

Case study: How LINMARK (Hong Kong) is using EDISPHERE to centrally process EDI purchase orders and distributes it to its regional offices.

Problem statement: LINMARK has developed a distributed information system called “LOGON”, which has one central LOGON Server at its headquarters in Hong Kong and multiple regional LOGON Servers at its various regional offices across the globe. The LOGON Central server and LOGON Regional Servers synchronize information on a daily basis to keep “appropriate” information on each LOGON Server.

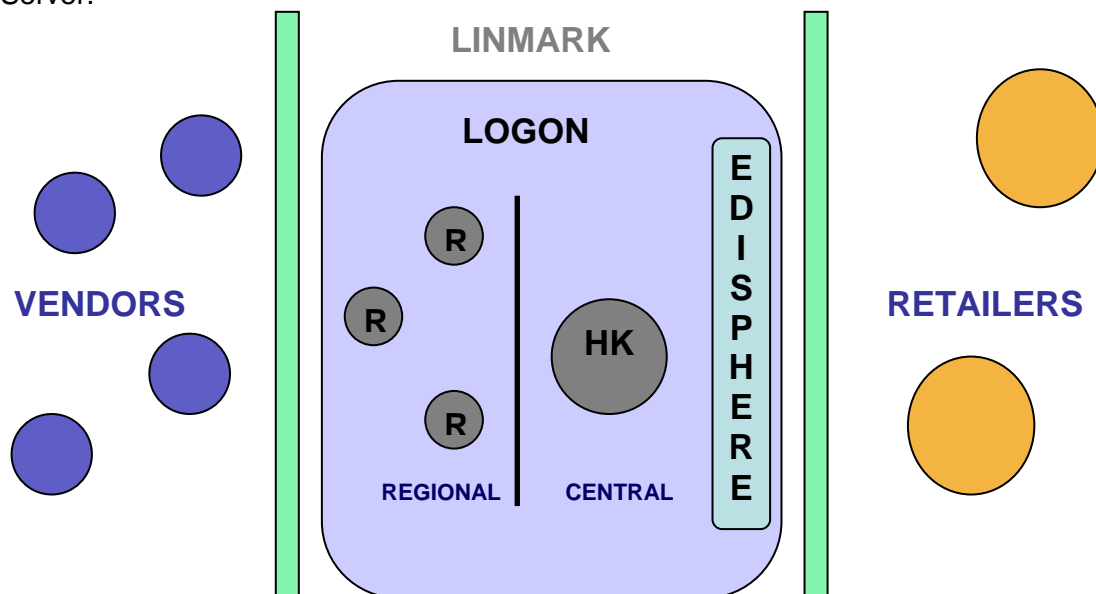


Figure 1 EDI Implementation at LINMARK

LINMARK receives X12 EDI POs (850s) from their customers, which it wants to process centrally and distribute it to their appropriate regional office. LINMARK was looking for an EDI system that would help them do the following:

- Using supplier information in the EDI PO, identifying the appropriate Linmark regional office to which this PO is to be sent.
- Seamlessly integrate with their Oracle backend system.
- Operate in 24 X 7 unattended mode.
- Automatically generate functional acknowledgement message, report all syntax errors the EDI document including certain semantic errors such as unidentified vendor number in the EDI PO via email.
- Provide interim EDI solution by mapping X12 EDI PO to XML document and associate a XSL style sheet with it for printing/viewing the EDI PO manually, while the integrated EDI implementation is ongoing.

Implementation: LINMARK selected EDISPHERE after evaluating other EDI software products and also considering EDI outsourcing option to EDI VANs.

ABO's EDI expertise was sought for undertaking EDI implementation. ABO quickly implemented and deployed X12 EDI PO to XML implementation. Since LOGON is a distributed system, comprehensive testing and test cases had to be identified before the solution can be deployed. A detailed mapping specification document was

created, which involved various activities that are to be carried out by EDISPHERE, such as cross referencing values, manipulating numbers and string data, referencing LOGON tables for integrity checks, reporting errors via email, etc; besides normal mapping. Sample data for each of the test cases were created. The EDI implementation at Linmark includes (a) inbound X12 Purchase Orders (850), inbound X12 Purchase Order Change Notifications (860) and outbound X12 Advance Ship Notices (856).

"EDISPHERE is a very robust and feature rich product in the EDI arena", says Sidney Hui, IT Director of LINMARK. "It enables a fast and economical way of implementing EDI solutions with our customers and vendors."

"We in LINMARK were looking for any to any converter and compared EDISPHERE with other products in terms of cost, functionality and time for deployment. We found EDISPHERE to be better in all the areas. Moreover its EDI capabilities are far better than other EDI products we evaluated for Semi Complex and Complex transformations. We were able to complete the very first delivery within one month which would have otherwise taken more time and money with other EDI products ", says Vikrant Rathore, Senior Systems Administrator of LINMARK.

"Integrating LOGON with EDISPHERE at only their central server in Hong Kong and then using their own distributed OMS to spread the benefits of EDI across all its offices in 25 countries, I think is a very smart IT architecture of LINMARK", says Ajay Sanghi, CEO of ABO Software. "In spite of it's vastness, implementing EDISPHERE at LINMARK was very smooth because of their very pro-active IT team, enjoying very strong backing of their management"

Results: LINMARK is able to distribute EDI purchase orders to their regional offices from a central location and enjoy full benefits of the EDI technology.

About LINMARK: LINMARK is a Hong Kong headquartered global sourcing and supply chain management provider for leading retailers in US, Europe, and Asia.

About ABO Software: ABO provides very innovative any-to-any EDI translation products that meet long-term IT goals of their customers – quickly, reliably and cost-effectively. For further information, please contact ABO Software at info@abosoftware.com or visit www.abosoftware.com.