

## CASE STUDY

### Time Warner Book Group

#### AT A GLANCE:

**COMPANY:**  
Time Warner Book Group, a division of Time, Inc.

**LOCATION:**  
Boston, Mass.

**INDUSTRY:**  
Book publishing and distribution.

**PRODUCTS:**  
Hardcover and paperback books, literature and non-fiction.

**ENVIRONMENT:**  
Gentran NT 4.0; Gentran Integration Suite 3.1 on AIX UNIX.

**KEY CHALLENGE:**  
Cost-effective migration of mature E-Commerce system to GIS.

**THE COMPANY:** Time Warner Book Group is part of Time Warner's \$5.5 billion publishing group Time, Inc. TWBG consists of Warner Books and Little, Brown and Company and is home to many best-selling authors, including James Patterson, Nicholas Sparks and David Baldacci.

*"Oxford saved us both time and money."*

**THE CHALLENGE:** Efficient B2B systems integration is vital at Time Warner Book Group. Eighty percent of orders arrive by EDI, and customers place increasing emphasis on E-Commerce.

To further their integration efforts, and as longtime users of Sterling Commerce's Gentran:NT, TWBG chose to migrate to Sterling's Gentran Integration Suite 3.1.

Then, faced with a lengthy migration, TWBG decided to utilize outside resources. Reviewing their mature EDI environment, Ed Bourgeois, Senior Manager E-Commerce & Fulfillment, set out to select an experienced integration partner with demonstrated expertise, who could build a solid foundation for both the migration and also future projects.

**THE SOLUTION:** Bourgeois' demanding requirement list included migrating hundreds of trading partners, setting up multiple communication protocols and methodologies, plus the growing need to integrate E-Commerce retail techniques, such as the exchange of XML documents.

He chose the seasoned team at Oxford Consulting Group.

Working closely with Bourgeois, Oxford immediately conducted a technical design and planning review to prioritize requirements.

**THE PROCESS:** During the review, four main EDI trading partner types were identified. Highest volume traffic at TWBG comes from trading partners using the ANSI X12 format and ICC.NET, a traditional Value Added Network. This group of 55 customers includes some of the world's largest book retailers, such as Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Borders.

A second group of TWBG customers uses the PUBNET network, where a single order may have up to 3,500 ship-to-addresses, and trading partners can connect by both direct-dial and in batch. Approximately 300 PUBNET bookstores connect to TWBG using direct-dial.

*"I would recommend Oxford over and over again."*

(over)

## CASE STUDY

### Time Warner Book Group (continued)

#### ABOUT OXFORD:

Since 1998, Oxford Consulting Group has successfully partnered with hundreds of mid-market and Global 2000 clients to develop, implement and support their technology portfolio. By focusing on sound business strategies rather than short-term projects, we assist our clients in delivering value-based solutions that provide flexibility and adaptability for the future.

EDI is of critical importance at TWBG and transaction volume is high. Up to 12,000 Purchase Orders are received daily. Outbound Invoice traffic can reach 22,000 transactions per day.

*“We are very satisfied with the return on our investment in Oxford.”*

After reviewing customers and transactions, Oxford included four key transactions in the strategic migration plan: Inbound Purchase Orders and Purchase Order Acknowledgements; and Outbound Advance Ship Notices and Invoices.

Oxford’s design plan also included a review of the many pre- and post-processing routines developed within TWBG’s Gentran installation. Using honed GIS techniques, Oxford seamlessly integrated each process into GIS. Product catalogs in XML format are increasingly exchanged within the publishing industry, yet had been problematic for TWBG within Gentran. With their expert knowledge, Oxford rapidly integrated the non-EDI documents into GIS.

After developing and initiating a comprehensive plan, Oxford carefully coordinated the knowledge transfer to TWBG. The final phase of Oxford’s project was spent on education, review, and complete end-to-end testing.

**THE RESULTS:** “Oxford took the time to plan things out, and did a great job on the project planning,” said Bourgeois. “I have no reservations whatsoever as to Oxford’s talents and abilities.”

*“Oxford’s work was professional and insightful.”*

Using professional planning and technical skills, streamlined architecture and audit controls, Oxford created a foundation that met project goals and enabled TWBG to smoothly move their migration forward.

Oxford’s knowledge transfer and training also produced results. “My team has a good understanding of the product and the methodology employed to implement the solution,” commented Bourgeois. “They were very comfortable with the hand-off at the end of the project. It’s been a very positive experience.”