Darn Tough Vermont Case Study

Darn Tough Accelerates Trading Partner Onboarding Through EDI Transformation with Orderful

Business Challenge

Darn Tough Vermont delivers high-quality socks to customers around the world. When the company migrated to a new ERP system, it aimed to streamline manual EDI processes that involved too much data entry. Darn Tough began looking for an EDI partner that would support the company through an EDI transformation that would allow them to onboard new customers and partners faster.

Solution

Darn Tough selected Orderful because of its modern API, which allowed them to easily integrate their new ERP and connect with their third-party logistics (3PL) partners in days rather than weeks. At the same time and just as beneficial, Darn Tough has been pleased with Orderful's outstanding technical support. As they began migrating customers to Orderful, the company was delighted by receiving same-day assistance with its technical issues. With ease-of-use in the platform and quick turnaround times for onboarding and support, Darn Tough has seen cost-reductions and heightened visibility and control throughout its EDI processes.
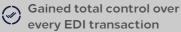
Results

✳ Consolidated three EDI systems into one	↘ Reduced cost of testing EDI connections	👤✓ Enabled business users to configure EDI rules
◷ Gained total control over every EDI transaction	🕐 Resolved EDI issues in 1-2 days rather than weeks	🔁 Accomplished an overall EDI transformation

Customers trust Darn Tough Vermont to deliver the most comfortable, durable, and best-fitting socks they've ever owned. To keep its products at a respected level with an unconditional lifetime guarantee, Darn Tough works as efficiently as possible with the highest-quality suppliers and partners.

Until recently, Darn Tough's shipping processes revolved around manual data entry. The company first started using EDI on a DiCentral (now TrueCommerce) system. On the recommendation of its new CTO, Darn Tough later added SPS Commerce to it's technology landscape. Although these systems delivered significant EDI capabilities, they required extensive manual effort from the Darn Tough staff.

"To make some of our EDI processes run, we were having to download inbound documents from SPS Commerce before loading them into our system," explained Jenna Sawyer, EDI Administrator, Darn Tough Vermont. "Any outbound documents required us to enter data from our system into SPS Commerce. And because we use a 3PL firm for shipping, there was manual effort involved in getting them our data and building labels. Relying on so much human effort in our EDI transactions made our processes more prone to errors, chargebacks, and other issues, which were time-intensive for our staff."

Darn Tough found that it could onboard trading partners within two weeks on SPS Commerce. But when the company ran into technical difficulties, SPS Commerce couldn't provide an adequate level of support for its growing customer base.
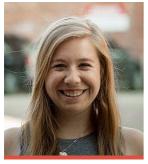
"SPS Commerce initially provided good support, but we have seen it drop off over time," recalled Ryan Camerlengo, ERP Business Analyst Manager, Darn Tough Vermont. "We weren't getting much help or feedback from them on how to automate our processes and maximize our efficiency in serving customers. Even after two years of using the platform, we were still manually entering data into a portal."

At that point, Darn Tough began looking for ways to make an EDI transformation with the goals of simplifying, speeding up, and automating tasks wherever possible. The company implemented an Infor M3 ERP system and began researching EDI technologies that would work well with M3.

Intuitive Rules Engine and Modern APIs Help Simplify EDI

Around that time, Sawyer and her team saw a demo of Orderful's Modern EDI Platform. Not only was Orderful's cloud EDI solution designed to be easy to connect to Infor M3, but it also offered several other appealing features.

"Our development team appreciated that Orderful offered APIs, which would make it much easier to integrate Orderful with our middleware," said Sawyer. "We also loved the rules engine, because we knew it would enable our business users to map EDI fields themselves without involving the development team."

Jenna Sawyer
EDI Administrator
Darn Tough Vermont

As soon as Darn Tough selected Orderful and began its implementation, the company realized it had found the right business partner to make their vision of an EDI transformation come to life.

"The implementation has gone smoothly for the most part, but what we're doing is fairly complex," Sawyer explained. "Our development team is massively re-engineering our custom middleware that connects us to our 3PLs. Any time we've been unable to figure something out ourselves, the Orderful customer support team has been right there to help us through the issue. We generally get a response from them the same day, or the next day at the latest. And if it's a complex issue, they're always happy to schedule a meeting and walk us through the solution."

Modern EDI Platform Enables a Consolidation of EDI Solutions

As Darn Tough continues to migrate its customers from SPS Commerce to Orderful, the company is handling all development work with a small in-house team. During the process, Darn Tough customers have experienced no interruptions in service. Once Darn Tough has migrated all its customers into Orderful, the company will be able to drop down from three EDI platforms to one, achieving significant savings from their EDI transformation.

"We began our customer migration process by focusing on our largest customers with the most complex integrations," said Sawyer. "In the process, we're building our mappings so that they will be standard for everyone. This has required some work up front, but it's going to enable us to onboard trading partners faster so we can get to revenue faster. That's one of the greatest benefits of Orderful: you can build a mapping once and use it countless times in the future. Orderful has reduced testing time allowing for faster onboarding of trading partners."

So far, Darn Tough has found that all of the new trading partners it has wanted to add were already in the Orderful network, which streamlines the onboarding process. Darn Tough uses Orderful's rules engine to fix invalid transactions for each partner.

"Configuring EDI is so much easier with Orderful," Camerlengo confirmed. "With the rules engine, you can see all your mapping rules and look up tables in one interface. We have total control over every EDI transaction without needing to involve developers, and it's much easier to understand the data we're getting from Orderful because we can actually see the x12 or JSON code. I'm convinced that Orderful should be the EDI platform of choice not just for smaller organizations like ours, but for any company that wants to make it easy for business users to configure EDI."

Outstanding Customer Support Drives Sustainable Growth

As a small company that seeks to increase its revenue, Darn Tough believes the combination of Orderful's easy-to-use platform and helpful customer support staff will pave the way to a brighter future. Once its customer migration is complete, the company looks forward to achieving more of their EDI transformation goals including connecting many new trading partners through Orderful.

"Orderful provides exceptional customer support," concluded James Decker, CTO, Darn Tough Vermont. "Orderful support quickly identifies and resolves issues in real time. With SPS Commerce, we would log a ticket and then wait days or even weeks for issues to be resolved. With Orderful, we've found a true business partner who's completely invested in our growth and long-term success."

orderful ✳
EDI DONE RIGHT

Orderful is the Modern EDI Platform that gives logistics providers, retailers, manufacturers, and technology companies full control to onboard, manage, and resolve all of their trading partner relationships and transactions in real-time. With its unique ability to digitize trading guidelines, Orderful customers build a single API integration against consolidated requirements for all partners. Orderful automatically transforms data to EDI without complex mapping and validates transactions against actual trading guidelines in real-time. Orderful proactively identifies errors before transactions are sent and provides business analysts with a point and click business rules engine to correct errors instantly to keep your supply chain operating smoothly. Orderful is EDI Done Right!

Darn Tough Vermont is an American manufacturer of premium, all-weather outdoor and lifestyle socks backed up by the industry's original unconditional guarantee for life. The company offers both Specialty and Tactical product lines. Darn Tough Vermont's Specialty line of socks includes Hike, Lifestyle, Run, Snow, Athletic, Work, Hunt and Juniors' styles.

Darn Tough's product is distinguished from industry competitors by 100 percent USA manufacturing; exceptional comfort, durability and fit; True-Seamless™ technology; and an exclusive blend of either ultra-fine, premium Merino wool or Coolmax®/Thermolite®. Founded by Ric Cabot in 2004, a third-generation sock maker, Darn Tough Vermont operates out of Cabot Hosiery Mills. For more information about Darn Tough Vermont socks, please visit: www.DarnTough.com.