



Services: Vendor Enablement

Industry: Pharmaceutical Wholesaler

Trading Partners: 500+ suppliers in Australia

Case Study: Symbion

Symbion is a large and growing national healthcare company headquartered in Australia with businesses in pharmaceutical wholesaling, retail services, hospitals and more. The company employs more than 1,000 people and has sales approaching \$4 billion.

In January 2012, Symbion’s senior management decided to complete the automation of its purchasing processes across its Retail Pharmacy and Hospitals business units. As a result, the company would require all vendors to use EDI. The majority of Symbion’s large suppliers were already utilising EDI with the company, but many of the small and mid-sized vendors were exchanging information via fax and e-mail.

Symbion began to search for a partner to help reach out to its fax vendors and bring them into compliance. It was important to Symbion that the provider offered EDI technology as well as the resources and knowledge to work directly with the suppliers to convert to Symbion’s EDI requirements.

Leveraging Proven Best Practices

Symbion selected SPS Commerce to lead its vendor enablement program. SPS had experience working directly with similar vendors and offered a web-based EDI solution, WebForms, for its less technical suppliers. SPS’s vendor compliance programs leverage proven best practices and expertise to maximise adoption rates. More than 50,000 SPS customers have found success in the breakthrough approach to EDI, with most achieving 70% to 90% compliance within a few months.

Symbion’s vendor enablement program included the following phases:

Planning: A dedicated supplier enablement team from SPS worked with Symbion to design and execute its custom program. The local and US-based SPS experts helped Symbion identify vendors and guided the suppliers through the enablement process quickly and easily.

Rollout: SPS maximised adoption with a formal kick-off program with Symbion’s vendors including customised communications. Symbion stayed informed through weekly teleconferences and progress reports with SPS.

Certification: SPS’s on-demand EDI services and hybrid solutions ensured compliance with Symbion’s program requirements for vendors using their own EDI solution.

Improving Symbion’s Trading Partner Relationships



RETAILERS



SUPPLIERS



3PLS

“SPS’s vendor enablement program exceeded our expectations. The program resulted in more suppliers becoming EDI-capable than we had forecast and we received support from SPS Commerce throughout the process.”

– Brett Barons, General Manager - Pharmacy, Symbion

Exceeding Expectations

The vendor enablement program resulted in more than 125 suppliers becoming EDI compliant with Symbion. Approximately 90 suppliers are using SPS’s WebForms solution to transact via EDI with Symbion, with others electing to certify their existing EDI service or leverage SPS’s integrated EDI solution to automatically transact via EDI from within their internal ERP or accounting systems.

“SPS’s vendor enablement program exceeded our expectations,” said Brett Barons, General Manager - Pharmacy at Symbion. “The program resulted in more suppliers becoming EDI-capable than we had forecast and we received support from SPS Commerce throughout the process.”

After the success of its initial program, Symbion is looking forward to adding additional suppliers in the near future.

Positively Impacting the Business

Symbion’s vendor enablement program has streamlined its order fulfillment process, giving the wholesaler better visibility and control. For example, the company can more easily track inbound stock and equip its customer support staff with order information, resulting in better communication with its pharmacy customers.

“SPS provided a talented team of individuals to work with our staff and suppliers,” continued Barons. “The implementation went smoothly and they made it an easy process for our technical staff and our non-technical suppliers.”

About SPS Commerce

SPS Commerce perfects the power of your trading partner relationships with the industry’s most broadly adopted, enterprise retail cloud services platform. As a leader in on-demand supply chain management solutions, we provide prewired, proven integrations and comprehensive retail performance analytics to thousands of customers worldwide. With a singular focus on the retail marketplace, we revolutionized traditional EDI systems by developing a platform that enables highly cost-effective and reliable trading partner collaboration. SPS Commerce has achieved 48 consecutive quarters of revenue growth and is headquartered in Minneapolis.