

EDI SUPPORT



Providing expert guidance to achieve high quality in electronic data

Why?

The need for exchange of data among postal operators and third parties is permanently increasing due to security requirements, customs and customer needs.

The requirements from different postal industry stakeholders and the operational challenges they face are in permanent evolution. In order to provide visibility and added value services, the implementation of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) is paramount. The process of implementing and improving EDI requires the support of technical and operational experts, ready to assist, test, advise, and monitor compliance. IPC is widely recognised as the leading industry partner providing this expert support.

How does it work?

Implementing EDI is a challenging project that a post, airline, or other stakeholder is not always familiar with. Firstly, they need to refer to existing EDI messaging standards. They then need to develop and test the technical capability to start exchanging data. This requires the creation and activation of the EDI mailbox. Finally, the applicable business rules and best practices need to be included in the development phase, in order to not only exchange EDI messages, but also to do it correctly. Once the exchanges are operational, continuous monitoring of the quality, availability, and timeliness of the messages, as well as their compliance with both the standards and the different industry groups' requirements, is needed. Each step of the process is facilitated by IPC, which provides expertise and appropriate tools.

Benefits

By using IPC's EDI support services to implement and monitor EDI messaging, any participant can be sure that they are complying with the requirements of the industry regarding the quality of the messages exchanged.

Scope

The typical steps toward a successful EDI implementation and the role IPC plays for each of them is described below:

- **Define the need that EDI is going to fulfil:** IPC assists any stakeholder interested in starting EDI exchanges of a given type in the process of identifying the best solution to fulfil the need expressed by the users. Business experts within IPC provide up-to-date input regarding the requirements to be considered while developing a certain exchange (e.g. which data elements need to be implemented to successfully provide Returns Services, to comply with airline security regulations, or provide despatch accounting information).
- **Provide information about specific industry group requirements:** throughout the implementation process, IPC's business experts provide additional documentation and support to ensure compliance with the business requirements of specific industry groups, which can exceed the technical requirements in the EDI messaging standards.
- **Plan the different steps required to implement EDI:** IPC has been assisting posts, airlines and other industry stakeholders planning to implement EDI for many years, providing standard and customised deployment plans with the key milestones and implementation scheduling based on the requirements and limitations of the implementing party.
- **Describe the technical requirements and the necessary configurations for the involved systems:** a Help Desk and Systems Technology team provide detailed documentation regarding the setup of an EDI exchange system, information on available system providers, and the key settings to be considered when configuring an EDI system.
- **Prepare the technical infrastructure to support the exchanges:** the Help Desk is the central point that puts in place the required technical infrastructure for the exchanges, mainly by the setup and management of EDI mailboxes and the exchanges between them.
- **Test and validate the EDI messages during the preparation phase:** as part of the technical support that IPC provides, prior to release in production, users can provide test EDI messages to the Help Desk, which uses IPC-developed tools to test them and validate their compliance with the defined requirements.
- **Communicate with the receiving parties to confirm readiness and activation of EDI message exchanges:** once the EDI exchanges are ready to be triggered, the Help Desk communicates through its extensive global technical contact network to coordinate and announce the start-up dates, and provides the necessary information for a successful exchange.
- **Monitor and support the new exchanges:** to ensure success during the initial period, the new exchanges are closely monitored by the Help Desk, assisting as needed.
- **Provide continuous technical advice and the right reporting tools to help the users monitor their own EDI message quality:** IPC's technology teams develop the applicable tools and reports to support permanent and proactive monitoring of the quality, availability, and timeliness of EDI messages, supporting seamless day-to-day operations and facilitating the generation of value-adding, business relevant data from EDI.

More information

For more information about EDI support contact: helpdesk@ipc.be.



More info