

New England Biolabs GmbH (NEB)

New England Biolabs transforms digital order processing

MANAGING NON-STANDARD ORDER FORMATS

NEB receives approximately 4,750 purchase orders each month from various customers, including numerous well-known academic institutions.

NEB accepts these orders in diverse formats. Increasingly, customers are choosing to place orders in machine-processable formats such as XML. Some customers, however, do not use the universally accepted data standards such as ORDERS or cXML in their pure form, but instead rely on modified or even proprietary formats. These different formats lead to a high degree of manual processing. Orders have to be reformatted and re-entered. In many cases, errors also need to be corrected before orders are uploaded to NEB's ERP system.

IMPROVING DIGITAL ORDER PROCESSING

NEB was looking for technology solutions to streamline the management of the various machine-processable order transmission formats. This is when contact was made with ZS Computer Service GmbH, a Bottomline partner in the field of document-related technologies, portal solutions and electronic mapping of business processes. Marcel Krummenauer is an IT Business Analyst at NEB, and he explains:

"We were originally looking for a classic middleware solution and looked at and compared various solutions. However, it quickly became clear that Bottomline Transform offered all the document creation and customization functionality we needed at an attractive price. Overall, Transform provides a feature set that significantly exceeds our original requirements, great flexibility and is easy to use. We value the advice and expertise of ZS Computer Service. They provided us with convincing arguments in favour of Transform. It has proved to be a good decision."

SELF-SUFFICIENT DOCUMENT BUILDING AND CUSTOMISATION

ZS set up the Transform servers and provided training for NEB users using the Bottomline Transform solution. This training included how to use the real-time visualisation features during the design process to map inputs, format data, and create dynamic document layouts, as well as change processes and implement user approvals. Marcel works as Business Analyst at NEB and explains:

"It is easy to use the powerful Transform Designer to build and edit documents using the 'drag and drop' features to design processing procedures.

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CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

New England Biolabs Inc (Ipswich, USA)

has been a privately held research company and leading manufacturer of innovative reagents and enzymes for molecular biology for over 45 years. The world's largest selection of DNA- and RNA-modifying enzymes is used in PCR, gene editing, synthetic biology, mRNA synthesis (IVT) as well as in library prep and target enrichment for next-generation sequencing. New England Biolabs GmbH (NEB) in Frankfurt is the central service hub for European business activities.

BENEFITS



Created an efficient digital processing hub for customer orders, irrespective of format



Automated processing to improve the customer ordering experience



Became self-sufficient in document processing changes



Drastically reduced manual effort when importing orders into the ERP system



Increased control by insourcing processes that a third party previously carried out

We can customise documents without worrying about customizing our ERP. This means we can be more self-sufficient with Transform and not rely on coding or using external consulting services. The mail connector and web service connectors offer support for native output, which turns previous costly design changes into simple tasks that we can do in-house."

An additional requirement was to set up a REST interface for order entry. For this, NEB turned to ZS Computer Service, who developed a customised service. Today, every incoming, machine-readable customer order can be processed with Transform and converted into a format that can be automatically imported into the ERP system.

Bodo Zipffel, Executive Partner, ZS Computer Services confirms, "The integration of Bottomline's Transform solution into the NEB project has enabled flexibility and a scope for design that ultimately leaves no customer requirements unfulfilled."

IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

NEB worked hard to introduce customers to the new format options for submitting orders through the order channels. This investment was well received and contributed to its rapid adoption.

Marcel explains the business impact, "We operate in a competitive market, so a smooth ordering process is invaluable. Transform has given us an efficient way of managing orders and requests. This automation saves a lot of time and reduces the manual effort required to process other customer orders, such as those received by fax.

We can now manage more processes using internal resources, reducing our reliance on external service providers."

BUILDING A DIGITAL PROCESSING CENTRE

Connecting more customers via standardised formats has proved an essential selling point to NEB's customers. Marcel states, "We see Transform as a digital processing centre that can process various data streams. It gives us better control over the orders, especially where there are any deviations from the standard format. We can also intervene earlier in the order lifecycle, meaning we have a higher level of automation in digital document delivery, processing and storage.

Our goal was to use Transform as an interface between our customers and our ERP system. The result is that we have an open solution that caters for a broader range of formats. Transform plays a vital role in our ability to continue providing a very high level of service to customers."

MEETING A NEXT DAY DELIVERY PROMISE

After seeing first-hand the stability and robustness of Transform, NEB's next step is to look for ways to automate its invoice production and printing process. Similar to purchase orders, NEB has to manage many different formats.

"This will further reduce manual processing and help NEB continue to deliver on its customer promise: for all orders received Monday to Thursday by 4pm, we aim to deliver by noon the next day in Germany and Austria. The ability to consistently achieve this is critical for us and our customers.

The top priority has been to enable better service for our customers. Thanks to Transform, we have achieved this. I would recommend Transform for medium and large corporates that want to automate document transformation and processing.

Now that we know how Transform works, we are starting to think about other business areas where automation is needed or helpful," Marcel concludes.