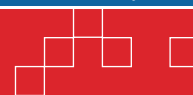




American Meter Company

Streamlining document flow through the SAP® system



Since the emergence of the natural gas industry more than 150 years ago, American Meter Company has been a leading supplier of meters, regulators, electronic instruments, data management solutions and automatic meter reading systems. The company is a member of Elster Group, a global organisation that brings the latest technology and best practices from leading European and American manufacturers of gas measurement and control equipment to markets around the world. American Meter Company is located in Horsham, Pennsylvania, with a dozen other key facilities in the United States and Canada.

Challenge: Automate the delivery of business documents within the SAP system

American Meter Company's IT team responded to a call from executive leadership. "Time is money," said Ed Brady, Corporate IT Director for American Meter Company. "Our team was asked to evaluate what new systems were needed to enable efficiency improvements across the enterprise. Previously, we relied on autonomous applications and so the goal was to find solutions that would streamline our business operations, reduce IT and administrative resources, and ultimately, save time and money."

The first decision was to launch a corporate-wide ERP solution, SAP, to centralise and store customer information and commercial correspondence. "The implementation of SAP got the ball rolling on our process improvement initiative," said Brady. "It brought together all the business critical documents to one location and introduced a common thread to everyone working in the back office."

American Meter Company's back office comprises more than 300 people across customer service, billings and purchasing departments distributed among 13 North American offices.

The rapid success of the SAP system implementation in these departments prompted the IT team to look to further improve business processes. "Although SAP made the customer service operations much more efficient, we noticed it was still taking a long time to process the business documents associated with each transaction," said Brady. "We determined the best way to address this issue was to find a solution that would automate the delivery of information to and from SAP."

Solution: Esker DeliveryWare for document delivery from SAP applications

American Meter Company wanted a document management subsystem that would integrate with its SAP system rather than another siloed application. "We turned to our trusted contacts at SAP for recommendations, and they pointed us to a short list of solutions," said Brady. "We then evaluated the products on our own and determined Esker DeliveryWare was the best fit for our environment."

The deployment of Esker DeliveryWare across American Meter Company's customer service, billings and purchasing departments was the first automated fax solution to be used by the company. Prior to embarking on this project, commercial documents, such as invoices, purchase orders and order confirmations would be printed from the SAP system, assembled and delivered manually. Within the billing department alone it would often take up to two days each week to complete this processing procedure. In all, it was a cumbersome and inefficient process.

With Esker DeliveryWare, American Meter Company can now automatically send electronic fax documents from within its SAP system. "We handle about 4,000 documents each month," said Brady. "Immediately after the implementation, about half

Time spent stuffing envelopes is now spent interacting with customers and suppliers.

Ed Brady ■ Corporate IT Director
American Meter Company

SAP was the catalyst for process improvements and that led us directly to Esker DeliveryWare.

Ed Brady ■ Corporate IT Director ■ American Meter Company

that amount was delivered electronically and we expect that activity level to continue to increase. Time spent stuffing envelopes is now spent interacting with customers and suppliers. People are available to do more critical work rather than mundane administrative tasks."

Benefits/future plans

Looking ahead, American Meter Company plans to implement Esker DeliveryWare desktop faxing capabilities. "We have had a great experience working with Esker," said Brady. "We realise the tremendous benefits from DeliveryWare's automatic faxing functionality and are excited about exploring its additional capabilities as we continue to look for opportunities to improve business operations."

Immediate benefits for American Meter Company included:

- Ability to manage documents in the SAP system natively
- Time savings over manual processes
- Ability to free resources for more critical tasks
- Flexibility and scalability



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