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OpenText B2B/ERP Data Discovery and Analysis

Gain data-driven and detailed view into your ERP and supply chain integration requirements

Benefits

- Gain unified view into your supply chain data
- Inform the design of new business systems
- Manage risks around system migrations
- Identify issues with trading partners

Integrating B2B data in ERP systems relies on standards—such as ANSI X12 and EDIFACT—that enable organizations to exchange business documents and other information with their partners in a structured format. However, there are multiple standards, each of which has several versions, and only a fraction of all the data attributes that are defined in a given standard are used in a typical integration flow. Since most organizations have developed their B2B programs over several years and on a project-by-project basis, few have an overarching and well-documented view into their integrations that covers all of these details.

While having this detailed view into B2B integrations helps to optimize supply chain operations and identify potential issues with non-compliant trading partners, its importance can easily be overlooked when focusing on day-to-day business activities. However, when an organization faces a big project such as an ERP system migration, lack of insights on key supply chain data can cause major delays, incur unnecessary costs, and even disrupt business processes.

Gaining these insights can be challenging and expensive. This is why OpenText has developed a data discovery service that uses automated tooling to analyze large quantities of B2B and ERP data, which are then interpreted and summarized OpenText B2B/ERP Data Discovery and Analysis 2/4 by our business analysts and reported back to the client. The key deliverable is a harmonized ERP/B2B reference data model—a single document summarizing all the B2B message types, data attributes and processing rules involved in exchanging business documents with partners. The engagement and the associated report provided by OpenText will also highlight any existing data errors and compliance issues. These insights can be used for various purposes, such as supporting blueprinting of new systems, managing migration-related risks, optimizing integration map usage, and remedying issues with trading partner behavior.

The data discovery service typically acts as a first step in identifying a longer-term roadmap for supporting system migrations and improving the client's supply chain performance through business process optimization and better data quality.

Gain unified view of all B2B standards, versions and data attributes leveraged across your supply chain

The B2B/ERP data discovery service leverages proprietary tools developed by OpenText to interrogate large quantities of business transactions, such as purchase orders, order confirmations, shipment notices and others. The automated tooling helps OpenText business analysts to summarize and analyze the detailed content of these transactions and identify the specific standards, versions and individual data attributes used by each trading partner exchanging B2B messages with your company. The value of analyzing large sets of data is that even one-off and rare data requirements are identified and reported alongside the more common requirements. Being able to review and compare the requirements of different trading partners simultaneously based on a harmonized view of the data also enables identifying identical trading partner behaviors, which can be managed using shared data maps to help reduce the costs of integration.

Inform the design and blue-printing of new systems with data-driven insights

Perhaps the greatest value of having a comprehensive view into your exact B2B and ERP integration requirements is realized in the case of a system migration, such as moving to a new ERP system or adopting a new integration platform. Knowing exactly what data you exchange with your trading partners allows you to accurately determine the scope of your B2B program, define data models and inform the blueprinting of new systems while focusing specifically—and only—on those supply chain data attributes that are really needed. This can save tremendous amounts of time and money that would otherwise need to be spent on identifying, defining, and implementing integration requirements.

Manage risks around system migrations by knowing your exact requirements

In the case of a system migration, having detailed insights on your B2B requirements also enables you to define a testing strategy for the new system that accounts for all real-life use cases you have across your B2B environment. Unlike when defining the testing strategy based on general assumptions, being able to accurately identify all relevant test cases helps to avoid issues and delays at project go-live that might otherwise occur due to surprises related to one-off or otherwise rare requirements of some trading partners.

Summary of B2B/ERP data discovery deliverables

OpenText B2B/ERP data discovery service will help you speed up your ERP migrations and manage the risks involved. Key deliverables include:

- Final report summarizing the key findings of the data discovery exercise
- Reference data model capturing and harmonizing your supply chain data requirements
- Roadmap for leveraging the generated insights for business process optimization and data quality improvement as part of a system migration

Identify non-compliant partners to remediate issues and optimize processes

The data discovery service provides you with a detailed list of errors by document and trading partner along with suggested resolutions. This is done by comparing large amounts of the actual data that is exchanged with trading partners against the applicable standards, such as ANSI X12, EDIFACT, and others to identify behaviors that deviate from what is defined in the standards. These non-compliant behaviors—either by trading partners or by your organization—can cause errors in the business process and lead to chargebacks that create unnecessary costs for the parties involved. Therefore, addressing the issues that are discovered can help you achieve significant cost savings across your supply chain operations.

How does it work?

The process for completing a data discovery engagement with OpenText is straightforward. After defining the scope of the engagement together with OpenText, the client delivers the agreed historical B2B and ERP data files to OpenText for analysis. The files can include standard EDI files (e.g. EDIFACT, X12, VDA, TRADACOMS, etc.), ERP data files (e.g. SAP IDoc, XML, etc.), or both. EDI files can be analyzed as such, whereas the ERP data files will need to be accompanied by supporting information about the file structure, such as SAP parser files for SAP IDoc or the XML schemas for XML files.

Upon receiving the files, an OpenText business analyst interrogates and analyzes the data using OpenText's proprietary tooling and produces the client-specific ERP/B2B reference data model and the applicable reports to summarize the findings. The model and the reports are then shared with the client in a workshop to review the key findings and recommended actions based on them.

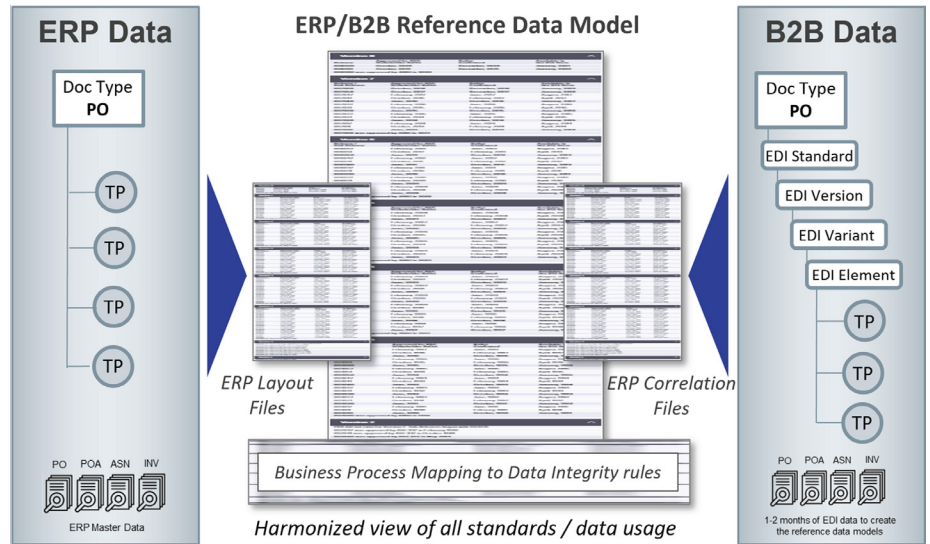## Complete B2B integration solution to support optimal supply chain operations

The data discovery service provided by OpenText helps organizations to fully understand their B2B integration requirements, which among other things supports the creation of ERP master data layout files and correlating ERP and B2B data. This is important in the planning and blueprinting phase of implementing a new system and can significantly speed up the migration, but the help that OpenText can provide does not stop here.

Based on the detailed understanding of your B2B environment and mapping it against your business processes, OpenText can help identify further opportunities around business process optimization and modelling as well as data quality improvement. And once it is time to kick off the migration project, OpenText can help you to manage the risks around migrating B2B connections to the new ERP by applying a parallel testing framework, where integrations with the new system are tested with live data that is duplicated from the existing production environment. This approach allows simulating real-life trading partner behavior on the new ERP and making any adjustments that are necessary without compromising the actual business processes that continue to run with the old system until testing is complete and the new system is activated.

Simply put, as your B2B integration partner OpenText is there every step of the way to help you optimize your supply chain processes and maximize the business value of your ERP investment.

Resources

OpenText leverages advanced tooling to interrogate and analyze large quantities of ERP and B2B data to create a unified view into all standards and data attributes leveraged across the organization's entire trading community.

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