



SPS Commerce & Sterling Brands: A Network Success Story

Executive Summary

[Sterling Brands LLC](#) manufactures all of its products in the U.S., primarily using recycled materials, and selling its chair mats, stair treads, pet mats and vinyl runners in national retail chains, including Ace Hardware, Family Dollar, Home Depot, Meijer, Menards and Orchard Supply. With its limited IT staff, the company was doing its best to keep up with the growing order volumes from its retailers and the ever-shortening delivery windows to meet consumer expectations.

In 2017, Sterling looked for a way to automate its order cycle with an EDI solution integrated with its Sage 100 system. With SPS Commerce Fulfillment, orders were automatically received by its ERP and immediately moved into the picking process, eliminating hours of delays. Today, the supplier is delighting its customers with improved service while impacting its bottom line with dramatically reduced chargeback fees and reduced staffing allocated to manual entry of orders.



Industry: Vinyl products using recycled products

Headquarters: Wheeling, IL

Retail channels: National retailers

SPS Product: Fulfillment

ERP: Sage 100

Network Member Since: 2017

Challenge: Replace manual process for 1,000+ orders/week with key retailers

Solution: Use SPS Commerce Fulfillment to receive, ship and invoice orders within shortened shipping windows

Results: Reduced chargebacks by 70 percent, savings of \$30K from staff reallocation

Keeping up with growth

As a growing manufacturer of more than 50 vinyl products for home, garage, outdoors, automotive and pets, Sterling Brands was looking to replace its manual order entry process with a streamlined solution that would allow them to scale their business and comply with their customers' trading requirements.

Before 2017, the company had a small staff of three individuals who manually retrieved orders from their retail customers' portals and entered it into their Sage 100 system. The order was then picked and packed, and the shipping details were manually uploaded to the retailer. After signing on several large national retailers, including Home Depot, the company's order volumes rose dramatically, topping more than 1,000 orders per week.



The small business was growing and its current operations were simply overtasked by its success. The company began looking for a way to automate its order cycle, eliminating its manual processes and setting it up for future growth. “We were continually working late to meet our retailer’s thresholds for receiving shipping details on their fulfilled orders and invoices,” said Lauren Sanchez, office manager at Sterling Brands. “Chargebacks were often incurred when we simply couldn’t keep up. We looked at hiring more staff, but saw that future growth required new technology that could integrate with our Sage 100 ERP.”

After looking at the options in the market, Sterling selected SPS Commerce Fulfillment with its prebuilt and proven Mapadoc integration to Sage 100. As an integrated offering, suppliers like Sterling significantly reduce or eliminate manual entry of orders and other documents, improve ship timeliness, and connect with existing trading partners including retailers, 3PLs, and warehouses.

Easy ROI

Today, Sterling Brands has just one individual responsible for managing all of its EDI operations, which averages more than 3,000 transactions per week with 99.4 percent success rates. “With just one click, all of our orders are downloaded, and sending ship notices and invoices done in seconds,” said Sanchez. “I never worry about having to stay late to keep up with our order volumes. SPS Fulfillment gets everything done in the timeframe we need it to.”

The new solution has quickly cost-justified its investment by reducing chargebacks by more than 70 percent and eliminating the need to hire new staff. Unquantifiable benefits have included improved customer support. “By eliminating our manual processes, order errors are almost non-existent,” said Sanchez. “Since deploying SPS Fulfillment, we haven’t had any phone calls from customers validating their orders or correcting shipment details.”

Like riding a bike

Growth always means growing pains, but Sterling Brands has excelled in delighting its customers with improved service. They are continually fulfilling and invoicing orders within 36 hours or less.

“Our order fulfillment process is dramatically easier, more accurate and meeting the needs of our company,” said Sanchez. “Learning the new solution from SPS Commerce was simple, just like riding a bike. We would highly recommend them to any organization experiencing high volumes of orders and look forward to adding more retailers as our business expands.”



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