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TopForm's WebEC

A few years ago when the dot.com concept really started to gain momentum it became obvious that QBF would need to have an e-commerce means of conducting business in the near future. There sure seemed to be a lot of things to consider and being a small company with limited resources the uncertainty of it all presented a new challenge.

The first matter of order was to determine what our business objectives were regarding the integration of a web-based program into our operations. We knew this project was going to require a sizable capital investment plus many internal man-hours. Hence, it was important that we got a good handle on the end-result that we hoped to accomplish.

Following much thought and several group discussions we identified several key ingredients. However, first and foremost, it had to address the primary need of our current core of clients, which is distribution services. Many of our customers needed a more efficient way to request and follow-up on shipment of product to their various end-users. In conjunction, they also needed a better way to access inventory and order information and the data had to be real-time.

As everyone knows, there is a myriad of third party web-based software solutions to consider. The one thing that became apparent early on in our search was that most of them were focused on the vendor transaction side. In other words, the capture and transmittal of purchase order data to the plants. Certainly, this is an area that we want and will bring efficiencies to but it did not address the aforementioned primary need.

The more we looked around the more we realized that TopForm's WebEC module was going to best fit our current needs and provide a solid platform for e-commerce expansion in the future. The module was definitely developed with the customer in mind. A graphical interface makes it very easy for the end-user to identify the right product to be shipped. The shopping cart design makes it simple to key in orders and is flexible when needing to make changes on the fly. A direct linkage to the UPS website allows the client to know exactly what is happening with their order. Best of all, the client can get up to the minute inventory and order information since they now have a direct "real-time" connection to our data base.

We are very pleased with WebEC. During the development process, QBF and its clients put forth many good ideas and TopForm stepped up to the plate by incorporating most of them into the module. The result is a technologically advanced and simple to use tool for providing enhanced distribution services to the marketplace. We look forward to being a part of its continued evolution in the future.

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