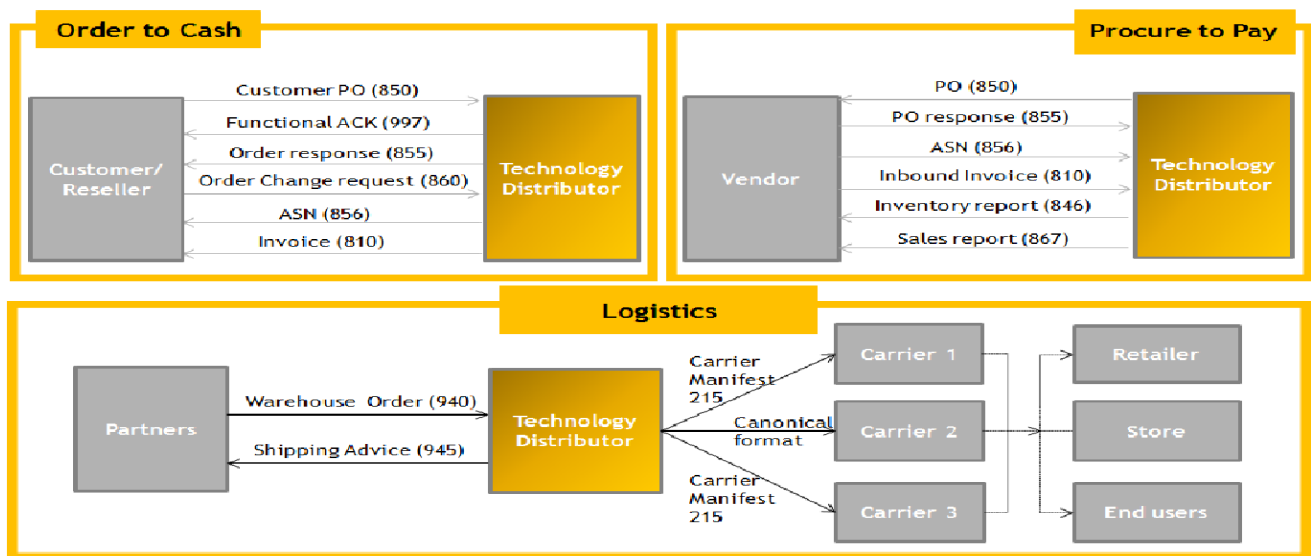


Case Study - B2B Implementation for a Technology Distributor

Background

Some of key challenges faced by large enterprises in B2B integrations are - multiple disparate and fragmented B2B Gateway solutions, legacy routing and translation platforms with multiple patch upgrades and fixes, lack of Integration of B2B Gateway with the internal/back-end applications, Inconsistency in governance of B2B integrations. These scenarios in turn impact the Business due to high maintenance and support costs, lack of business agility and scalability, bottlenecks in improving productivity, lack of end-to-end visibility for B2B transactions etc.

The case study described here is against this background and talks about an extensive, enterprise level B2B consolidation and migration program executed for a leading wholesale technology distributor which has an extensive sales and distribution network throughout North America, EMEA, Latin America and Asia-Pacific and has business critical dependency on B2B integration with its 10000+ Trading Partners. The technology distributor is engaged in B2B integrations with various Sales & Distribution (SD) entities like Vendors/Manufacturers, Carriers, Resellers & End-users. These B2B integrations at a high level fall under various business functions namely Order to Cash, Procure to Pay, Logistics as depicted below.



Business Case

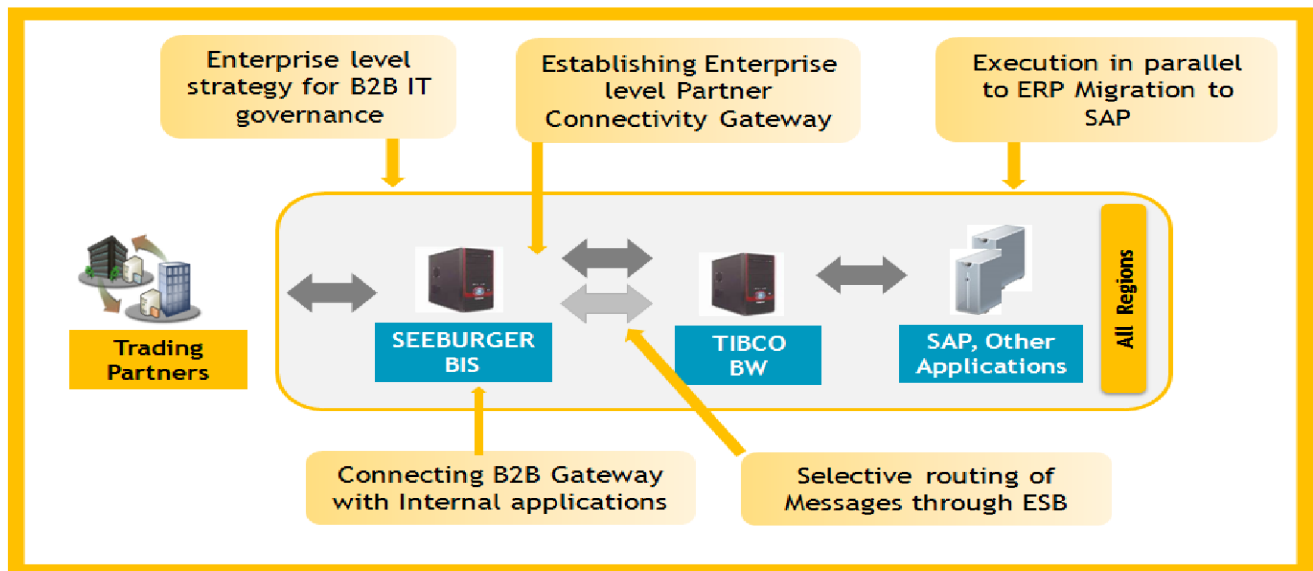
Before the migration and consolidation exercise the Enterprise had a clutter of various B2B tools (like Cyclone, TIBCO BC, GENTRAN, and BIZTALK) interacting with multiple IBM based ERP's. In parallel to the ERP migration (IBM based ERP's to SAP) it was planned to do the B2B migration and consolidation to overcome below challenges:-

- High running costs due to need for maintaining and supporting 4 different B2B platforms
- Lack of Business agility due to high turnaround times for on-boarding of new Trading Partners, new transactions
- Lack of end to end visibility for B2B transactions

- Need for building new interfaces and transformations due to ERP Migration from Legacy ERP on Mainframes to SAP
- Need to retire the outdated and out-of-support softwares

TO-BE Architecture

After elaborate exercise involving product evaluation, architecture definition, proof of concept etc it was decided to establish a single SEEBURGER based B2B gateway and with TIBCO as the ESB platform. The planned end state of this implementation is as below:



The implementation is currently mid-way with the frameworks, solution-definitions and initial pilot roll-outs completed for various geographies.

Key challenges and complexities for the migration and implementation are:

- Migration of 10,000+ geographically spread diverse Trading Partners
- Scalability in the range of more than 300,000 orders per day
- Catering to VAN, AS2, FTP, SFTP, FTPS, HTTP & HTTPS protocols
- Localization requirements for various countries
- Aligning with ERP Migration plan for regions and countries
- Address all customizations in existing platforms
- Crucial dependency on Trading Partners for meeting timelines, quality standards
- Lack of Documentation on existing Solutions
- Datacenter Migration including platform upgrade and along with roll-out execution

Execution Approach

Below is the outline of the Program execution approach for the B2B-EDI migration and roll-out:

- Elaborate Product evaluation exercise for finalizing the middleware platforms
- Comprehensive Program Management Plan

- Global Templatization to maximize reuse and standardize processes and interfaces
- Scalable, high-performance platform setup
- Pilot roll-outs
- Effective team organization and induction
- Accelerated Rollout development
- Partner Engagement
- Detailed roll-out planning and implementations

In addition to the above track for migration and consolidation of core solution, the other tracks executed in parallel are:

- On-boarding of new Trading Partners
- Bulk Migration of Partners for Non-SAP-Live Countries
- 24X7 Maintenance and Support Services
- Datacenter Migration from external to internal infrastructure
- Defining Proprietary XML Schema and Portal for further facilitating on-boarding of smaller Partners

Some of **highlights of the B2B Gateway solution** are:

- Custom Self Service Business Web Portals for Trading Partners
- Highly generic Business Process framework
- Multi-level Routing Rules
- Optimized Data Transformations using Super Map concept
- Streamlined Version Management using middleware product features and SVN
- Highly customized channels for End-2-End Transaction Tracking
- Managed File Transfer (MFT) for Price catalogues, Inventory stocks, Reports and other files
- Security of Transactions ensured through Secure protocols and data Encryption
- Load Balanced (Cisco-based ACE Load-balancer) & Fail Safe Architecture
- Automated, Robust & Customized Error Management, Systems Monitoring & Alerting with configurable settings for prioritizing
- High speed transaction processing ensured through Architecture and Design best practices
- Effective automation tools and accelerators

Key **Business value-adds** from the B2B migration and consolidation are:

- Streamlining and standardization of Enterprise's B2B operations across the globe
- High speed processing of B2B transactions
- Greater scalability of B2B operations
- Greater Business agility
- End to end tracking and visibility of transactions with Partners
- Lower Operations and Maintenance costs

Key **learning's and best practices** from this B2B implementation are:

- Intensive stakeholder management planning and partner evangelization is a must
- Automation tools and frameworks are instrumental in accelerating implementations as well as ensuring high quality standards
- Dependency on Trading Partners for Testing must be minimized through stratification, stubs and regression testing packs
- All options for Self-service, Solution Templating and designing of Reusable components should be explored thoroughly
- Factory model is extremely useful for repetitive tasks

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