

Government Micro Resources, Inc.

## GMR Brings Integrated E-Procurement Service to Federal Marketplace with Commerce Server 2000

*Manassas, Va.-based Government Micro Resources, Inc. (GMR) is a major reseller of integrated hardware solutions to the federal government. The company aggregates orders and purchases systems from manufacturers and distributors such as Apple, Dell, Ingram Micro, MOCA and Sun. It then delivers hardware and customized workstations to customers in agencies such as NASA, the Defense Department and Department of Justice..*

*Although GMR had successfully used e-commerce with its customers for years, many orders still involved phone calls, e-mails and hand transcription. Though time-honored, this legacy process was inefficient and prone to errors.*

*GMR turned to Web Data Solutions, Inc., a Microsoft Certified Partner based in Arlington, Va., which developed a new e-procurement and supply chain management system based on Microsoft's Commerce Server 2000 and BizTalk Server.*

Commerce Server 2000 provided the application framework, feedback mechanisms and analytical capabilities needed to develop a secure and robust purchasing environment that would win the confidence of federal purchasers. BizTalk 2000 Server offered the underlying communications mechanism for transacting business with buyers and sellers. Using BizTalk, the new GMR system handles electronic ordering with buyers and sellers and taps into suppliers' product databases to obtain real-time information on inventories and shipping schedules.

"We believe that vendors who embrace modern, standards-based e-procurement will find themselves among the leaders," says Lonnie Landers, senior vice president of NASA/DOE sales at GMR. "Moving to this system was a strategic move for us."

In the past, "e-commerce platforms haven't always been built with the needs of government procurement customers in mind," says Landers. "In the government purchasing world, the end-user who requests products is typically different than the buyer who deals with billing. Each should have access to different information in the e-procurement system."

A typical purchasing agent may order for several organizational entities and may need to build orders over an extended period of time. Such a customer needs to be able to manage several shopping carts and draft orders. In many agencies, individual workers can order computers, but

### Solution Overview

#### Customer Profile

Government Micro Resources, with annual revenues of \$130 million, is a leading provider of integrated computer hardware solutions to federal agencies.

#### Business Situation

GMR wanted to take advantage of the supply chain management opportunities made possible by XML-based e-commerce platforms, while working within the procurement constraints of the federal marketplace.

#### Solution

##### **Benefits**

- Improved order fulfillment efficiency.
- Improved customer service and satisfaction.
- Tighter relationship with suppliers.

##### **Software and Services**

Commerce Server 2000  
BizTalk™ 2000 Server  
Exchange Server  
SQL Server™ 2000  
Windows® 2000 Server

##### **Partner**

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their orders must be approved and finally verified by one or several purchasing supervisors. The underlying e-procurement system must be able to handle the unique approval process for each government entity.

Web Data Solutions programmers crawled under the hood of the Microsoft platforms to customize a solution that would satisfy GMR's federal customers. For example, they developed the capacity to manage multiple shopping baskets and shipping destinations.

Perhaps more importantly, they developed Web-based tools for routing purchase requests to one or more procurement officials, allowing them in turn to approve, deny, comment and return, or even "line-item veto" purchase requests. The original requestor can then reply, modify and resubmit the purchase requests. The process is determined by business rules customized for each agency or purchasing contract. Using BizTalk Server, the system can accommodate and automate transactions with purchasers who have buyer-side EDI or XML-based procurement systems.

Using Microsoft technologies, Web Data Solutions delivered a system in just three months, allowing GMR to gain an advantage in the marketplace.

"Not only does GMR now have an e-commerce site that fulfills the needs of its federal customers, with supply chain integration we have taken a major step towards hands-free e-commerce," asserts Landers. "Realtime credit card processing and integration with corporate sales, accounting and inventory systems automate and streamline the fulfillment process. Orders pass directly to our suppliers without needing to be re-entered, and catalog updating from suppliers takes place automatically."

Customers have access to all the information that suppliers can provide, including product descriptions, inventory levels and shipping status. The automation of the approval process virtually eliminates the need for GMR intervention.

As buyers and suppliers become e-commerce enabled, BizTalk will enable GMR program office staff to quickly integrate them as electronic trading partners with little if any programming. Commerce Server's XML-based catalog will allow importing of new and updated catalogs from suppliers as they become available.

Based on the experience gained in this process, GMR is now positioning itself to help agencies develop their own, buyer-side procurement integration systems.

"It's clear that in the near future the number of e-commerce buyers and suppliers will mushroom," says Landers. "Without this BizTalk/Commerce Server solution, integrating each new buyer and supplier would have required a costly programming effort."

## ***For More Information***

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