



FULL SPEED AHEAD ON THE (DATA) HIGHWAY

Lobster_data middleware has regulated all data traffic for logistics company Logwin since 2008.

Just like a multi-lane highway, 10 terabytes of EDI data travels along Logwin's IT systems every year, totalling around 150 million transactions and 45 million conversions. The Lobster_data platform coordinates all this traffic, which flows along at full speed despite the high volumes - and without any bottlenecks or accidents! "Lobster_data is one of the most important systems in the entire company", reports Joachim Rosehnal, EDI Competence Centre Manager within the logistics firm.

Lots of Logwin's customers are in the fashion industry, where changing trends and seasonal peaks are the order of the day. The companies it works with all depend on smooth, flexible logistics. Consequently, data must be transported error-free, in large quantities, and as quickly as possible from their customers' systems to Logwin and back. This involves orders, delivery notes and invoice data. Because the systems all work with different formats, a platform like Lobster_data is vital to translate everything and make it understandable.

Customers manage their own data

Most information reaches the logistics provider in EDIFACT format, which Lobster_data then translates into a readable in-house format, before forwarding it either to the warehouse or feeding repeated orders directly into the transport management system. Once there, orders can be processed automatically. Customers can also access their data directly via personalised user accounts, from anywhere and at any time.

Access is granted via the EDI4you webmonitor, which Lobster has specially adapted to Logwin's requirements. Customers are then able to independently carry out EDI (electronic data interchange) searches and monitor logistical progress. They can accurately track jobs from their profiles, relaunching orders as and when needed, as well as modifying, uploading and saving files locally. The web interface can be displayed in any required language - at Logwin, they offer German, English and French. "Customers manage their information themselves and we don't have to provide so much support", says Joachim. "Almost nothing goes wrong any more. The transfer process is fully automated now with Lobster_data".

Stable and flexible despite huge volumes of data

Although Lobster_data processes up to 400,000 transmissions, 120,000 conversions and 30 gigabytes of EDI data every day, the system is stable and, in Joachim's own words, far from working at the limits. A total of six IT employees define the EDI processes at Logwin, including 16 core processes with 48 gigabytes of RAM main memory working in the background. "That's still quite a lot", jokes Joachim.

Lobster_data handles all common data formats, integrating all important industry standards (EDIFACT, IDoc, VDA, Fortras, XML, etc.) and ensures communications can take place via different protocols (SMTP, AS2, FTP, X.400, OFTP, WebServices, etc.). Joachim explains, “we’re completely flexible and no longer need to think about what will and what won’t work”.

Simple electronic accessibility with customers

Without electronic connections, cooperation in the logistics industry would be non-existent. The fact that Logwin is able to offer rapid integration with Lobster_data, even with its international customers, is greatly appreciated by the logistics company’s clientèle.

The software is also programmed to be so user-friendly that every user - regardless of how much, or how little, programming experience they have - can easily work with it. And the price is just right, too! “We opted for Lobster because the price to performance ratio was unbeatable. It certainly paid off for us!”, concludes Joachim.

Company profile: With its headquarters in Grevenmacher (Luxembourg), Logwin AG operates from around 180 locations in 33 countries with 4,200 employees, as well as 500,000 square metres of indoor warehouse space worldwide. Logwin divides its logistics services between its Solutions and Air + Ocean business units. Solutions develops individual contract logistics solutions. The business unit offers sector-specific transport and logistics concepts, in particular for companies operating in plant construction and mechanical engineering, the automotive, chemical, electronics and high-tech sectors, as well as in retail and fashion. Air + Ocean is responsible for international shipments by air and sea freight, as well as associated individual logistics services. This is all based on a strong global network of subsidiaries, close cooperation with partner companies and a globally-consistent, high-performing IT system.