opentext™

Success story

IDEA (Industry Data Exchange Association)

Industry
• Information Technology

Solution
• OpenText™ Alloy™

Results

⇄ **Enabled efficient, secure and compliant** digital data exchange

📈 **Drove business growth** with advanced EDI mapping, standardized formats and comprehensive support

☑ **Ensured compliance** with a standards-based system

🧠 **Leveraged industry expertise** to extend business reach into multiple verticals

idea ™

IDEA transforms data exchange with powerful managed services capabilities

Technology services provider powers the electrical industry with a cost-effective managed EDI solution, built on the OpenText Alloy platform

"The OpenText Alloy platform has helped us meet the objective of increasing revenue. We had to grow to continue to have success within the channel. If we didn't, then we risked the possibility of customers moving on to other providers. OpenText Alloy has definitely helped us grow the business and make customers happy."

Tom Guzik
Director of Digital Integration Services
IDEA

Established in 1998 by the National Electrical Manufacturers Association and the National Association of Electrical Distributors, IDEA (Industry Data Exchange Association) is the official technology service provider of the electrical industry. The organization provides manufacturers and distributors with solutions to effectively manage daily operations to achieve lower costs and higher profits and ensure more satisfied customers.

The organization's mission is to be a single source of complete, high-quality data, backed by outstanding customer service and the latest technology. With a corporate mandate to grow the business, IDEA realized that it lacked the technology to meet its objectives. Tom Guzik, director of Digital Integration Services at IDEA, explained, *"We were looking for a partner and product that would grow with us. There are a lot of great technologies that would work but we looked beyond the technology. So, we built a roadmap for the next 10 years and decided to find a provider that would be able to meet our needs."*

The new technology was needed to support IDEA Exchange, an electronic data interchange (EDI) solution that enables IDEA's customers to quickly, easily and securely exchange electronic business documents, such as purchase orders and invoices, with their suppliers and customers. Guzik described the requirement. *"We were looking to provide more managed or outsourced EDI services. Many companies within our channel are considering outsourcing their EDI. We could do some mapping and some hosted connections, but we didn't have a full managed services offering."*

After a rigorous evaluation process, IDEA selected OpenText™ Alloy™ to help deliver its data exchange solution. Along with a managed services approach, Alloy facilitates data integration activities, including B2B, MFT, A2A and hybrid integration. The platform offers any-to-any translation

capabilities, best-in-class mapping software, built-in data security and the ability to handle data from all sources in any format. The platform is part of the OpenText™ Business Network, which processes trillions in commerce every year and connects more than a million businesses globally.

By deploying the Alloy platform, IDEA has the relevant technology it needs to grow its managed services offering with advanced mapping abilities, standardized file requirements, global support and industry expertise. Using Alloy to power its Exchange solution, IDEA can offer electrical distributors and manufacturers the technology and expert resources they need to strengthen partner relationships and provide better service.

For example, IDEA customers now benefit from Alloy's comprehensive features, including its advanced mapping functionality. Guzik said that EDI mapping allows data to be translated to different file formats. *"Previously, we had specialized mapping needs that we couldn't meet with our current providers, so we ended up not being able to take that business. With OpenText Alloy's mapping system, we now have unlimited opportunities as far as mapping needs. There is no barrier to a partner being able to trade electronically because everything can be mapped and converted into the desired format."*

Using Alloy, IDEA has also benefited from standardized data formats. Guzik explained that EDI standards prescribe the required format and content of electronic business documents, including the order and location of the units of data in a document. Without standardization, it was challenging to maintain and scale data exchanges. *"What we found over the years was a lax attitude as far as standards. Some customers didn't want to enforce them. They asked for exceptions, which we accommodated, but the result is a system that doesn't follow one standards-based system. With the current OpenText structure, it's all standards driven."*

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Tom Guzik
Director of Digital Integration Services
IDEA

In addition, IDEA and its customers have gained access to OpenText's global support team, which provides unparalleled expertise. According to Guzik, *"Customers are extremely happy with the service. Their support needs are being handled within hours. If there's ever a support issue, the OpenText Alloy support team is on it, 24/7. Sometimes customers don't even know about issues because they are fixed instantly."*

While IDEA handles 70 percent of the e-commerce activity within the electrical supply channel, OpenText's presence in multiple industries has helped extend the reach of IDEA's business. *"Although we primarily focus on electrical, our customers are not limited to that. OpenText*

is in many channels and many verticals. They've demonstrated the ability to handle just about any need, both domestically and globally. Having a provider with that experience really helps us grow the business and meet the needs of our customers," said Guzik.

Guzik also noted that growing the business is critical to IDEA's continued success and the Alloy platform has helped them meet the objective of increasing revenue. *"We had to grow to continue to have success within the channel. If we didn't, then we risked the possibility of customers moving on to other providers. OpenText Alloy has definitely helped us grow the business and make customers happy,"* concluded Guzik.

About OpenText

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