

DemandB2B



News and Views on Implementing a Complete B2B Solution.

February 2007

Specific B2B Solutions for Manufacturing, Automotive, Retail, Energy and Logistics Industries

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Covast Update: Covast Introduces the Business Bot, the World's First B2B Appliance for Supply Chain Hubs

B2B integration may be easier than ever before, but let's face it - it's not exactly easy. Especially for large supply chain hubs and their suppliers. In fact, it can be a nightmare. However, Covast is making it as easy as sending an email with the launch of BBot.

Technically speaking, BBot is a box, or appliance, of pre-configured stack of hardware and software. With just a LAN and an internet connection, BBot creates an invisible "bridge" between your supply chain systems and your smaller suppliers' using Microsoft Office.

This means if your suppliers use Microsoft Office (and 99.9% of them probably do), B2B integration is a cinch.

What does this mean for your business? Real supply chain visibility. Lower IT costs. Improved fulfillment and accuracy rates. More life out of your existing IT investments. And much more.

To learn more about the Covast BBot is revolutionizing supply chain communications, click [here](#).

B2B Integration: What Will it Mean for You in 2007?

Dear Friends,

Like people, most companies welcome the New Year with an array of resolutions. A majority of them go something like this: Do more business, do it with the right people, and do it more efficiently.

Each year, thousands of companies turn to B2B integration to help keep those

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B2B Integration News

TMCnet.com

["Covast, Network Engines Introduce the Covast B2B Appliance for RealTime Networks"](#)

.Net Developers Journal

["Industry's First Microsoft BizTalk Appliance for B2B Integration"](#)

Gijsbert in 't Veld Blog

Explore the latest in Microsoft BizTalk and B2B integration in the [blog](#) of Covast CTO, Gijsbert in 't Veld.

What's New

Specific B2B Solutions for:

- [Manufacturing](#)
- [Automotive](#)
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- [Logistics & Distribution](#)

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resolutions. Before you ponder any changes in your B2B integration strategy, here are a few things to consider that are driving this sector of technology in 2007:

- **Verticalization...What Flavor is Your Solution?** B2B integration, like most technologies, does not come in a “one size fits all” solution. The most effective solutions are tailored to meet the supply chain and technical challenges of specific industries.
- **The Network Appliance Meets B2B:** Companies have turned to appliance technology to jumpstart their operations for some time. Now, these preconfigured decks of hardware and software include B2B integration servers. That means supply chain partners, large and small, can integrate B2B applications more quickly and easily than ever before.
- **BPM Goes Mainstream:** It's not just for the techie anymore. Business Process Management is part of corporate vernacular. And, easy-to-use BPM tools are popping up everywhere. The availability of BPM tools will be a make-or-break factor for the B2B integration solutions of 2007.

Whether your B2B integration to-do list includes upgrading old systems, investing in new ones or just making a few tweaks, we hope this information will be helpful to your efforts.

Wishing you the best for the New Year,
Daan Scheer
CEO
Covast

Customer Spotlight:

Covast B2B Suite for Logistics & Distribution to Reduce Supply Chain Costs by \$20K per Month for Cardinal Logistics Management Corp.

Initial deployment results indicate that the Covast B2B Suite for Logistics & Distribution will save major bucks and lots of time for Cardinal Logistics. As a leading provider of third-party logistics (3PL), transportation and supply chain solutions, Cardinal Logistics turned to Covast to reduce supply chain costs and better support an increase in the volume of EDI transactions.

Because Cardinal Logistics provides customers with multiple status updates on every load transported, value added network (VAN) character charges had become a hefty expense. Additionally, the company needed a more reliable solution to provide improved visibility and reporting at every step of the transaction transmission process. Since deploying the Covast B2B Suite for Logistics & Distribution more than four months ago, Cardinal Logistics has realized the following benefits:

- **Lower B2B Transaction Costs:** By mid-2007, Cardinal Logistics estimates they will be saving up to \$20,000 each month.
- **Less Time to Add New Trading Partners:** The Covast solution allows the company to add new trading partners to its B2B systems in 50 percent less time.
- **Increased Flexibility and Customization Capabilities:** Cardinal Logistics can now quickly adapt to their customers' supply chain requirements by easily making changes to functions such as document mapping, reporting and verifications.
- **Simplified Invoicing and Tracking:** The ability to see and sort transaction detail has allowed Cardinal Logistics to expedite and simplify its invoicing and collection process.

Covast @ Your Service Answers to Your Common B2B Integration Questions

Q: Earlier this year, Microsoft announced several EDI enhancements for Microsoft BizTalk Server. Do these enhancements make BizTalk Server's integration capabilities powerful enough to support my B2B operations WITHOUT Covast?

A: To answer your question, it really depends upon the complexity of your supply chain and trading partner activity. But, consider this...Most of our customers come to us because they rely heavily on EDI and other B2B systems to do business. In other words, they have an “advanced” need for B2B integration. Microsoft still willingly directs these types of customers to Covast.

Until now, Covast has provided EDI facilities on top of BizTalk Server as the generic integration broker. This Microsoft/Covast partnership has been very successful, but with some limitations. Fortunately, these limitations will be removed in 2007. Architecturally, it makes more sense to have mainstream EDI translation in BizTalk Server, where Covast adds functionality, to further enhance the BizTalk Server B2B offering for:

- Trading partner management
- B2B document flow monitoring
- End to end real time supply chain integration
- Automatic trading partner onboarding
- Specific vertical needs in Automotive, Retail, Logistics & Distribution, Manufacturing and Energy & Utility

In the future, you will set up your professional B2B environment with Covast technology that runs on a BizTalk Server integration platform that supports mainstream EDI transactions.