

“Our Customers Insistence on E-invoices created interest in LaserNet. Now the Benefits Pay Off”

Overview

■ Challenge

To convert Concorde XAL output to oioXML e-invoices and automate delivery to government customers.
To reduce cost on postage, handling and document management

■ Key Benefits:

Major cost reductions on paper, postage, printing and envelopes.

Faster integration of NIRA document templates to newly acquired company's computer systems

Easier ERP administration

Fast access to electronic archived documents, leading to more efficient working practices

■ IT Applications

Microsoft Business Solutions
– Concorde XAL
Converting to Agresso
WIN 2003

■ Scope

Multiple transactions
Centralised maintenance

■ Solution

LaserNet Server and Developer
LaserNet PDF Creator and e-mail
LaserNet XML

■ Why LaserNet?

LaserNet enabled the conversion to XML without having to re-programme the ERP application

ERP version and application independent

■ Is it For You?

LaserNet can support all IT applications and IT platforms and significantly reduce cost on forms creation and distribution



Engineering consultancy company, NIRAS, discusses how they use LaserNet to reduce costs and improve customer service with XML based e-invoices.

Emil Larsen, CFO for NIRAS, explains: "In early 2005 a 'requirement' was issued from all our government customers that invoices should no longer be delivered in paper format, but as e-invoices in oioXML format. As a large part of our customer base comes from the public sector our attention was significantly awakened, particularly as it was not so much a request, but a legal directive from the Danish Government. However, this didn't mean that our company did not stand to benefit from the initiative"

Jane Johansen, IT Manager, continued: "Right from the start, we instinctively knew it would be more cost effective to convert our ERP output to XML than to use a third party company to scan our paper invoices, convert them to XML and then forward them to our customers. This would be just too expensive, take too long and could have led to payment delays. But the question was, how could our ERP data be converted to XML without our ERP having to be completely re-programmed? This was a critical point, as we were planning to move from Concorde to Agresso in two years time and didn't want to spend time & money on updating a soon to be obsolete system."

"With these thoughts in mind we attended a LaserNet Output Management seminar and soon realised that LaserNet would provide the

Output & Document Management

perfect remedy to our quandary. Not only would LaserNet allow us to convert our invoice output to oioXML, but the LaserNet set-up could easily be transferred from Concorde to Agresso. The resultant implementation of LaserNet went extremely well and we were prepared for electronic invoicing by the required date of March 2005. Indeed we achieved target several months earlier than many of our government customers!" Jane Johansen added with a note of irony.

The Benefits

Whilst mandatory e-invoicing has reduced the Danish Government's invoice processing costs by around €68000, suppliers also benefit. NIRAS say that they have reduced their costs by around 30,000 euros through savings on printing, paper, postage and manual envelope stuffing. More importantly, there has been a positive effect on our company cashflow since the invoices are received by the customer almost as soon as they are generated, in an electronic format that can be virtually automatically processed, allowing NIRAS to be paid more quickly.

Our business also benefits from a more efficient work flow, for sales invoice processing. LaserNet and its associated AutoFORM archive solution eliminate many of the tedious printing, invoice copy distribution, envelope stuffing and filing tasks. As the invoice is created in XML, an additional copy is produced in PDF format which looks like the original paper invoices. The PDF version is automatically sent to the electronic archive (along with the XML version), so we can refer to it onscreen should the customer have a query. In addition a copy is automatically emailed to the NIRAS account manager and the relevant customer's authorising manager. This system dramatically reduces the number of customer queries and when they do call we can quickly resolve their invoice query by looking at the invoices onscreen. This also simplifies and shortens the invoice approval procedure for our customers.

LaserNet's ability to manage multiple companies.

Today LaserNet handles all outbound documents from all of the subsidiaries of the NIRAS Group. The offices consist of:

- NIRAS Rådgivende ingeniører og planlæggere A/S
- NIRAS Konsulenterne A/S
- NIRAS Greenland A/S
- NIRAS Polska Sp.z.o.o
- DEMEX A/S
- Chemcontrol A/S
- Scanagri A/S
- Pentra A/S
- Dybbro og Haastrup ApS

LaserNet automatically switches the logo and contact address according to the destination. LaserNet can even direct documents to the right printer paper tray; for example customer letters to headed paper and drafts to plain paper.

Implementation

"Moving from paper to e-invoicing was never going to be easy, as the XML format was new and largely unproven. We also had to spend some time updating our ERP customer & product files with the EAN location number and dynamic XML descriptions to enable the automation through LaserNet. However, the LaserNet partner EuroFORM A/S has supported us throughout the implementation and provided us with excellent service. Their help made what could have been a very stressful time relatively painfree," commented Jane Johansen.

Ease of Maintenance

Jane continued: "A major advantage with LaserNet is that we can make changes to our documents ourselves, without external technical support. For example, we recently acquired two new companies and we were able to copy over much of our existing LaserNet set-up to the new companies systems. This meant that we could quickly produce NIRAS branded invoices and purchase orders within a few days of the transfer of ownership. Furthermore, all the document design work can be completed by our marketing department, allowing this time consuming task to be completed outside of the IT department.

Emil Larsen, CFO for NIRAS A/S concludes, "The e-invoicing requirements from our customers forced us to invest in LaserNet. However, we have reaped the benefit by not only reducing our invoice delivery costs, but also by gaining a number of technical output management advantages. Indeed, we now wonder how we ever lived without them. The other main benefit is that we can transfer the LaserNet set up to Agresso when we move away from Concorde. In fact we are anticipating that LaserNet will make the switchover considerably easier than it would have otherwise been."

About NIRAS

NIRAS is a large consulting engineering company with offices across Northern Europe. The company was founded in 1956 and has since then grown through expansion and acquisition. They have a wide range of expertise in both general and specialised engineering design and project management. This provides the basis for NIRAS to perform and manage very large projects both in Denmark and internationally.

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