

“Our service levels to our customers in 2002 stood at 98.6 percent. With 670,000 order lines during that year, it would have been near impossible to achieve this level without Tradanet.”

—EDWIN PEARSON,
PLANNING DIRECTOR AT
BERNARD MATTHEWS



Bernard Matthews Hatches Supply Chain Success with Tradanet®

Tradanet Helps Leading Food Business Improve Customer Responsiveness

Corporate Profile

Leading Food Processing Business

Founded over 50 years ago, Bernard Matthews is a privately owned food processing business, and the UK's leading producer and brand for fresh, chilled and frozen turkey products.

Having started out with just six turkeys, the company now supplies a wide range of products including oven-ready turkeys, added-value processed meat products, pre-packed sliced meats, turkey portions, fresh pizzas and sandwiches.

Bernard Matthews produces four million packs of pre-packed cooked meat per week and generates an annual turnover of £350m (\$550m). It employs 6,200 people based across the UK, Germany, Hungary and New Zealand.

The Business Challenge

Increase Customer Responsiveness

From a single weekly delivery, Bernard Matthews grew rapidly to 500 orders a week, and needed 12 people to manage its order processing. As it expanded, the company recognised that in order to improve efficiency as well as meet customer demand, it had to digitise the exchange of its orders and invoices.

Edwin Pearson, Planning Director at Bernard Matthews, explains, “Like similar food processing companies, the drive to automate the supply chain came from Bernard Matthews’ customers. However, the company not only saw this as an opportunity to improve customer responsiveness but also as a way to improve the efficiency of its steadily expanding business.”

The company opted for EDI to start trading electronically with its customers.

The Solution

Electronic Document Exchange

The company opted for Tradanet® Service from GXS, a service that enables Bernard Matthews to exchange business documents electronically by supporting electronic trade through various standards and communication protocols, such as XML, EDI and other industry-specific standards. In addition, Tradanet includes audit trails, user-controlled access and local language support 24 hours a day to help ensure business documents are protected in a secure environment.

Today, Bernard Matthews receives over 2,000 orders a week from approximately 100 trading partners, which include all the major supermarkets. The orders arrive electronically to Bernard Matthews' Tradanet mailbox, which is automatically checked on an hourly basis during the day. As long as all the data is valid—that is, cross-referenced with product codes—the orders are automatically processed. "Most of the time no-one touches them," adds Pearson. This information is then sent to the customer order management database on Bernard Matthews' ERP system.

Invoices are raised on confirmations from the warehouse and also sent via Tradanet to Bernard Matthews' customers. These are pre-set so they are automatically sent to customers when they are due.

The Results

Impressive Service Levels, Reduced Administrative Time

As its use of EDI increased, Bernard Matthews halved the number of administration staff, and maintained this level while it expanded its trading partners to over 100, and its range of activities from turkeys and pre-packed cooked meats to sandwiches and pizzas. Today, 90 percent of the company's business is transacted electronically via Tradanet.

The benefits in streamlining its supply chain have been impressive: as the orders are automatically processed, all of its cooked meats can be stored, held and dispatched within a few hours. Pearson comments:

"Each day, between 8am and 3pm, 150 orders—mostly EDI—are processed electronically, sent to the warehouse and gone by midnight with very few people involved. In such an aggressively competitive market, supply chain efficiency and the consequent customer responsiveness is a fundamental benefit of EDI to us."

"Manual just meant 'onerous', with mistakes at each stage of the process," concludes Pearson. "Our service levels to our customers in 2002 stood at 98.6 percent. With 670,000 order lines during that year, it would have been near impossible to achieve this level without Tradanet."

BERNARD MATTHEWS' RESULTS:

- 90% of business digitised through Tradanet
- Administration headcount reduced by 50%
- Automated and streamlined supply chain
- Consistently high customer service levels

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About GXS

GXS is a leading global provider of B2B e-commerce solutions that simplify and enhance business process integration and collaboration among trading partners. Organisations worldwide, including more than 70 percent of the Fortune 500, leverage the on-demand services on GXS Trading Grid® to extend supply chain networks, optimise product launches, automate warehouse receiving, manage electronic payments and gain supply chain visibility. GXS Managed Services, GXS' B2B outsourcing solution, empowers customers with the expertise, technical infrastructure and program support to conduct B2B e-commerce with trading partners globally. Based in Gaithersburg, Md., GXS has an extensive global network and has local offices in the Americas, Europe and Asia-Pacific regions. GXS can be found on the Web at www.gxs.co.uk.