hardware, software, and scripts ended up saving money by sending and receiving data as efficiently as possible. Best of all, the implementation of these three subsystems by the single company that best understood RBX prevented things from falling through the cracks. Although the migration is done, Custer feels comfortable knowing that ECbridges is available to help maintain and support their ECommerce system in the future.



"Because of ECbridges, my transition to ECommerce was so smooth that it was transparent to my trading partners."

***—Marilyn Custer
RBX Industries***

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