

The **Andalusian Healthcare Service (S.A.S)** provides healthcare to Andalusian citizens, with guarantees of quality, accessibility, fairness and user satisfaction as a centrepiece of its management.

Assigned to Strategic Healthcare Authority of the Andalusian Region, it is one of the largest Spanish public healthcare service:



#### CLIENT

Andalusian Healthcare Service

#### ACTIVITY

Health care services in primary care, hospitals and special organizations (Mental Health, Transplant Coordination, Emergencies)

#### Localización

Autonomous Community of Andalusia (Spain)

#### SOLUTIONS ROLLED OUT

EDI - Electronic Data Interchange  
ASP - Application Service Provider  
EDICOMNet  
Electronic Invoicing

- Cloud-based B2B e-commerce platform for integration of supplier network through the exchange of key business documents: Supply Orders, Despatch Advice, Receipt Confirmation and Electronic Invoice.

- Advanced EDI services including development of guidelines, pilot projects and supplier integration onboarding.

- With more than 1,500 primary care centers for citizen services.
- Integrating a network of 29 hospitals.
- The workforce consists of more than 84,000 doctors, auxiliaries and other professionals.
- The budget for 2013 was over 7,000 million euros.

#### EDI'S HEALTHCARE SECTOR ROLE

Significant progress has been made in the exchange of business information electronically in the pharmaceutical and healthcare sector in recent years and it is now a reality among the most important vendors in the sector.

The Central Healthcare Services in the Spanish national health system include a large number of working centres and organizations that take up the challenge of providing a critical, free and quality service to a large number of beneficiaries of the system.

Distributed geographically by Autonomous Regions, Services such as the SAS (Andalusian Healthcare Service) handle a high volume of resources that must be operated in an organized manner to ensure uninterrupted provision of an essential service to a large number of people.

In this context, efficient supply chain management is critical. Optimizing the supply process is crucial in order to

provide a huge and diverse amount of products essential to the smooth running of each of the service provision centres making up the SAS.

The use of information technologies thus becomes a key element that allows us to simplify and automate the management needed to ensure continuous and timely provisioning of all the healthcare points distributed throughout Andalusia

#### CHALLENGE FACED

The Andalusian Healthcare Service needed to have a centralized communication platform able to integrate around 600 suppliers.

This integration involved the automation of sending their supply orders, while receiving a significant amount of critical documents such as goods delivery notifications, essential for resource planning and to manage the warehouses spread throughout Andalusia.

Integration of supplier invoices was another key element in optimizing the running of a complex organization which, through this project, aimed to encourage efficient management models that would contribute to the sustainability of the healthcare system. After all, we are talking about an organism (Andalusian Healthcare Service) that must be ready to serve more than 8,000,000 potential users.

Swift connection of its supplier community to the technological platform was the other challenge faced by the organization, as it called for a dynamic start-up which in a short space of time would enable them to exchange their commercial documents electronically in a coordinated fashion. This challenge was further complicated by the complexity arising from having to work with trading partners with very different technological capacities, ranging from large pharmaceutical companies accustomed to working with these technologies to small local providers that had no experience at all in exchanging data via EDI.

### ASP - SaaS EDISOLUTION

The Andalusian Healthcare Service trusted EDICOM with the development and rollout of an EDI platform to integrate its whole supplier community through the exchange of Purchase Orders, Despatch Advices, Receipt Confirmations and Electronic Invoices.

Installing the solution was carried out in ASP - SaaS mode, so that all the technology and hardware and software resources remained in the hands of the service provider (EDICOM), so relieving the Andalusian Healthcare Service of having to undertake costly installations for the rollout of its EDI platform, as well as the subsequent maintenance of all the resources involved.

The technology platform developed automatically integrates the messages exchanged with suppliers into the ERP or Internal Management System.

The solution's development involved

parameterization of multiple processes to transform and adapt the data residing in the healthcare management system (SIGLO) to the EDIFACT standard for outbound messages (Purchase Order and Receipt Confirmation).

These same transformations also had to be carried out vice versa (from EDIFACT to the SIGLO system) for despatch advices and invoices, although not before subjecting them to syntactic and semantic validation processes to detect any possible errors and incidents in the documents received.

The SAS XML/EDI technology platform is designed with scalability criteria to ensure its rapid dimensioning as new requirements arise, simplifying projects to expand the solution to include new trading partners, messages and document interchange flows.

The solution is currently ready for the integration of some 600 suppliers and is set to manage traffic of around 90,000 documents monthly.

### EDI ADVANCED SERVICES

Rolling out a suitable technological solution is an essential step to promote an XML/EDI communications project, but not the only one. In fact, it is not even the first, as certain essential criteria must be defined beforehand to specify the functionality the IT solution must have to ensure that it achieves its objectives.

The Andalusian Healthcare Service not only entrusts EDICOM the rollout of the software and communications needed to start up an EDI platform for sending and receiving electronic messages.

It also delegates a management service that would primarily define the features that the solution should have, and finally guarantee rapid incorporation of suppliers once the EDI platform is up and running:

### Development of EDI guides

When promoters of a large-scale EDI project such as SAS plan to develop their

electronic data interchange platforms, they must first of all delimit the specifications to be used to work with all the suppliers.

These specifications are detailed in the EDI GUIDES, which serve as a handbook to keep your trading partners up to date with the progress of your communications project, making the technical specifications of your project known to the public.

Different tasks carried out by the EDICOM Specialist Consulting department culminated in the development of the SAS EDI guides.

These guides specified the details of how the messages that SAS intended to change with its trading partners should be constructed.

They also specified detailed information on the communications flow, the architecture of the location numbers to be managed, or technical aspects of communications networks or the signing of electronic invoices.

In developing the SAS Guides, and in order to facilitate the swift connection of suppliers, EDICOM set out from our in-depth knowledge of the healthcare sector, proposing integration models widely used in this market.

The aim was to achieve maximum standardization of the data interchanges on the basis of the features of the documents already being exchanged between suppliers and other Health Services.

### Pilot project

EDICOM coordinated a pilot project with some of the largest SAS suppliers to test the XML/EDI solution developed.

This project involved active management by EDICOM with the suppliers selected, coordinating different communications and document exchange trials to detect any possible errors, or adjustments to be introduced in the data transformation systems and EDI guides.

Given the diversity of the vendors and service providers to be integrated, the

pilot project was critical to validate the developments carried out and the management model defined. Suppliers of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, goods on consignment and consumables all made up part of the project's target objective. All of them were suppliers of very diverse products with highly specific features which affected the purchasing processes. It was therefore essential to carry out rigorous testing, to ensure that the implantation guides were fully operational and covered 100% of the provisioning processes reached by the client's EDI project.

### Supplier Onboarding

Once the pilot project was completed, and with the SAS XML/EDI solution up and running, the necessary tasks began to integrate as many suppliers as possible in the shortest possible time.

To optimize the XML/EDI solution, it was crucial to set up mechanisms that notified the supplier base of the existence of the EDI project, while promoting their rapid incorporation to the project. The speedy integration of new trading partners would allow us to optimize the client's e-commerce platform, maximizing their profits through the massive exchange of electronic documents.

Moreover, the connection of new partners to the SAS platform gave rise to a significant complication, due to 2 basic elements:

#### ■ Technological capacity of the

**suppliers:** The project proposed the integration of suppliers that already had EDI solutions and were accustomed to handling large volumes of document exchanges. However, it was also necessary to incorporate other vendors with little or no experience in electronic data interchange, who would need to undertake investments and adaptations to their systems before they were able to begin exchanging documents with the Andalusian Healthcare Service.

■ **Geographic location of suppliers:** The project also involved a portfolio of multinational suppliers. EDI technologies allow us to overcome language barriers thanks to their operations based on internationally regulated standards. Whatever the case, their inclusion in the project called for personal interaction for the exchange of connection instructions, running tests, etc., where the participation of people who needed to make themselves understood using a common language was indispensable.

To overcome these obstacles, and accelerate the integration of SAS partners, EDICOM started up an Onboarding project for Suppliers.

This service involved the participation of several high-profile technical consultants able to interact with advanced EDI solution users.

The Onboarding team members at the disposal of the SAS were able to speak different languages to interact with any supplier, regardless of the country where they are based.

The Onboarding project meant that EDICOM had to take on an active role with the suppliers, contacting each of them to explain the project and describe the steps to be taken to connect to the platform as quickly as possible.

The project organization consisted of the following phases:

**Schedule:** organizing the project, defining timeframes and calendars, segmentation of partners, phases and outlining specific actions to be carried out by EDICOM and the client to spread the knowledge of the project among vendors and service providers.

**Technological Status:** Gathering detailed information on the technological status of the partners. Finally, it was necessary to find out if they already had an EDI solution and, if so, whether it was ready to exchange the messages which the SAS needed to deal with.

**Partners with a solution:** Those suppliers that already had an EDI solution were provided with all the information on the

project, including the technical documentation. Trial runs of connection to the platform were carried out with this group of suppliers, providing them with technical support throughout the test phase.

**Partners with no solution:** Those suppliers without an EDI solution were offered alternatives for integration with the SAS platform based on their own specific needs. Beforehand, they were given detailed information on the project and the objectives pursued.

**Reporting:** Throughout the project, the Onboarding team assigned by EDICOM reported on the progress of their collaboration with each supplier in a central record, which the SAS could access using the "Onboarding Web Tool". This online access tool enabled the SAS managers to perform a detailed follow-up on the project, analysing the degree of achievement of the objectives and actively engaging in its management. This is a collaborative tool whereby the client indicates how their own dealings with their providers are progressing, to complement the actions of the EDICOM Onboarding team.

### Benefits achieved

The Andalusian Healthcare Service now has an XML/EDI that is 100 % operational and able to exchange a full flow of documents ranging from purchase orders to supplier invoices.

It also now has a management model defined in the specific form of a distributable and extensible EDI Project, thanks to the EDI supplier manual and the guides defined, among other resources.

The SAS e-commerce platform has simplified the administrative processes, streamlining procedures with suppliers and cutting costs and response times.

This is a complete EDI Project able to integrate 100% of the target suppliers.

In addition, it is a scalable and open platform whose activity can be boosted by the incorporation of new trading partners and new electronic documents.

## About EDICOM ✓

Edicom is a global leader in the development of technological platforms for B2B e-commerce solutions like EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) or Electronic Invoicing.

With a long history in the field of EDI, we currently have over 10000 clients worldwide, many of them leaders in their respective industries such as Harrods, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Bayer, Glaxo Smithkline, Toys R'Us, etc.

Over 100 million commercial transactions are generated worldwide through Edicom's solutions in ASP – SaaS mode, throughout multiple sectors such as Retail, Healthcare, Logistics and Transportation, Automotive, Tourism, Finance, etc.

Edicom provides advanced technological solutions that enable users to outsource the administration and maintenance of large B2B communications platforms, achieving seamless operation of all systems.

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### SOLUTIONS

- ▶ Application Service Provider
- ▶ EDI - Electronic Data Interchange
- ▶ Electronic Invoice
- ▶ Accounts Payable Integration
- ▶ EdicomData - GDSN Data Pool
- ▶ Continuous Replenishment CRP/VMI
- ▶ EDICOMNet - Private B2B communications network

### CERTIFICATION AUTHORITY

- ▶ Issuing Electronic Certificates
- ▶ Remote Signature Services from Secure Device
- ▶ Timestamping
- ▶ Certified document safekeeping service

### SERVICES

- ▶ International Support Center
- ▶ 24x7 System Monitoring
- ▶ Mapping Management
- ▶ Global Outsourcing
- ▶ Onboarding Projects
- ▶ Integral Partner Management

