

Nationwide Truckload Carrier Removes Service Roadblock to Drive Reliable B2B Integration

Knight Transportation drives business with immediate, reliable electronic document exchange through OpenText™ Trading Grid™ Messaging Service

“Stop” is not a word Knight Transportation or its clients want to hear. It’s not how the truckload carrier grew from a handful of trucks and one center to a fleet of more than 4,000 tractors and 8,800 trailers flowing through a nationwide service center network. Today, Knight offers dry van, refrigerated, and brokerage services while striving to maintain personal service and accessibility as “Your Hometown National Carrier.” The company expects the same customer care from its vendors, but encountered a roadblock for the electronic exchange of business documents.

Transportation Reliance on EDI

Most of Knight’s business arrives through electronic data interchange (EDI) transmissions. To Scott Koterman, EDI Development Manager for Knight Transportation, the impact of their value added network (VAN) going down is absolutely “crippling.” “In using our previous VAN provider, our services went down and the amount of time it took to get us back going again seemed excessive on more than one occasion,” notes Koterman.

Minutes matter in the transportation industry. The flow of goods—from consumer staples to import/export commodities and more—is an interconnected system where a single delay can reverberate across multiple players. As a result, top-tier carriers are chosen for their responsiveness and reliability.

Before EDI, communication to establish and authorize shipments was more labor- and time-intensive. On the occasions when Knight’s previous VAN service went down, the company reverted to business as it was handled before automated EDI. Knight employees had to call customers, requesting tender documents (EDI 204s) via email for review, causing a slower turnaround compared to today’s Internet-based transaction management.

INDUSTRY

Transportation

CUSTOMER

Knight Transportation

CHALLENGES

- *Delays due to B2B network outages*
- *Lower scorecard grades that impacted future business*
- *Difficulties in getting support from unresponsive VAN provider*

SOLUTION

- *OpenText™ Trading Grid™ Messaging Service*

BENEFITS

- *Offers customers real-time, anytime, anywhere access to documents*
- *Completely secure with full audit trail*
- *Customers are offered seamless deployment and upgrades*

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JON BRYANT, DIRECTOR OF EDI FOR KNIGHT TRANSPORTATION

“You’re only allowed a certain amount of time to respond, so there can be hundreds of lost loads with delays,” says Jon Bryant, Director of EDI for Knight Transportation. Without a timely response, customers will tender loads to competitors. “Lost loads mean lost money,” Bryant notes. He estimates around \$80,000 in missed opportunities during a particular outage that lasted several hours when they were using their previous VAN provider.

Along with the 204 transaction, carriers and their customers rely on another EDI transaction, 214, for shipment status reports. “Our customers are relying on these status updates, because they are trying to plan headcount. If they’re doing a live unload and receiving, they want to make sure people are there when they need them and not two hours earlier sitting around,” says Bryant.

While Knight’s customers maintain various communication preferences including AS2 and direct FTP, “a significant percentage basically demand we use a VAN for reliability, stability, and support,” explains Koterman.

Responsiveness During Outages

In the case of a network outage, a swift, customer-focused reaction from a VAN provider can mitigate issues. Unfortunately, Knight’s previous vendor demonstrated no such response. “It took way too long,” Bryant says of a frustrating run-around. “We were passed around from one person to another...customer support and service was lacking.”

Combined with other issues, the experience created a tipping point for Knight. “We needed to find a dependable company with people I can talk to when we have a problem; people who I feel are looking out for our interests as well, not just: ‘What can I sell you next?’ We needed a VAN provider that is reliable and has a good reputation in the industry to move forward with us,” says Bryant.

Reliable Service Ensures Fast, Smooth B2B Interactions

Knight now exchanges business documents electronically in the OpenText Cloud with Trading Grid Messaging Service, a global, cloud-based transaction management service built on a high availability platform—Trading Grid Ultra—designed to provide 99.95 percent availability or better while providing capabilities of the world’s most powerful B2B network.

Trading Grid Messaging Service offers access through the Internet, private network, or third-party VANs and supports all popular protocols, including AS2, FTP, and more. Among other files, Knight professionals maintain immediate, reliable access to

tender documents for review; they deliver shipment status notices with speed and precision, actions that influence the carrier’s positive scorecard.

“Knight receives report cards that cover everything from human interaction to EDI transactions,” Koterman explains. “That grade can affect the number of loads we’re offered.” Thus, with reliable VAN service from OpenText, Knight ensures immediate, consistent access to current business opportunities; then, by fulfilling customer requirements with Knight’s personal service, the carrier maintains high grades on scorecards, increasing chances for future prospects. “It’s actually very critical,” Koterman notes. “Not just for ongoing loads, but for the potential volume of business in the future.”

In all, Trading Grid Messaging Service offers increased reliability and opportunity at a lower cost when compared with its previous VAN. “The cost savings turned out to be a nice bonus,” Koterman says.

Smooth Implementation and Top-Notch Service

To replace its previous service, Knight EDI professionals took note of comments and recommendations from IT peers. “I ran into some people who had good things to say about OpenText,” Bryant recalls. They discussed customer service, noting every customer is a key customer to OpenText, regardless of size. “We’re not a mom-and-pop shop, but there are companies that handle more volume than we do,” Bryant notes. “Still, with OpenText, knowing we have a high level of support is great.”

OpenText support comes from experienced professionals. “When the technical team came out and explained the process for setup and conversion, it was obvious they knew what they were doing,” Bryant says. He and the EDI team at Knight describe implementation of Trading Grid Messaging Service as smooth and timely, migrating service from the previous provider by the planned cutover date.

All matters were handled with speed and expertise, according to Bryant. “We had a couple of little things we had to change and we always found experts from OpenText to resolve the problem immediately,” he says. “We’re talking minutes with OpenText versus hours with our old provider.”

OpenText Trading Grid Messaging Service offers increased reliability and opportunity at a lower cost when compared with Knight Transportation’s previous VAN. In the transportation industry—like many others—minutes matter. Leveraging Trading Grid Messaging Service, Knight is taking full advantage of those minutes.

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