

# Advanced EDI Solutions

from

## Tangentia Consulting

Making Business Simple

### The Workings of EDI

In its simplest form, EDI is the exchange of information between two trading partners in standard, predefined formats. Figure-1 shows EDI in its simplest form. The documents exchanged between trading partners may vary from invoice and purchase order to payment and credit check documents.

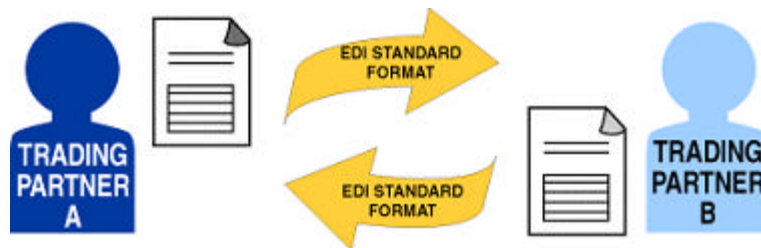


Figure 1. Simplest form of EDI

There are several points to be noticed in the above figure.

- I. **Generation of Documents-** The documents to be exchanged between the trading partners are not stand-alone and self-contained. They are usually generated based on business information like POS, Forecasts, Inventory etc
- II. **Means of Transmission-** An electronic medium is required for the document to flow between trading partners. This may be a simple dialup modem to the proprietary VAN (Value Added Network) or the Public Internet (AS2/AS1).
- III. **Document Standards-** For a simple two party exchange of data, it is easy to agree on a predefined format. However in the complex world of business today, where each company has hundreds of suppliers, a one-by-one agreement is impossible. To address this, a number of formats and standards have been developed by standard authorities.

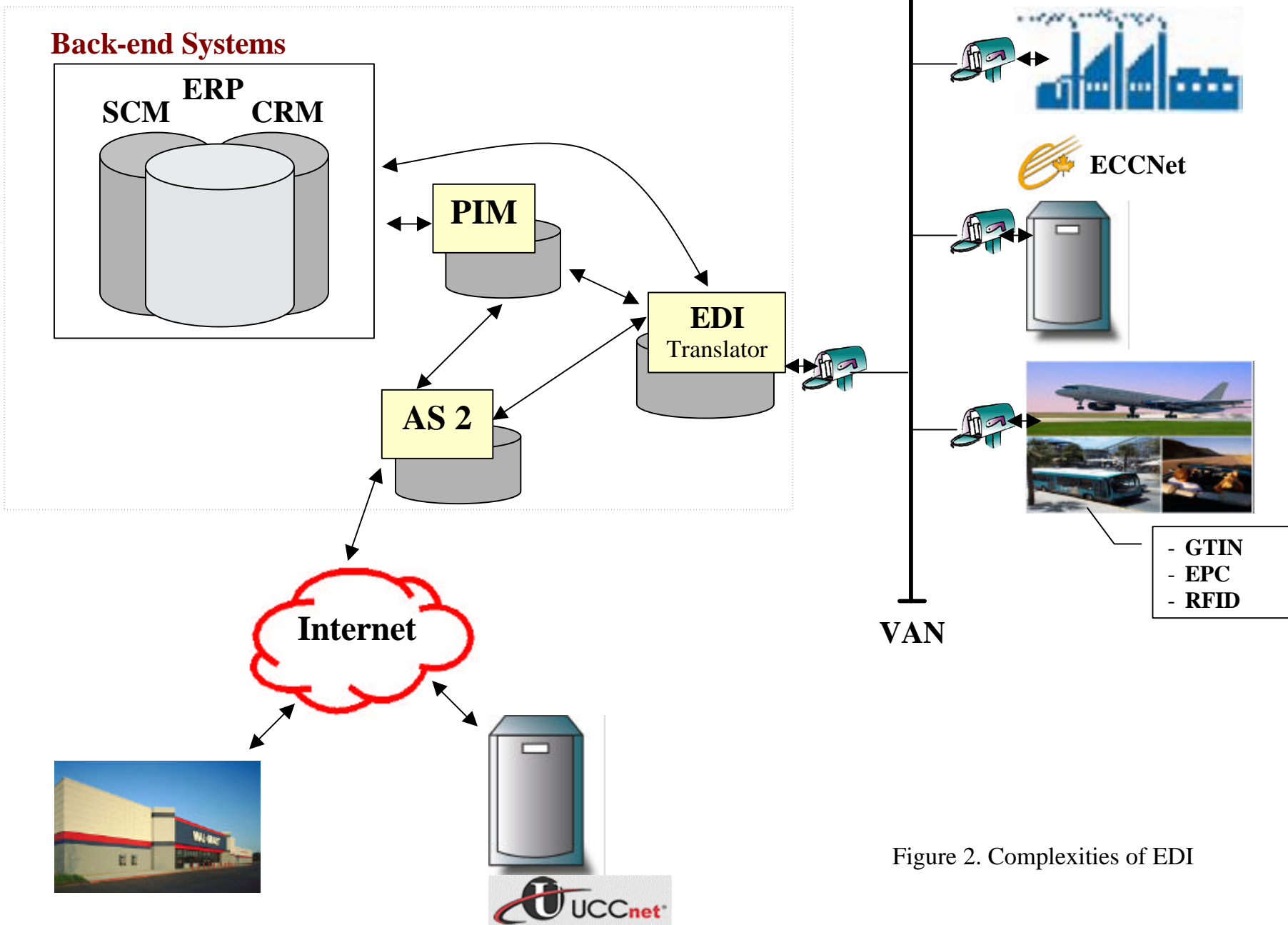


Figure 2. Complexities of EDI



## The Complexities of EDI

Today every company deals with a number of trading partners. This entails the use of different tools and communication media to exchange information. In short a seamless integration between the internal systems and processes of the company and those beyond the enterprise borders is required. Figure 2 depicts this concept. As seen in the figure, the main components and requirements of a successful EDI/ B2B strategy are as follows:

- **PIM or Product Information Manager:** In most companies today, product information resides partly in the back-end systems like ERP, partly on spreadsheets, paper or even in people's brains. This makes it extremely difficult for the companies to manage the increasing and diverse demands of retailers or data-pools like ECCNet / UCCNet. That is why a PIM is becoming a standard item in a company's IT infrastructure. It is the vault of item information for the company and stores and manages all item data related to different SKUs.
- **EDI Translator:** EDI translator recognizes different EDI formats. It receives the documents from ERP/Accounting application, creates an EDI standard document and communicates it to the enterprise mailbox. It also receives the incoming EDI standard documents from the enterprise mailbox, translates it to the format understandable by internal system and sends it over to the back-end system. There is usually a mapping function associated with the EDI translator, which maps the different data fields, both ways.
- **VAN (Value Added Network):** It's a network of mailboxes with routing and document validation functionality, designed specifically to meet the EDI requirements.
- **Public Internet and AS2 Software.** Companies may also use the Public Internet to interchange the EDI documents. To do so, AS2/AS1 compliant software is required to secure the passing of documents through the Internet.
- **GTIN and EPC.** In a real world of supply chain management, each vendor's product should be uniquely identified among all others. This is what GTIN (Global Trade Identification Number) does. The authorized bodies like ECC in Canada assign GTIN, which is usually specified on goods using a bar code label. EPC (Electronic Product Code) is another related term, which refers to GTIN in the context of the manufacturer, distributor or the original country of production. GTIN is mandated to be used by all trading partners by Jan 2005.

- **RFID (Radio Frequency Identification).** Today's product codes are all passive. It means they are bar-coded on the SKU and do nothing before a bar-code reader detects them. This makes it difficult and costly for the large retailer and inventories to check and manage good's storage and flow. An RFID is an EPC, which is broadcast by a small chip embedded in each product. The decreasing costs of chips and wireless technology has made it possible to track goods as they flow from country to country and storage to storage. RFID is being adopted by several major companies of the world and is viewed as the next big move in global trading.

## Tangentia EDI Solutions

Tangentia Consulting is a co-operative of consultants with special focus on EDI. Through its partnership with big players like IBM & EDS, Tangentia provides complete solutions and services for EDI, tailored to the requirements of the client. The Tangentia eCircle suite of products is also developed specifically to meet the EDI requirements of the SME. The following are Tangentia solution in the realm of EDI.

- **PIM** - eCIRCLE-PIM is a product information manager, designed and developed specifically for the Canadian SMB sector. It also easily connects to the popular systems like SAP, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Business Vision, etc.
- **ASN Application**- eCIRCLE ASN application with MH10 labels & integration with various ERP/Accounting applications.
- **EDI Translator** - Through its partnership with EDS, Tangentia provides the EDS\*Asset software to meet the requirements of the client. We also provide EDI Mapping services on the following EDI Translators
  - Sterling - Gentran Server, Gentran Integration Server, Gentran for PC
  - EDS- EDI\*Asset
  - IBM- WebSphere Data Interchange (WDI)
  - GE- Application Integrator, Desktop
- **AS2 Software** - Tangentia is a partner of IBM and deploys the IBM WBI Connect and IBM iSoft AS2 software in its EDI solution.
- **VAN**- Tangentia is a partner and reseller of EDS\*ELIT for the purpose of communication to trading partners. (We usually offer at least **30% savings** to the customer over their existing VAN)

We understand that each business and each client has its own unique problem and solution and focus on the solution most suitable to the specific problem. We always look for a long-term relationship with the client, addressing all its problems in the IT domain and specifically EDI.

## About Tangentia Consulting

Tangentia Consulting was formed by merger of many independent consultants who had a common vision of a company dedicated to providing services/products to the Retail/Distribution & Manufacturing industries in the SMB sector. Some of the trading partners we have helped our customers to successfully start doing business with are Amazon.com, Wal-Mart, Bay, Zellers, Sears, Target, Rite Aid, Shoppers Drug Mart, Rona, General Motors, Chrysler etc.

Tangentia Consulting is a partner of the IBM Software Group with specific focus on the WebSphere Business Integration (WBI) family of products. Tangentia Consulting is also a partner with EDS for their products like EDI\*Asset and EDS\*ELIT.

## TANGENTIA CONSULTING

5293A, Yonge Street  
Toronto, ON, M2N 5R3  
Tel: 416-238-7515  
Fax: 416-352-6066  
[www.tangentia.com](http://www.tangentia.com)

### TANGENTIA CHALLENGE

Please give us a call and we will provide you with a guarantee that we will be able to reduce your EDI/IT costs by at least 30%

Partners:

