

"Our vision is to EC-enable the global trade process."

*George Atkinson, Vice President of Business Development
Trade Compass*

Trade Compass, Washington, DC, USA

TYPE OF BUSINESS

INTERNET-BASED SERVICE PROVIDER FOR BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

OPPORTUNITY

MANY OF TRADE COMPASS'S 10,000 REGISTERED USERS WERE SMALL AND MID-SIZED COMPANIES NOT ABLE TO CONDUCT ELECTRONIC COMMERCE VIA A VAN.

STERLING COMMERCE SOLUTION

USING THE INTERNET AND THE POWER OF GENTRAN, TRADE COMPASS CREATED AN OPEN CLIENT NETWORK TECHNOLOGY TO ENABLE WEB-COMMERCE.

BENEFITS

- ▶ A SECURE, ECONOMICAL, EASY-TO-USE SYSTEM THAT REACHES ALL SIZES OF COMMERCE PARTNERS, INCLUDING THOSE WITHOUT VAN ACCESS.
- ▶ QUALITY CONTROL WITH A MEANS TO CATCH DATA ENTRY ERRORS.
- ▶ VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK FEATURE ALLOWS COMPANIES TO COMMUNICATE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION SECURELY.
- ▶ EASY AND COST-EFFECTIVE WAY FOR BUSINESSES TO CUSTOMIZE THEIR OWN ELECTRONIC FORMS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO THEIR COMMERCE PARTNERS.
- ▶ WEB INTEGRATION ALLOWS THE EXCHANGE OF CRITICAL INFORMATION USING LOW-COST AND FAMILIAR WEB BROWSERS.

TYPE OF BUSINESS

Trade Compass is an Internet-based service provider of mission-critical market intelligence and logistics information for businesses involved in the international trade process.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE OPPORTUNITY

Trade Compass believed that many of its 10,000 registered users were small and mid-size companies who do not have VAN access, thereby prohibiting them from exchanging electronic commerce (EC) documents. Using the Internet, and the power of GENTRAN® Web Suite, Trade Compass sought to create an open client-network technology that would allow these companies to electronically exchange documents, such as purchase orders, cargo booking, tracking requests, export declarations and invoices.

Launched under the name Caravan, Trade Compass has created a virtual trading neighborhood for commerce partners from around the world. GENTRAN:Server® with Web Suite from Sterling Commerce makes this flexible Web-based trading community possible, and the solution also includes networked data warehouses from Microsoft® and Trade Compass. Web Suite is a desktop Web commerce application that includes standard forms, like purchase orders and invoices, aimed at allowing trading partners to participate in electronic commerce. Trade Compass uses this Web solution for its export management solution, TRADEsolutions.

TRADEsolutions is a client/server application that replaces the old paradigm

of continuously updating databases, giving Trade Compass customers seamless links to Caravan for immediate, updated access to compliance and shipping information such as country requirements, HTS determinations, denial party list search, ECCN filings, shipping schedules and rates. The final result is the generation of timely, accurate and cost effective export documents that can be sent to commerce partners throughout the world through Web browsers.

Caravan creates a virtual private network on the Internet, allowing commerce partners to communicate securely with one another. The network provides accountability, certification and authentication of commerce partners. It also helps companies catch data entry errors, and take proactive steps to correct them. The solution also features electronic filings for hundreds of documents including purchase orders, cargo booking requests, invoices, letters of credit, shippers' export declarations, manifests and cargo tracking requests. Business forms can be translated into their electronic counter-parts easily over a virtual private network. The data from these forms can be connected via GENTRAN to purchasing procurement and logistics applications, eliminating paperwork and saving on data entry.

This initiative also helps large companies in distributing EDI capabilities to small trading partners by creating a central hub where small commerce partners of all sizes can exchange data.

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STERLING COMMERCE



World Wide Web

www.sterlingcommerce.com

E-mail

gentrans_info@stercomm.com

Worldwide Headquarters

4600 Lakehurst Court
P.O. Box 8000
Dublin, Ohio 43016-2000
Phone: (614) 793-4041
Toll-free: (800) 299-4041
(U.S. and Canada)
Fax: (614) 793-7221
U.S. Gov't Sales: (800) 468-8334

Americas

+1 614 793 7000

Amsterdam - European Support Ctr.

+31 20 560 5600

Australia

+61 2 9966 2500

France - European Headquarters

+33 1 5523 6000

Germany

+49 211 43848 0

Japan

+81 3 5408 8500

Singapore - Asia Pacific Support Ctr.

+65 732 9996

United Kingdom

+44 181 867 8000

If your locale is not listed here, visit our Web site for a complete listing of our worldwide offices.

STERLING COMMERCE SOLUTION

Software within GENTRAN Web Suite, the Web client, runs within a Web browser, which renders the customized trading forms and manages each commerce partner's business data. Next, GENTRAN Web Suite connects to GENTRAN:Server with Advanced Data Distribution residing on the server, which establishes a commerce partner's account, such as identifying secure log-on parameters and the transactions and related forms that are valid for each commerce partner.

The result is a secure network through which all types of electronic commerce can flow. Caravan is built to industry standards, such as ANSI X12, and UN EDIFACT.

"Our vision is to EC-enable the global trade process," says George Atkinson, VP of Business Development, Trade Compass. "Through Caravan, Trade Compass is able to provide a low cost, easy to use service that meets the requirements of both an enterprise and its commerce partners to make our vision a reality."



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