Integrating B2B Communication for One of Europe's Largest Gas Transport Companies

COVAST®

Technology Challenges:

- Enable management of all B2B communication through a single integration platform.

- Ensure secure and controlled communication.

- Support all EDIG@S messages reliably.

- Decrease the time it takes to add new trading partners to its network.

Technology Results:

- The Covast EDI Accelerator has provided Gasunie with improved operational efficiency and provided real-time visibility of all external communications through the Microsoft BizTalk Server integration platform.

- The Covast AS2 Adapter allows all of Gasunie's trading partners to be connected through a dedicated virtual private network for ensured availability, capacity and security.

- Gasunie's integrated B2B platform now supports all protocols and standards, including the EDIG@S standard, and messages ranging from a few kilobytes per transaction to several megabytes.

- Because Covast's EDI Accelerator is designed to be used by non-developer/non-programmer resources, Gasunie's new trading partners and document definitions can be added in as little as 30 minutes – helping keep operations optimized at all times.

Challenge: Keeping Up With the Pace of Energy

As owner and operator of one of Europe's largest gas pipeline grids, N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie (Gasunie) is a global leader in gas transport management services. Over the past decade, the European gas and energy industry has been a highly-dynamic environment thanks to Europe's integrating free market. This has added new pressures to companies like Gasunie. Now, more than ever, the ability to quickly, securely and reliably communicate with trading partners – existing and new – is critical to keeping up with the industry's fast pace.

Industry:
  Energy & Utility

Gasunie Corporate Overview:
  One of Europe's leading gas transport management companies.

Covast Solutions:

- Covast EDI Accelerator for Microsoft BizTalk Server 2004

- Covast AS2 Adapter for Microsoft BizTalk Server 2004

In early 2003, Gasunie undertook an enterprise integration initiative to help alleviate these pressures. The company decided to combine its business-to-business and application-to-application systems to a single integration platform so that they could manage all business activities more easily and cost-effectively.

Solution: Simplify B2B Communications, Improve Reliability

Gasunie selected Microsoft BizTalk Server as the single integration platform of choice. While this handled their application-to-application internal communication needs well, it wasn't able to adequately support their EDI integration needs. They needed an EDI integration solution that could easily partner with Microsoft BizTalk Server and extend the server's EDI functionality.

When Gasunie migrated from Microsoft BizTalk Server 2000 to the 2004 version of the product, the company turned to the Covast's Energy & Utility version of its EDI Accelerator for Microsoft BizTalk Server. As the only Microsoft-recommended EDI solution for BizTalk Server, the Covast EDI Accelerator is also one of only a few solutions that support EDIG@S, the European standard for the gas industry. This standard has been defined by the European Association for the Streamlining of Energy Exchange (EASEE), the counterpart of the North American Energy Standards Board (NAESB).

Gasunie currently uses the Covast EDI Accelerator to support all external document exchange with more than 70 national and international trading partners. This external document exchange makes up the allocation and reconciliation process that determines and adjusts the daily quantities of gas produced and delivered in the Dutch national gas grid, one of the largest in Europe. The Covast EDI Accelerator, in combination with the Covast AS2 Adapter, allows all trading partners to be connected through a dedicated virtual private network for ensured availability, capacity and security.

Results: Real-Time Visibility and Responsiveness for Increased Operational Efficiency

As a result of the implementation of the Microsoft BizTalk Server and the Covast EDI Accelerator, Gasunie is able to provide its gas transport-related processes more efficiently and reliably. The Covast EDI Accelerator has improved operational efficiency for Gasunie by enabling real-time visibility of all external communications through the Microsoft BizTalk Server integration platform. The solution also provides reliable support of all EDIG@S transactions – allowing them to compete in the global marketplace.

"The combined Covast-Microsoft solution has given us the tools to conduct business more efficiently and reliably with our suppliers and customers. This can be quite a challenge in Europe's fast-changing gas market," said Wim de Olde, ICT Architect, Gasunie.

The ease-of-use provided by the Covast EDI Accelerator has allowed Gasunie to add new trading partners in as little as 30 minutes. In turn, the company can be significantly more responsive to market changes, customer and supplier requests.

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>
> **Wim de Olde**
> **ICT Architect**
> **Gasunie**

To learn more, visit www.covast.com or call 1.866.COVAST1 or + 31 10.235.10.22 in Europe.

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