



Industry

- Apparel Manufacturing

Products

- Microsoft SQL Server
 - Enterprise
 - Analysis Services
 - Reporting Services
- Microsoft SharePoint Server
- Microsoft BizTalk Server
- PerformancePoint Services in Microsoft SharePoint Server

Challenge

In response to fast growth of online sales, Columbia Sportswear needed to improve an outdated e-commerce integration solution to one that would support higher throughput and adapt to planned changes in the company's IT environment

Solution

Columbia partnered with Neudesic to redesign its e-commerce integration solution by applying a service-oriented architecture based on Microsoft BizTalk Server, Microsoft SQL Server Enterprise data management software, and Microsoft SharePoint Server

Benefit

- Speeds order processing
- Increases scalability
- Improves customer support
- Supports supply-chain transformation

e-Commerce Integration Solution Redesign

Founded in 1938, Columbia Sportswear manufactures and sells high-performance outdoor apparel and equipment. The company sells its Columbia, Montrail, Mountain Hardwear, and Sorel products online and in retail outlets worldwide.

Montrail footwear serves the high-performance footwear needs of runners who train and race on a wide variety of surfaces. Mountain Hardwear is a leader in premium outdoor apparel and equipment and works with era-defining athletes to develop innovative products and technologies. Sorel combines luxurious materials, provocative designs and flawless construction to create footwear that is fashionably bold, daring and brave. From frozen tundra to city streets, Sorel inspires fashion-forward feet for every season.

With BizTalk Server and SQL Server, processes that used to take minutes now complete in seconds, so our order processing is massively faster than it used to be.

Larry Davis
Senior Solution Architect

Project Highlights

- Columbia Sportswear launched e-commerce businesses and built significant sales from its multiple brand websites.
- Columbia decided to upgrade from its original e-commerce solution to further strengthen its processing of online orders.
- Columbia wanted an e-commerce integration solution that would support higher throughput and adapt to planned changes in the company's IT environment.
- Deployment proceeded on schedule and was completed well in advance of a crucial holiday shopping season deadline.
- Columbia can process orders faster and solve customer-service issues more nimbly. The solution's reusable processes and services also support future changes, such as deploying SAP ERP or moving services to the cloud.



e-Commerce Integration Solution Redesign

The Challenge

Columbia Sportswear launched e-commerce businesses, building significant sales from its multiple brand websites. A company wide supply-chain transformation project and e-commerce growth prompted Columbia to upgrade its original e-commerce solution to further strengthen its processing of online orders.

A previous e-commerce integration solution, based on Microsoft BizTalk Server, used point-to-point integrations to connect various applications. That solution showed signs of strain as the company's online sales continued to grow.

"Our online sales increased dramatically," said Larry Davis, Senior Solution Architect at Columbia Sportswear. "Supporting that growth required an unsustainable level of effort."

The old solution also would have complicated the company's planned transition from its JD Edwards enterprise resource planning solution to SAP ERP. "Keeping the old e-commerce solution while deploying SAP would have required us to create, run, and maintain two separate integration environments at greatly increased support and development costs," said Davis.

Columbia wanted an e-commerce integration solution that would support higher throughput and adapt to planned changes in the company's IT environment.

The Solution

Columbia teamed with Neudesic to design and deploy a new solution that uses SQL Server to store BizTalk Server application-group configurations, route service bus messages, and track business activity monitoring data. The Microsoft BizTalk Enterprise Service Bus Toolkit extends the functionality of BizTalk Server and plays a key role in the company's SOA by supporting lightweight service composition, dynamic resolution of endpoints and maps, web service integration, fault management, and reporting.

The solution also employs Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services, Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services, and PerformancePoint Services in Microsoft SharePoint Server. These technologies give analysts access to intuitive dashboards and reports that provide comprehensive visibility into operational and technical information. The new solution required only minimal changes to existing JD Edwards processes and can be easily modified to support new SAP business processes.

Deployment proceeded on schedule and was completed well in advance of a crucial holiday shopping season deadline.

The Benefit

Transforming its e-commerce integration system into a service-oriented architecture based on BizTalk Server positions Columbia for continued e-commerce growth. "Our BizTalk Server solution is serving our current transaction volume with a good deal of headroom for any future growth. And the scalability of BizTalk Server and SQL Server would make it easy to grow past our current headroom if we needed to," said Davis.

Neudesic brought in the right resources at the right time and was always responsive to our needs. The project was delivered on time and under budget.

*Brian Summers
Senior Manager for Global
Application Development*

By offering comprehensive visibility into automated business processes, the company's new solution makes it easier to resolve customer problems, and replacing its point-to-point integrations with a service-oriented architecture enables Columbia to support future planned changes in its IT environment. The company also has the option to easily move services to the cloud, as needed.