

GE Healthcare — Automating Order Entry with Esfer to Achieve Multiple Business Benefits



GE Healthcare

GE Healthcare provides transformational medical technologies and services, shaping a new age of patient care. They are committed to serving healthcare professionals and their patients in more than 100 countries. Expertise in areas such as medical imaging and information technologies, medical diagnostics, and patient monitoring systems helps their customers deliver better care to more people around the world — at a lower cost.

GE Healthcare has a long history of working closely with healthcare professionals in the Department of Health, NHS and private sector to develop and implement better patient management, using improved diagnosis and monitoring.

Healthcare

GE Healthcare's Medical Diagnostics department processes approximately 220,000 sales orders per year across 15 EMEA countries. Seeking a solution to improve its EMEA order entry operation, enhance its Customer Service function and integrate with the current SAP® harmonization program, GE Healthcare chose to automate sales order processing operations with Esfer DeliveryWare.

The Challenge

Due to the nature of GE's products, order entry is a critical operation within the business. Products containing radioactive material have a limited shelf life; therefore, an effective and error-free procedure is vital to maximizing business efficiencies and customer satisfaction — especially within a "lean practices" environment.

The limitations of GE's old order entry operation presented a number of challenges to key areas of the business:

- Excess of paper and manual duties within order entry
- Order entry errors and archiving issues
- Limited resources to focus on added-value Customer Service activities

GE Healthcare hoped to achieve a range of financial benefits by improving its order entry system, identifying a number of critical deliverables and business requirements:

- Improved ability to track and trace sales orders from receipt to system entry
- Reduce the number of manual touch points, order entry time and key stroke errors
- Increase Customer Service productivity, including value-added activities and improved customer satisfaction
- Reporting and analysis capabilities

“ We needed a solution to streamline the way we process customer orders across EMEA countries. With Esfer, 34% of our fax and email orders are now processed via Esfer DeliveryWare, and we are confident this percentage will significantly increase — enabling us to further improve Customer Service productivity and overall customer satisfaction. ”

Peter Langworthy ▪ Head of Customer Services Europe ▪ GE Healthcare

SAP requirements

A crucial area of focus for GE's automation initiative was achieving minimum manual interaction from Customer Service when entering orders into SAP. The challenge was to minimize the number of touch points; a decrease in order entry errors would help reduce customer queries, disputes and the need for credit notes. GE would benefit from major efficiency gains due to operatives having more time dedicated to Account Management activities.

Solution: Esker DeliveryWare

The Esker solution automates every phase of order entry — from the receipt of a customer document to the creation of a corresponding sales order in an ERP system. With the ability to handle any type of incoming order format, the Esker solution makes every order electronic and instantly accessible.

This enabled GE to better manage current, critical inefficiencies, such as limited process visibility, high cost per order and expensive errors. And, because the Esker solution interfaces with SAP, there was no problem with integrating into GE's SAP harmonization program. Additionally, Esker's solution allowed GE to achieve its overall goal of streamlining the way they processed customer orders across the EMEA countries.

Realizing the Benefits

With Esker DeliveryWare, GE Healthcare benefits from one standardized tool for all countries using SAP, and is now enjoying multiple, tangible business benefits.

Faster order entry time

Order entry time has already started to decrease by reducing the number of touch points. This optimizes the customer experience through improved service levels by enabling operatives to increase productivity and focus more on value-added activities such as customer care and opportunity detection — without the company having to increase its headcount.

"The dream for the future is totally electronic processing," said Peter Langworthy, Head of Customer Services Europe at GE Healthcare. "We are currently working towards this by significantly reducing our existing touch points, such as staff members having to handle paper orders multiple times as well as manually archiving orders. This gives us the ability to spend more time enhancing the customer relationship as well as increasing speed and minimizing the scope for errors."

Improved customer satisfaction

GE also believes that the reduced incidences of order entry errors will help the business overall, such as reducing customer complaints, payment disputes, and the removal of costs associated with customer queries and credit notes.

Enhanced visibility and retrieval

The electronic workflow brings GE improved efficiencies, such as enhanced visibility during the order life cycle. This offers better transparency, while enabling the tracking, tracing and escalation of orders — with the option to increase sales and improve order-to-receipt timescales.

"A specific feature that has been well received by our Customer Service team is the ability to retrieve archived sales orders quickly and effortlessly via the creation of a URL link to the archived sales order stored against the transaction in SAP," said Langworthy. "This not only saves time for the Customer Service team, it also provides a higher level of service to our customers by being able to be more flexible and responsive to any questions that are raised."