



GXS

www.gxs.com

At A Glance:

- **Company:** Supply chain management solution provider that operates a global network services platform that enables more than 40,000 businesses in 58 countries, including 75 percent of the Fortune 500, to collaborate on supply chain issues.
- **Employees:** 2,000 worldwide
- **Industry:** Software; Supply chain management
- **Location:** Corporate headquarters in Gaithersburg, MD
- **Challenges:**
 - GXS needed a better way to manage their services to ensure they matched client needs.
 - A year into the deployment of a client-server solution, GXS realized it lacked sufficient customization capabilities.
 - The client-server solution’s usability was hurting adoption.
- **Results with OpenAir:**
 - Speed. OpenAir was rolled out in 10 weeks across 25 countries and 900 users.
 - Flexibility. OpenAir allows for on-the-fly customization, enabling managers to tailor the system to their needs.
 - Simplification. OpenAir integrations eliminate the struggles of enterprise level invoicing.
 - Training. Easy for staff to get up to speed quickly using OpenAir.



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— John Radko

Chief Technology Strategist, GXS

Results

GXS’s chief technology strategist, John Radko, noted that the true on-demand vendors, such as OpenAir, live and die on their existing customer base. On-demand software business models are built on the premise that the best way to sustain the business is to figure out how best to serve existing customers.

“As a result, on-demand software companies have the upper hand because their financial rewards are better aligned with continuing customer satisfaction,” Radko added.

After selecting OpenAir, GXS decided to stress test it from day one. Rather than having a demonstration group and a phased roll-out, as is common with most new technology platforms, GXS decided to roll out their new PSA solution the way they would new enhancements - globally and all at once.

“We had close to 900 end users in 25 countries, and the deployment was seamless,” said Bobby Patrick, SVP and CMO at GXS. With a dedicated focus, GXS successfully rolled out OpenAir in 10 weeks, from first user added to invoices being generated.

GXS was happy that the deployment went smoothly, but not terribly surprised. After all, as an on-demand software provider, they knew this was how a deployment was supposed to work.

What did surprise Patrick and other executives was how quickly project managers began customizing the suite and tailoring it to their specific needs. “A manager in an offshore center may have different needs than a senior manager,” Patrick pointed out. “Since the user interface is easy to customize, when managers want to see different sets of data presented in different ways, they can adjust it to their particular needs.”

The Challenges

“We bring together companies of all sizes and shapes,” said Patrick. To facilitate collaboration among this diverse client base, GXS has a large professional services group. “Considering that today’s supply chains are global and constantly changing, we needed a way to better manage our services so we could ensure they matched our clients’ needs.”

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— *George LaDue*
OpenAir Director, GXS

Even though they were sold on the on-demand model, GXS soon realized that not all on-demand offerings are created equally. “Some of the on-demand PSA solutions say they’re on-demand, but they use a third party for software delivery. We wanted a solution built from the ground up on the on-demand model.”

When GXS first began evaluating OpenAir, they were already a year into deploying an alternate client-server solution linked to their financials, however soon realized they needed a more robust, customizable solution. The solution was not meeting their services goals and usability issues were hurting adoption.

Furthermore, prior to using OpenAir, report creation was dependent on their IT department, report turnaround was not timely, and business decisions were often delayed.

The Solution

With data sharing built into the system, project managers can customize how they use and present data, linking OpenAir to the applications most relevant to them. For instance, actionable data like an issue resolution alarm can be set to trigger events in related applications, such as inventory tracking or CRM systems.

Today using OpenAir, managers write powerful reports on their own in minutes and run against real time data. This gives managers the latest information available and allows for new views into their business, resulting in better business decisions being made.

GXS also integrated OpenAir with Oracle Financials. “We use OpenAir Project Billing Rules and Invoicing capabilities, and the flexibility of the billing rules has proven to be a strong tool for supporting the myriad contract variations with our many customers,” said George LaDue, OpenAir Director at GXS.

GXS project managers create their own billing rules and subsequent invoices, which could make invoicing complex and slow, considering GXS’s broad and diverse customer base. With OpenAir in place, the invoicing process is centralized, streamlined and simplified. Project managers file invoices in OpenAir, while finance managers go to the same interface to review and approve them. In the case of a rejection, automatic email notifications are sent.

Upon acceptance, the invoice is automatically staged for an OpenAir batch extract to Oracle Financials where Oracle is updated and the invoice is sent to the customer. “We have more than 20 countries using this capability successfully, and the ramp up time for our project managers and finance managers was minimal,” LaDue said.

“Invoicing was a struggle before, especially when trying to get information from one system to another,” LaDue added. “Now it’s all integrated, and invoicing is simple. Believe it or not, project managers say that they like billing rules. When you hear that, you know you’re on to something.”

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