SAPinsider

Next-Generation Labeling Solutions Enhance Supply Chain Agility

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1 What is the top supply chain challenge that SAP customers face in 2015?

Executives are being challenged to more quickly deliver process improvements that produce strategic advantage. Speed and agility are now key requirements. The Internet of Things (IoT) is intensifying the pace of change and the need for agility allowing customers to harness more differentiated services more efficiently.[1]

Barcode labeling is a mission-critical operation that offers a substantial opportunity to generate such operational efficiency gains. Many SAP customers employ outdated or disparate labeling systems. These systems constrain the organization's ability to rapidly respond to demand and supply volatility and to implement process improvements required to deliver strategic advantage.

With regulatory requirements becoming more complex and customers having unique labeling requirements, legacy systems simply cannot keep up. Customers that have improved their labeling processes have realized significant savings and made their supply chain more agile, responsive, and competitive.

2 How should organizations address that challenge?

SAP customers can turn these challenges into a competitive advantage by taking a strategic approach that centralizes label management and extends it beyond the enterprise to business partners.

Our recommended best practice is to adopt a centralized strategy that consolidates all labeling across the enterprise and the extended supply chain. As part of this strategy, SAP customers need to implement a label lifecycle management solution that utilizes a centralized database repository, rather than file-based storage. A browser-based user interface enables enterprise-wide access and faster design and approval workflows.

The SAP system should be the single source of truth for label data, directly driving label printing processes. In addition, web-based printing forms can be deployed instantly for on-demand labeling processes and for supplier collaboration. By focusing on these key drivers, companies significantly reduce the complexity of labeling, which ultimately results in greater supply chain agility. This optimization can save enterprises millions each year and establish their supply chain as a competitive advantage.

3 What current market trends are impacting supply chain management?

Established supply chains are under pressure from new business models. Globally, customers are becoming more demanding and want products delivered faster and in smaller quantities. At the same time, the stringency of regulatory requirements is increasing each year.

Contract manufacturing also means that the competitive marketplace can rapidly shift demand from one manufacturer to the next. SAP customers need the ability to respond faster to demand volatility by instilling more agility in their supply chains.

In today's networked economy, companies need to think beyond their own company and instead adopt "network thinking" by collaborating with their business partners. Enterprises that share access to labeling systems with business partners improve efficiency and reduce the risk of non-compliance.

> You can save millions each year and establish your supply chain as a competitive advantage.

[1] TechRadar, "Gartner Predicts Internet of Things Will Spark Supply Chain Reaction" (March 2014; www.techradar.com/us/news/internet/internet-of-things-will-deliver-supply-chain-changes-1236384?src=rss&attr=all).

Centralized and consolidated labeling solutions allow enterprises to respond to market volatility and meet customer and regulatory requirements faster. Companies can also adopt "extended supply chain thinking" by implementing browser-based printing solutions that business partners can use.

4 How are new technologies affecting supply chain organizations?

Organizations achieve the biggest gains by implementing browser-based labeling productivity solutions. In addition to reducing costs, companies can improve operational efficiency, responsiveness, and agility. In fact, one NiceLabel customer reduced goods-receiving processing time by 44% after deploying a web printing solution to suppliers.

Companies are seeing these improvements for a number of reasons. Label change requests traditionally required written specifications, sign-offs, and a waiting period for IT to develop items such as printer code and approvals. This daunting process can take months for even the slight repositioning of an object on a label.

By contrast, next-generation solutions let business users tap into the power of centralized database storage to find, visually compare, and modify templates. Browser-based access improves workflows and collaboration to deploy approved label changes globally in a matter of hours rather than months.

Companies have also always struggled with the consistency of their outbound labels. With modern, centralized print productivity solutions, this is no longer an issue. Next-generation web browser printing technology allows this consistency to be extended to business partners without the disadvantages of server-side printing. Client-side processing and printing delivers desktop levels of performance with full, centralized control.

5 How does NiceLabel help SAP customers improve their supply chain performance?

NiceLabel's Enterprise Labeling Solution is designed to improve agility, responsiveness, and efficiency in the supply chain. The core of the solution is an all-in-one, next-generation technology platform that provides SAP customers with lower operational costs and faster time to value than any other approach.

The platform seamlessly integrates with SAP applications and requires little or no change to the SAP environment. The unique label consolidation technology reduces the need for many label variations. It significantly reduces the complexity of the labeling system by simplifying the label creation, management, and validation processes.

NiceLabel's "configure, don't code" approach empowers business users to design and manage label templates using configurable menus and workflows, not programming scripts. These configurable business rules reduce response times and lower costs of label creation and maintenance.

In addition, secure web access enables SAP customers to centralize label management, globally synchronize changes in real time, collaborate across all their locations, and extend labeling to business partners.

6 Why do SAP customers need to act now and contact NiceLabel?

The NiceLabel platform provides the fastest way to configure, deploy, and manage a centrally controlled, scalable enterprise labeling solution. Previous-generation approaches limit the ability to adapt to changing customer and regulatory requirements. NiceLabel's Enterprise Labeling Solution provides the agility to rapidly react to changing environments and lower the total direct and indirect costs of ownership.

For more than two decades, Fortune 500 companies have been relying on NiceLabel to deliver print productivity solutions. NiceLabel can help SAP customers dramatically improve labeling efficiency and achieve faster time to value. NiceLabel's experienced Professional Services Group delivers industry best practices, onsite services, responsive 24/7 support, and maximum uptime.

By delaying labeling modernization, enterprises limit the ability of the supply chain to provide strategic advantage. Contact NiceLabel to decrease the complexity of labeling and increase the agility of the entire supply chain. Learn more at **www.nicelabel.com/enterprise** or email us at **sales@nicelabel.com.** ◼