

ProcServe Grows e-Marketplace Services Using SEEBURGER BIS as Transaction Engine

PROC SERVE AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER BUSINESS

ProcServe (www.procserve.com) is a provider of hosted electronic marketplaces that simplify catalog setup, maintenance and invoicing for both buyers and suppliers.

TYPE OF PROJECT

**Supply Chain Connectivity
Marketplace Transaction Enablement**

LOCATIONS

**London, UK
Guildford, UK
Cambridge, UK
New York, NY**

SOLUTIONS

**SEEBURGER Business Integration
Server
SEEBURGER XML Adapter
SEEBURGER In House Adapter**

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- **Electronic transaction enablement**
- **Reliable message exchange**
- **Diverse connectivity options**
- **Scalable to support growth**

TECHNICAL BENEFITS

- **Open platform**
- **Pre-built connectors**
- **Any-to-any data conversion**
- **Data validation**
- **Secure data transport**
- **Reliable performance**
- **Message tracking**

TECHNICAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Oracle**
- **Windows 2003 EE (64-bit)**

When UK-based ProcServe went into business as a provider of hosted electronic marketplaces in 2006, one of the company's first tasks was to select an integration broker and transaction engine for its electronic procurement platform. Whether buying groups using the firm's services would be purchasing pencils, medical supplies, cleaning products or computer equipment, ProcServe's solution for processing purchase orders, invoices and other trading documents would be a mission-critical part of its business. Within a year after choosing SEEBURGER's Business Integration Server (BIS), the firm was processing over 20,000 messages every month through the BIS gateway and was well on its way to becoming one of Europe's largest e-marketplace service providers.

ProcServe

The Challenge

ProcServe's electronic marketplaces enable public and private sector organizations to reduce spending and transaction processing costs through end-to-end electronic procurement delivered as a managed service. Projects range from Zanzibar, an eProcurement platform for UK public sector organizations, to OPEN, an electronic trading network for schools across England.

For buyers, the firm's on-demand marketplaces eliminate the burden of loading and maintaining supplier catalogs and building links to each trading partner as well as providing the usual eProcurement cost and efficiency benefits, including fast and easy price comparisons among suppliers as well as a reduction in paper-based ordering and invoicing. For sellers, ProcServe's services facilitate trading with large customers. A robust transaction back-end is essential for all parties involved.

"We knew from the beginning that we needed a strong transaction engine that would not only provide reliable message delivery but also offer the flexibility to interact with any ERP system, file format and global communication protocol," said Jesper Lynge Petersen, Head of IT Development for ProcServe. "We also needed a solution that would scale because we expect to eventually be processing millions of transactions through our trading network. We didn't want to have to start over when we got too big for one box."

The Strategy

The ProcServe team evaluated business integration brokers ranging from dedicated integration servers to middleware frameworks. After rejecting a number of framework solutions as too broad for their needs, the team selected the SEEBURGER gateway because of its comprehensive connectivity options, reliable one-platform architecture, and ability to provide advanced functionality such as message tracking as well as support for smaller trading partners without EDI or XML capabilities.

SEEBURGER
BUSINESS INTEGRATION

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Soon after, the SEEBURGER BIS was connected to ProcServe's trading network via Web Services interfaces and database inserts. All transactions not only run through ProcServe's eProcurement platform but also integrate directly with the buyer's or seller's ERP system to provide paperless ordering and invoicing.

The Benefits

With the SEEBURGER platform operating under the hood, ProcServe is able to quickly integrate new buyers and suppliers into its individual e-marketplaces and overall trading network regardless of the internal business software, EDI or XML standard, or global communication protocol used by a given organization. This is critical because of the size and continuing growth of ProcServe's network.

"Our average customer has 500 suppliers, and we connected over 1,500 buyers and sellers to our trading hub in the first year. Some use SAP. Others use Oracle. The document formats range from flat files to every flavor of XML and EDI, and different organizations use different transport protocols," Petersen noted. "SEEBURGER's open, standards-based platform and pre-built connectors allow us to handle all of them without forcing costly technology changes that would discourage marketplace participation."

SEEBURGER'S broad support for different technology infrastructures also enables ProcServe to add new suppliers in days or even hours, and the gateway's data transformation and validation capabilities ensure smooth message delivery. The SEEBURGER platform checks all messages for mandatory fields prior to processing, automatically translates them to the appropriate format, and securely transmits them to their destinations.

In addition, because the SEEBURGER gateway serves as ProcServe's central transaction hub, ProcServe is able to load all transactions into a data warehouse on a nightly basis for reporting and spend analysis purposes. This value-ad-

ded service helps ProcServe customers evaluate spending patterns, identify cost-cutting opportunities, and otherwise support their strategic sourcing initiatives.

The Future

With just one year of business under its belt as of this writing, ProcServe continues to expand rapidly. The Zanzibar managed service is continuing to gain market traction in UK public sector organizations ranging from the Department for Work and Pensions to the Bank of England, and earned an Operational Performance award in the Management Today MCA Awards 2008. The OPEN marketplace for schools, launched in March 2007, is moving out of the pathfinder phase and into full production at all 20,500 elementary and secondary educational institutions in England.

In addition, ProcServe is currently rolling out a Zanzibar-based electronic purchasing and payment system in Wales, as well as activating a new marketplace enabling a consortium of maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) suppliers in the U.S. to exchange orders and invoices with their customers electronically.

These and other initiatives are steadily increasing ProcServe's transaction volumes, along with growing use within each organization as users became accustomed to the new procurement systems. The credit goes to ProcServe's development work, including an eBay-like interface that encourages marketplace use by employees at every level. But SEEBURGER technology provides the fuel that helps ProcServe's marketplaces run.

"Our core competency is marketplace building, but any marketplace needs a transaction engine to execute orders and automate the rest of the purchasing and invoicing process. It's a core component of any trading platform," said ProcServe CEO Veera Johnson. "For that reason, SEEBURGER is an important part of our infrastructure."