

## New partnership speeds setup of electronic trading communities—and ERP ROI

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By Frank O Smith, senior contributing editor (fosmith@thewritinggroup.com) -- Manufacturing Business Technology, 3/1/2008

Establishing trading partner communities just got easier given a partnership between B2B platform provider **Seeburger and Edifecs**, a specialist in streamlined mapping of transaction specifications between trading partners.

EDI specifications created in Edifecs SpecBuilder schema authoring and testing tool can be automatically imported into the **Seeburger** Mapping Designer via a new Edifecs export module.

“Both companies have long been in the B2B market helping organizations conduct electronic commerce,” says Bill Metallo, a **Seeburger** company VP. “**Seeburger's** B2B Gateway translates and manages the communication of trading documents among partners, while Edifecs has tools that help companies speed development of trading communities by authoring and testing EDI specification standards against each other.”

According to Metallo, **Seeburger** is working closely with SAP customers to translate purchase orders and other documents out of SAP so they can be passed through B2B Gateway to other trading partners.

“One way you get good ROI out of ERP is to have more trading partners linked electronically, which lowers inventory costs, cycle times, and errors,” he says. “If you have to manually input data, the process is much more inefficient. But building large trading communities takes time. We've had some customers who have built communities of 4,000 to 5,000 trading partners.”

A tool like Edifecs can have significant impact in reducing the time it takes to achieve the benefits of volume, Metallo adds, because Edifecs allows importing all the various global EDI specifications.

“Edifecs automates the testing and certification between partners,” says Metallo. “The cost of building trading communities can be in the millions of dollars. Edifecs does a lot of the heavy lifting. If you can leverage an automated tool to get 30-percent to 40-percent improvement in efficiency, it's a huge gain.”