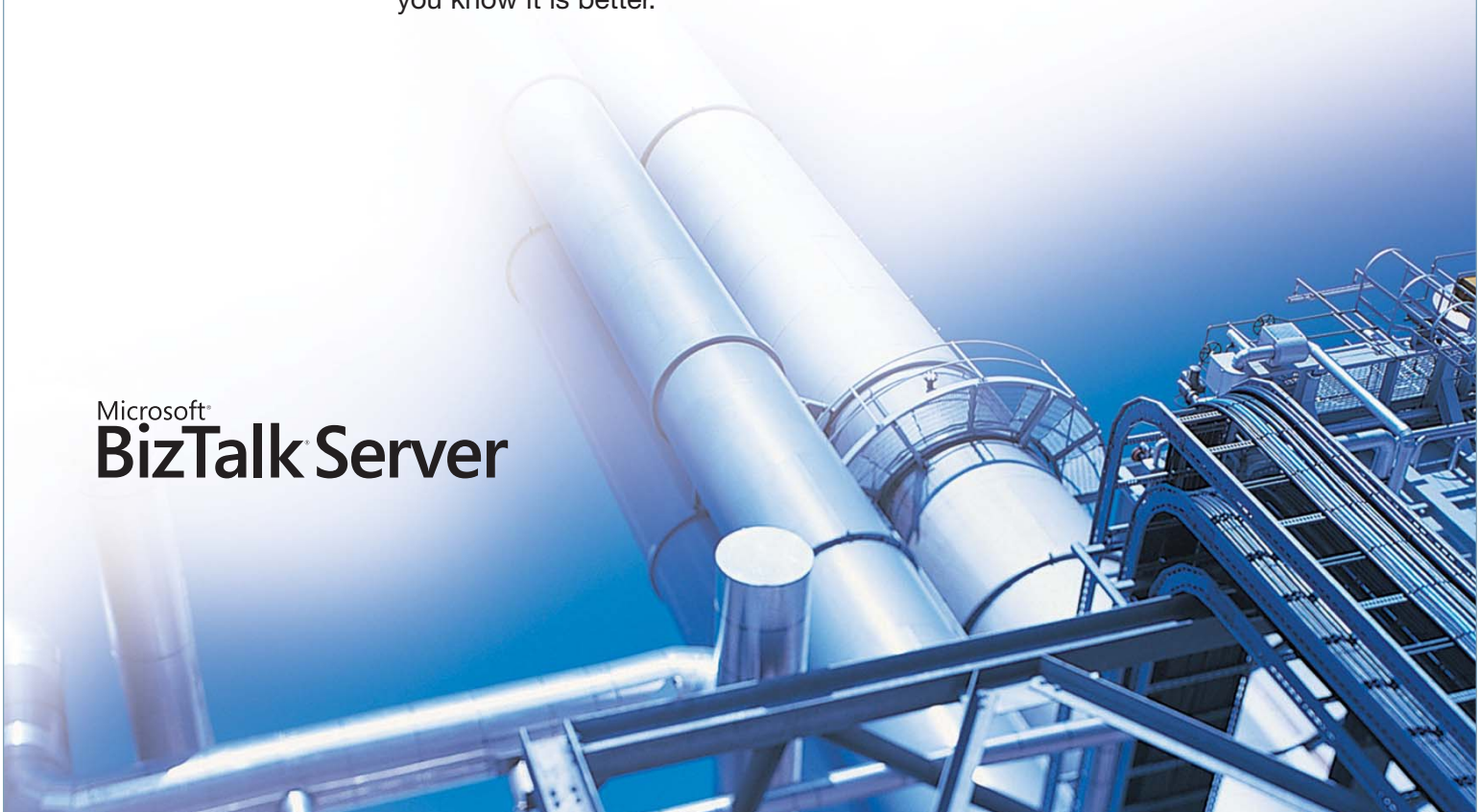COVAST®

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility

Covast understands the fast pace of today's energy and utility industry. In an increasingly global marketplace, every aspect of your business must be integrated for agility.

Many of the world's largest energy and gas companies turn to Covast to overcome this challenge. The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility enables total B2B integration by extending the integration capabilities of traditional single platform environments.

The result? Operations are more efficient. Supply chains are more flexible. Your IT infrastructure is more scalable. Put simply, business as you know it is better.

Microsoft®
BizTalk Server

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility is the industry's most reliable and scalable B2B integration solution. With more than a decade of B2B integration success behind us, Covast understands there is no "one size fits all" solution. Our industry-focused solutions are designed specifically to overcome the organizational, operational and market challenges of your energy and utility company.

Seamless B2B Integration with Microsoft BizTalk Server.

Most of today's energy and utility companies recognize the benefits of a single integration platform. The ability to consolidate and manage all applications and business activities from one place quickly translates into improvements in efficiency, business process management and business activity monitoring. However, migrating B2B communications to a single platform — and the systems that support them — can be an overwhelming challenge.

Welcome to the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility. Covast's combination of B2B integration software and expert professional services drastically extends the B2B integration capabilities of Microsoft BizTalk Server. Integrating and conducting B2B communications is as simple as installing the Covast B2B Suite. Once this is done, you can access all available B2B integration features, such as EDI, from within your integration server. Covast's tools help you easily define your trading partner profiles and transform B2B documents to orchestrate, conduct and track all of your B2B exchanges.

Specifically Designed for the Complex Demands of Energy and Utility.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility is designed specifically for the business and supply chain demands of today's global energy and utility companies. The solution offers:
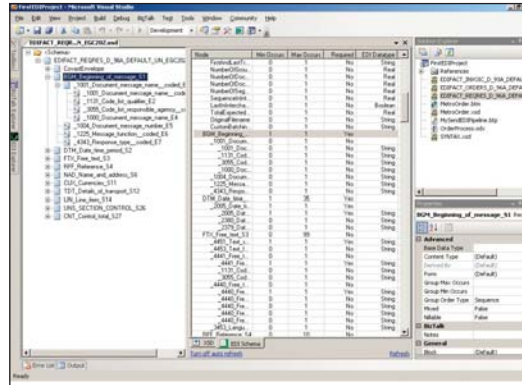
- **Management of and insight to all B2B communication through a single integration platform.** Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility extends the capabilities of your single integration platform to improve operational efficiency and enable real-time visibility of all external B2B communications

- **Reliable support of all energy and utility B2B standards and protocols.** Covast supports all B2B communication standards and protocols used in the energy and utility marketplace — allowing you to conduct business on a truly global scale.

- **Secured, controlled communication.** The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility enables companies to communicate with trading partners in a secure and controlled way, ensuring communication integrity and reliability.

- **Ability to quickly add new trading partners.** Covast's solutions are designed to be used by non-developer/non-programmer resources in the energy and utility marketplace. This allows you to further tailor your solution to fit your precise B2B communication and integration needs — quickly and easily.

Full End-to-End Support for Your Complex B2B Requirements.

Whether you just need to exchange invoices and purchase orders or you manage a B2B exchange that disperses a vast variety of documents, Covast addresses all of your B2B communication requirements. The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility simplifies the technical challenges of integrating B2B infrastructures — with your internal applications as well as your trading partners — making it easy to process and generate both inbound and outbound B2B messages.
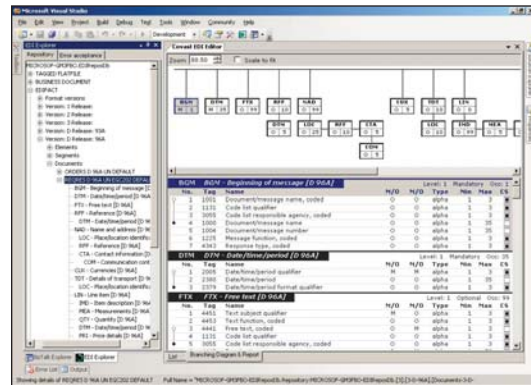
Control of B2B Specifications and Versions.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility easily handles the storage, management and editing of B2B communication specifications, with an emphasis on EDI. A SQL Server-based metadata repository stores all of your document types, versions, standards and partner-specific implementations. These include standards such as X12, EDIFACT, TRADACOMS, VDA, ODETTE, EDIG@S and others, as well as proprietary file formats, which are used to process the wide variety of inbound and outbound documents. You can use pre-defined, standard document definitions — downloaded from the global B2B repository on the Covast website. Or, you can customize the definitions and settings using the Covast EDI Explorer, an efficient, easy-to-learn workbench. Either way, Covast makes it simple.

EDI to XML Parsing and XML to EDI Serialization.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility automatically renders an XML schema representation (XSD) of the EDI format for use in Microsoft BizTalk Server. Even partner-specific XML schemas can be generated as you can easily accommodate specific EDI Implementation Guides used by different business partners.

All EDI document specifications, including standard definitions and partner-specific documents, are stored in Covast's SQL Server EDI Repository and can be maintained using the Covast EDI Explorer hosted b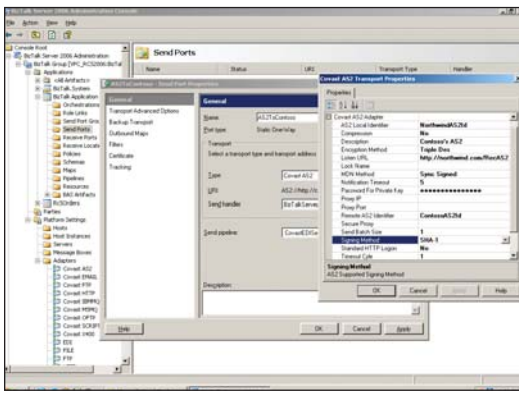y the Visual Studio application development framework. The EDI Document definitions can be added as Generated Schemas using the Solution Explorer by selecting them from the EDI Repository. This "enables" them as XML Schemas (XSD) and they will be added to the current BizTalk solution automatically. They are then ready for immediate use in the BizTalk Schema Editor, Mapper and Orchestration Designer.

Comprehensive VAN Support.

Covast ensures full connectivity with predefined parameter settings to support the most commonly-used Value Added Networks (VANs), customized configurations with end-user and third-party VAN connectors and support for other transport mechanisms over secure Internet protocols.

AS2 Adapter for Seamless and Secure Connectivity.

The AS2 standard for B2B communication promises the best of two worlds: the reliable service levels of a VAN plus the cost-effectiveness of using the Internet HTTP protocol. This is why more and more energy and utility companies are opting to exchange B2B documents using the AS2 standard. Covast makes the transition to this technology simple and straightforward, with the AS2 Adapter. As a Drummond Group certified adapter, this solution is fully integrated from a configuration and operational point of view.
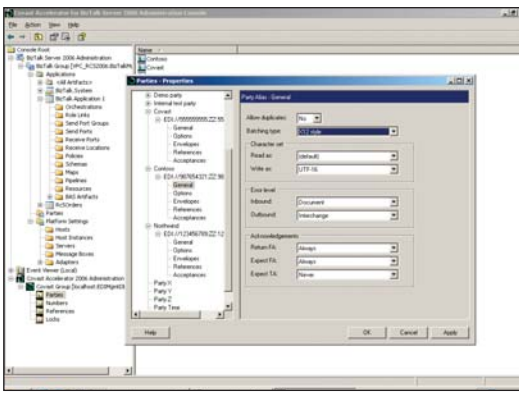
Businesses can connect to their trading partners in the manner that is most effective for each partner. The Covast B2B Suite enables reliable document exchanges via the Internet and the EDI Accelerator provides pre-configured Transport Adapters for commonly-used VANs worldwide. Configurations may also be customized for any end-user and third-party VAN connections. Connectivity for a number of other transport mechanisms, including OFTP (on X.25, ISDN and TCP/IP) and X.400 P7, is also supported.

B2B Document Envelope Mapping and Translation Support.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility maps B2B information to and from any envelope, regardless of its structure. You can easily define and automatically map partner-specific envelopes as needed; no user intervention or programming required. Envelope contents of inbound documents are passed in their entirety to the message center of your integration server. From there, messages are ready to be interrogated, translated and routed based on envelope contents.

Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility can be easily configured to batch outbound documents. Simply select one of the available batching types per trading partner in the Trading Partner Manager hosted by the BizTalk Administration Console. You can even control document batching and sequencing from within your BizTalk maps. Furthermore, trading partner specific configurati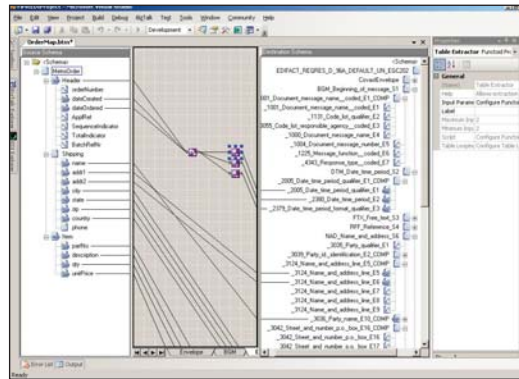ons can be set up here, for instance: deviating EDI separator usage, custom control numbering, specific character set handling and custom envelope handling can all be specified in one location: the TPM.

Complete Auditing and Tracking.

Covast provides thorough auditing and tracking of every B2B communication, or document, processed. Before they are published to the message box or external trading partners, inbound and outbound documents are validated for syntactic and semantic correctness against the B2B standard or trading partner-specific implementation guidelines. Sent and received documents can be tracked through your integration server's tracking tools, which have been extended with B2B specific properties and functionalities. As a result, you can check real-time status of each message and see if a message has been read and processed successfully by your trading partner.

Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility keeps a thorough Audit log of all transactions it processes. This Tracking Database can be interrogated using the user-friendly EDI Reports, where all kinds of filters can be applied. Any processing error messages are also sent to the BizTalk Server event log. Messages that failed validation can be debugged directly from within Health and Activity Tracking (HAT). Messages can also be resent in a user-configurable way.

Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility tightly integrates with BizTalk Server 2006. The EDI Translation functionality (translating EDI to XML and vice versa) has been implemented as a set of pipeline components complying with the standard BizTalk Server architecture. Mapping of the XML/EDI messages is done using the standard BizTalk Mapper. The EDI Accelerator's VAN and Peer-to-Peer connectivity has been implemented as a set of BizTalk Transport Adapters, complying with the Adapter Framework. No programming work is required for the configuration of BizTalk Server. All you have to do is define your EDI Trading Partner profiles using the TPM console, and the connections to those partners through the standard administration tools provided by BizTalk Server.

End-to-end Functional Acknowledgments.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility delivers full support for functional acknowledgments, like the X12 997 and EDIFACT CONTRL messages. This includes appropriate distribution, tracking and error management. Users can also easily track the acknowledgments from within their integration server's activity tracking tool.
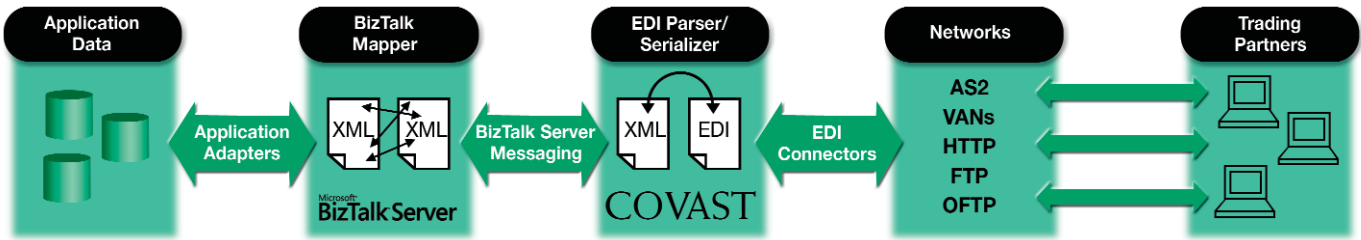
Scalable to Business Requirements.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility's scalable design helps businesses integrate their continually increasing number of trading partners and growing trading volumes easily. The solution has been designed to scale out very well, which means that adding more servers to the group will almost linearly increase the processing power of the solution, thus helping enterprises to accommodate the grow of their businesses without any limits.

Covast Services and Support.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility is comprised of several award-winning and industry-certified products and services from Covast. Depending on your specific B2B communication needs, existing B2B systems and integration server requirements, Covast custom builds B2B integration solutions from their off the shelf integration products. Besides the products, Covast provides:

- **Professional Training Services** — Depending on your preference, Covast provides training for the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility at one of our two training facilities or on-site in your environment. Our two-day Covast B2B Integration 101 course provides the foundation necessary to install, configure, manage and maintain Covast's B2B Solutions.

- **Professional Consulting Services** — Covast has partnered with a wide range of global and regional System Integrators to provide its professional services for the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility. Covast can provide long-term on-site assistance or its "Quick Start" package to accelerate solution delivery. Our technical and B2B integration expertise is coupled with our vast knowledge of the energy and utility industry.

- **Support** — Covast is committed to providing comprehensive support for all of our B2B integration products offered in the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility. We offer Software Assurance which includes new versions of the software and helpdesk support during local office hours. Upon request, 24*7 helpdesk support is also available.

The Path to B2B Integration — The Easy Bridge From EDI to XML

Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility Architecture.

Architecturally, the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility consists of run time components and design time components. The run time components parse inbound B2B documents into XML and serialize outbound XML instances into their appropriate B2B format. Additionally, various adapters in Microsoft BizTalk Server arrange the communications with your trading partners. The Covast batcher takes care of batching outbound B2B messages into interchanges. By extending the B2B capabilities of your integration server, Covast's design time components are used for the management of B2B Document Definitions, the management and monitoring of the trading partners and the configuration of the actual exchange of documents.

Immediate ROI.

Deploying the Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility is quick and easy. The Covast solution is designed to tightly integrate with Microsoft BizTalk Server. This means that, once you deploy your Covast solution, you have everything required to facilitate fast, easy B2B communication.

Imagine Commerce Unbound.

The Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility not only simplifies technical challenges, it also dramatically reduces your implementation timeframe. Microsoft BizTalk Server customers can establish connectivity almost immediately and begin exchanging documents in weeks or even days. To learn more, visit www.covast.com or call 1.866.COVAST1 or + 31 10.235.10.22 in Europe.

Covast B2B Suite for Energy & Utility provides:

B2B Standards Support
- X12 (U.S.)
- VICS (U.S. general merchandise retail)
- WINS (U.S. warehousing retail)
- UCS (U.S. grocery retail)
- EDIFACT (Worldwide)
- EDIG@S (Europe)
- EANCOM (European retail)
- Tradacoms (U.K.)
- VDA (German automotive)
- Odette (Automotive)
- XML
- Cargo-IMP (Airfreight)
- Gencod (France)
- Name/Value Pairs
- Proprietary flat files
- Other (user configurable)

VAN Support
- 400Net Messaging Service (NL)
- Atlas 400 (F)
- BusinessMail (D)
- GXS EDI*Express
- GXS Tradanet (GB)
- IBM (GXS) Information Exchange
- ICC.net
- Inovis
- Kleinschmidt
- SITA
- Sterling Commerce
- Transettlements (Descartes)

Peer-to-Peer Communications Support
- AS2
- OFTP (Odette File Transfer Protocol)
- FTP
- POP3/SMTP (including attachments)
- MSMQ
- IBM MQSeries
- HTTP and HTTP/s

Run Time B2B Communication Features
- Customizable outbound batching
- Inbound de-batching
- Syntax validation
- Semantic validation
- Complete functional acknowledgement generation and reconciliation
- TA1 (Interchange Acknowledgment) generation and reconciliation
- Custom control number generation
- Full end-to-end tracking
- Audit trail of documents handled
- Archiving of documents
- Access to EDI envelope information
- Detailed error logging on element level

Design Time B2B Communication Features
- SQL repository driven
- Document versioning
- Standards import facilities
- Full compliance checking
- Customize standard documents
- Implicit XML to EDI (and vice versa) conversion support

Trading Partner Management
- All B2B related trading partner properties managed from one central place
- Interchange agreement compliance checking
- Trading partner-specific handling

Advanced B2B Communication Features
- Context switching in transformation
- Use of EDI documents in a Business Process Management (BPM) environment
- Enables Business Activity Monitoring (BAM) views for complete integration flows

Please contact your Covast representative for technical specifications and assistance determining the best-suited architecture for your specific B2B environment.

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