

K'NEX Brands Doesn't Toy Around with Trading Partners

nuBridges Exchange™ Commerce Suite Keeps the Orders Coming -- 24/7/365

K'NEX Brands is the name behind some of the world's favorite toys -- BRIO trains and Lincoln Logs to name just two. Founded in 1992, this Pennsylvania-based company's construction and educational toys are sold in more than 30 countries through major retailers, online stores and independently owned toy stores. Its largest trading partners include Amazon.com, Sears, Target, Toys R Us and Walmart.

Like many other manufacturers, during the 1990s K'NEX communicated with its trading partners via fax or EDI VAN. When Walmart implemented an AS2 solution hub at its data center in 2003, it encouraged all of its suppliers to implement their own AS2 spokes as well.

Tony Kratowicz, Senior IT Director at K'NEX, undertook a thorough evaluation of AS2 solutions based on the findings of The Drummond Group, an independent firm that certifies interoperability between software products. After installing and evaluating several AS2 solutions, Kratowicz chose Commerce Suite based on its reliability, ease of use and cost-effectiveness.

"We found that the feature sets of the major AS2 providers are similar, but what it come down to for us was how easy it was to install and configure Commerce Suite," said Kratowicz.

High-Performance, Low-Cost

Initially adopting the software to communicate with Walmart US and Walmart Canada, K'NEX quickly realized the benefits of using AS2. "As soon as we set up Commerce Suite to communicate with Walmart," commented Kratowicz, "we realized a huge cost savings and we were sold on AS2 technology -- the costs are fixed once you're set up and it's a highly secure point-to-point communication solution."

It wasn't long before Commerce Suite became K'NEX's de facto communication standard for external data exchange -- purchase orders, order acknowledgements, advance ship notices, invoices and point-of-sale transactions. In addition to communicating with its retail trading partners, K'NEX also relies on Commerce Suite to keep track of its shipments to and from China, where a number of its toy components are packaged. K'NEX receives daily updates via the AS2 connection on where its shipping containers are as well as when those containers are loaded and unloaded.

"The way K'NEX does business, using Commerce Suite for trading partner communications is a big, big cost savings."

-- Tony Kratowicz
Senior IT Director
K'NEX Brands

Business Value and Operational Benefits

Used by businesses of all sizes, Commerce Suite maximizes the benefits of conducting business electronically, so trading partners can . . .

- Get products to market faster, cheaper and better than the competition. Delivering products to market quickly is crucial to success; after a new product hits the market, competitors quickly follow.
- Gain visibility throughout the supply chain. A universal level of visibility enables the entire trading partner community access to every relevant aspect of business processes.
- Connect rapidly and reliably to AS2, EDI and other trading partner networks.
- Eliminate the complications and costs involved when different businesses in a network use different transfer protocols.
- Maintain a single, global connection that improves the reach and effectiveness of your supply chain network.
- Automate and manage global trading communities.
- Eliminate lost transactions by use of Message Delivery Notifications (MDN) reconciliation.
- Optimize business processes across the supply chain – from manufacturing to accounting to customer service.
- Eliminate the complexity of managing multiple communication protocols.

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About nuBridges

nuBridges is a leading provider of software and managed services to protect sensitive data at rest and in transit, and to transfer data internally or externally with end-to-end security, control and visibility. nuBridges encryption, key management, managed file transfer and B2B integration solutions are used to comply with security mandates and to digitally integrate business processes among enterprises, systems, applications and people. Over 3,000 customers depend on nuBridges secure eBusiness solutions to encrypt millions of credit cards, exchange billions of dollars in B2B transactions and enable countless business-critical file transfers, including Wal-Mart, Amazon.com, Timberland, American Eagle Outfitters, Belk, Bon Ton, Wachovia, Sun Trust, AIG, CheckFree, Bank of America and Verizon. nuBridges is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

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