



Terra Nitrogen (UK) Limited

Esker DeliveryWare breathes new life into Terra Nitrogen's SAP-based order-to-cash cycle



When Terra Nitrogen (UK) Limited sought to reduce the manual entry of thousands of purchase orders into its SAP system, it selected Esker DeliveryWare as the solution.

The company

All life requires nitrogen - it makes up around 78% of the air we breathe. Its compounds are vital components of foods and fertilisers, and it is the latter that are at the core of Terra Nitrogen's business.

Terra Nitrogen (UK) Limited is part of Terra Industries Inc, a leading international producer of nitrogen products. Terra Nitrogen manufactures per annum in excess of 800k tonnes of ammonia, 1 million tons of nitric acid and ammonium nitrate. Terra Nitrogen's NITRAM, the most established brand in the UK fertiliser market, is synonymous with high quality products that it delivers to its customers in the agricultural and industrial chemicals market.

The fact that Esker DeliveryWare can automatically handle all types and formats of inbound documents saves us and our customers a lot of time, hassle and money.

Hugo Bell ■ Systems Product Manager, Terra Nitrogen

The challenge

Terra handles thousands of purchase orders from its customers each year. A large proportion of these are faxed to the company, whose customer service representatives would key in details from each PO into the company's SAP R/3 system. A fax software application was also used for outbound faxes to hauliers and customers (purchase orders, quotes, order confirmations) requesting pick up and delivery of goods, but this proved to be highly unreliable.

"We had already implemented a SAP based solution to receive electronic orders from our larger Fertilizer customers, but we have been seeing a shift in the market to dealing more with smaller distributors and farm groups who would not find the investment to integrate their back end systems justifiable. What we needed was an integrated solution to automate the processing of inbound purchase orders - not just faxes, but other formats, including Adobe PDF, Microsoft Excel and Word - in order to make the order-to-cash cycle more efficient for these customers," explained Hugo Bell, Systems Project Manager at Terra Nitrogen. *"We also wanted to improve the faxing to hauliers on the outbound side."* After assessing various software solutions, Terra selected Esker DeliveryWare.

The solution

SAP-certified Esker DeliveryWare integrates seamlessly with SAP and does not require any re-programming or business processes modifications - over 100 customers have achieved successful integration. It enables large organisations such as Terra Nitrogen to:

- **Automate the exchange** of critical SAP business documents between customers, business partners, and suppliers regardless of source, format, and destination
- **Deliver documents** through traditional mail, email, fax, XML, SMS, and more
- **Automatically transform documents** from SAP systems and deliver business correspondence immediately in any electronic format, with receipt notification returned to the SAP system.

As a large organisation with thousands of customers, the ability to implement an efficient order-to-cash cycle that maximises integration with the company's core SAP system is essential. *"We recognised the need to bring in electronic purchase order processing that offered us the ability to handle not only faxed POs, but also those received via email in a variety of formats, including Word, Excel, Adobe PDF, and so on,"* said Bell.

Some of Terra's larger customers use the XML format to send POs and other documents and data straight into Terra's SAP system using SAP's SAP Business Connector. *"Where Esker DeliveryWare comes into its own is in handling inbound documents from the thousands of small-and medium-size customers for whom integrating with our SAP system would be a huge investment. We tried doing some coding in SAP to bring in an Excel document from a customer, but it was over a week's work just to get it tested and working, just for one document!"* said Bell.

Before implementing DeliveryWare, the customer services representatives at Terra were pulling faxes off the machine and keying the data into SAP. Now they can just review emailed POs coming in to DeliveryWare, accept them and enable them to flow automatically into our SAP system."

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Before implementing DeliveryWare, the customer services representatives at Terra were pulling faxes off the machine and keying the data into SAP. *"Now they can just review emailed POs coming in to DeliveryWare, accept them and enable them to flow automatically into our SAP system," explained Bell. "That means we can be more efficient, process the POs faster and thereby speed the order-to-cash cycle. Our people no longer waste time inputting information, and can focus on customer interaction."*

Outbound faxing

On the outbound side, the company books hauliers by fax to transport its goods to customers. *"DeliveryWare automates that whole faxing process and also enables us to track all faxes sent out, which means more efficient deliveries and fewer failed orders,"* said Bell.

The benefits

In terms of benefits, Bell cited direct cost savings in terms of getting rid of the previously unreliable faxing application, which was more expensive in terms of licensing and support.

"When we looked around at new software, Esker's DeliveryWare was half the price of competitive solutions, and offered more functionality," added Bell.

He concluded: *"Esker DeliveryWare is absolutely fantastic. It's very cleverly designed and is an incredibly flexible tool."*

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