

The Holt Jackson Book Co. Ltd.

INTRODUCTION TO EDI:

SALES TEAM

March 2004

The author of this paper is Celia Burton
Consultant - EDI and Bibliographical Services
e-mail: celiabornton@totalise.co.uk

Contents

What is EDI?	1
Why use EDI?.....	1
EDI standards	1
TRADACOMS	2
EDIFACT.....	2
Available messages	2
Transmission of messages	2
Trading partner relationship with customers	3
Individual messages	4
Quotes	4
Orders	5
Order responses - acknowledgements.....	5
Order responses - fulfilments	6
Invoices and Credit notes	6
Delivery notification/Despatch advice	7
Price and availability updates file	7
Returns	8
Announcement for returns	8
Instruction for returns	8
Graphical representation of the customer EDI cycle	9

What is EDI?

EDI (**E**lectronic **D**ata **I**nterchange) is the direct communication of trading messages between computer systems, using national and international telecommunications networks.

Many libraries and suppliers may currently use EDI simply for transmitting Orders and receiving Acknowledgements. However, EDI messages may also be used to transmit other information, for example:

- Invoices
- New title notifications

Why use EDI?

The main advantages of using EDI over other trading methods are:

- speed of transmission (data arrives in seconds rather than days in postal systems)
- accuracy of data (no re-keying of data into a system is required, eliminating the 'human error' factor at the receiving end)
- replaces much of the paper-handling at both ends
- security and audit trail

In tests comparing the use of EDI with paper orders libraries have found that they save several days on their turnround time (order to shelf-ready) by using EDI.

A 'fulfilment' message has also been developed, which allows a book supplier to transmit extra copy-specific data (eg: barcode, shelfmark) to be loaded directly into the Library Management System – thus allowing the item to be put directly onto the shelves, avoiding the extra processing usually required to add it to the circulation system.

EDI Standards

There are 2 main standards used in the UK:

- TRADACOMS – UK National standard
- EDIFACT – International standard

TRADACOMS was developed by the Book Trade EDI Standards (BEDIS) group and is now maintained by that group's successor: Book Industry Communication (BIC).

BIC has decided that any new developments will be carried out in EDIFACT.

EDIFACT (Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport) was developed during the 1990s with a subset, EANCOM, which is the most widely-used 'dialect' of EDIFACT in the international retail and distribution sector.

The Pan-European Book Sector EDI Group (EDItEUR) was set up to develop and promote EDI in the European book sector and decided to work within the EANCOM subset wherever possible. EDItEUR mainly interprets, and occasionally extends, these standards for use in the book trade.

Available Messages

Many libraries and suppliers use both TRADACOMS and EDIFACT messages. The following table lists the messages implemented by Holt Jackson – for use with libraries and/or with publishers/distributors. Where there is an equivalent message in both formats they appear on the same line eg: the TRADACOMS equivalent for EDIFACT 'Despatch Advice' is 'Delivery Notification'.

EDIFACT	TRADACOMS
Quotes	
Orders	Orders
Order Response – Acknowledgement	Acknowledgement
Order – Response – Fulfilment	
Despatch Advice	Delivery Notification
Invoice	Invoice
Invoice – Credit Note	Credit Note
	Price & Availability Updates File
Returns	

Transmission of Messages

Messages of either type may be transmitted/received using a variety of methods including:

- via a VAN (GEIS or Teleordering)
- via FTP

The main advantages of using a VAN (**V**alue **A**dded **N**etwork) are:

- validates the file
- ensures the privacy/accuracy of the data transmitted

The main disadvantage is the cost of using the service (to both parties).

The advantage of using FTP (**F**ile **T**ransfer **P**rotocol) is that it is free.

The main disadvantages are:

- lack of file validation during transmission – relies on the validation available in the software used by sender and receiver
- security – this may require encryption to be implemented by sender and receiver

Trading Partner Relationship with Customers

The following checklist is a suggestion for what should be discussed at initial meetings with the customer:

1. establish messages the customer wishes to use
2. obtain necessary information about the customer set-up
3. initial testing of the messages
4. discuss any new EDI messages

1. As explained in the previous section many customers will use a combination of EDIFACT and TRADACOMS messages. It is, therefore, important at the outset to establish which messages the customer wishes to use.

NB: the customer may not know which standard they use – the information may need to be obtained from the Library System Supplier.

2. Certain information will be required about the way the customer is set up, for example:

- customer ANA (13-digit number used to identify the customer in every transmission) NB: if they have not used EDI before it may be necessary to explain how they obtain the number
- network/method to be used for transmitting/receiving data
- delivery addresses
- branch/department codes

Other information may be required for particular messages – check with the IT department for details.

3. The customer must be informed that no live transmissions should take place until full testing has been satisfactorily completed. The IT department should organise and monitor this.

4. If a customer is not using all the messages available at Holt Jackson it may be worth discussing the advantages of using them (particularly if their Library System Supplier has already implemented them). The use of a particular message is outlined in the following 'Individual Messages' section.

Individual Messages

Quotes (EDIFACT)

Used by the Holt Jackson to notify a customer of:

- a new title which they may be interested in acquiring
- a title which has been selected from Holt Jackson's CD-Rom
- a title which has been selected from Holt Jackson's on-line database
- a title which has been selected during a visit to Holt Jackson's showroom
- a title which matches the customer's profile – supplier selection or approval plan
- a title which is part of a series for which the customer has set up a continuation order

Note: it is possible that not all of these are available or can be accepted by the customer (check with the IT department and Library System Supplier).

Some Quotes messages do not require a 'confirmation' order as a response from the customer. However, these are unlikely to be used as most Library Management Systems require an Order to be generated and sent to the supplier. This is because of the necessity of matching an Invoice or Order Response to specific Orders – the 'customer order number' MUST be included in any subsequent messages.

Data included in the message:

- Brief bibliographic description + ISBN if possible
- Price
- Unique identification number – allocated by Holt Jackson

Orders (EDIFACT or TRADACOMS)

Used by the customer to transmit to Holt Jackson (or by Holt Jackson to transmit to publisher/distributor):

- a new order
- a confirmed order (as a response to a Quote – only for Library customer)

Note: there is also a special case where the required item is known not to be currently available. In this case a customer may send an order which is, in effect, a request to Holt Jackson to trace a copy. This can be expressed as an Orders message with an upper limit on price.

Data included in the message (for each ordered item):

- Unique identification of item – usually ISBN
- Price
- Quantity (NB: if this is a ‘confirmed’ order this must NEVER exceed the quantity in the corresponding Quote message)
- Supplier’s identification number (if order is ‘confirmed’)
- Customer order number
- Location/site (possibly branch/department)

Other information may be included depending on the particular library system and the messages it can process. eg: if the customer wants to receive ‘fulfilment’ data they may transmit a unique number for each copy: to be used for matching any ‘fulfilment’ information (eg: barcode) returned by Holt Jackson.

Order Responses – Acknowledgements (EDIFACT or TRADACOMS)

Used by Holt Jackson (to the customer) or by publisher/distributor (to Holt Jackson):

- to respond to new orders
- to report the status of outstanding orders, either whenever there is a significant change in status, or at regular intervals as agreed between trading partners

Note: this message should only be used for ‘new’ orders when they cannot be fulfilled within the normal delivery cycle or where there are queries (eg: price change, not enough copies in stock, query on library’s account etc.).

Data included in the message (for each acknowledged item):

- Original order number
- Identification of ordered title – usually ISBN
- Codes indicating availability status and order action
- Quantity ordered
- Confirmed price

Order Responses – Fulfilments (EDIFACT)

Used by Holt Jackson (to the customer):

- To report copy data

Data in the message (for each fulfilled order):

- Original customer order number
- Identification of ordered title – usually ISBN
- Quantity supplied
- Information required (eg: classification, sequence, status) for each copy

Note: this message is transmitted at approximately the same time as the items are despatched to the customer. It should have been loaded at the customer's site before the delivery has been unpacked – so that all the information necessary for every copy has been added to the Library Management System, and the copies are immediately available for circulation.

Invoices and Credit Notes (EDIFACT and TRADACOMS)

Holt Jackson sends an Invoice message to the customer (or a publisher/distributor sends an Invoice to Holt Jackson) as the final message in any transaction cycle. Any required Credit Note from Holt Jackson (eg: for returned 'approval' items) is transmitted using either the EDIFACT Invoice message or the TRADACOMS Credit Note message.

In library supply it is normal practice for each consignment to be invoiced as it is sent, so an Invoice message, which should normally reach the customer in advance of the actual shipment, effectively doubles as a despatch advice as well as an invoice (ie: a despatch advice message is not normally used).

Data in the message (for each order being invoiced):

- Original customer order number
- Identification of ordered title – usually ISBN
- Quantity invoiced
- Price - including any allowances, charges, taxes

Notes: the EDI Invoice is used to update the Library Management System – for budgetary control – and not to update the Financial System.

Currently the EDI Invoice is a ‘copy’ invoice. The legal (‘original’) invoice (recognised by H.M. Customs & Excise) is still the printed version - and will remain so for libraries for the foreseeable future. However, publishers/distributors are hoping to implement EDI Invoices as ‘original’ in the near future, removing the need for printed versions.

The following messages are used between Holt Jackson and publishers/distributors only:

- Delivery Notification/Despatch Advice
- Price and Availability Update Files
- Returns

Delivery Notification/Despatch Advice (EDIFACT and TRADACOMS)

This message communicates the content of a specific delivery – it may relate to single or multiple orders. It will normally be sent before, or together with, the Invoice.

Price and Availability Updates File (TRADACOMS)

This message is used by publishers/distributors to communicate the latest price and availability information to booksellers. It may be used for the 1st notification of a new title when only basic details are available or for updating existing information.

The information is used to update a Product Information file (as opposed to similar information contained in an Order Response – Acknowledgement message, which is used to update an Order file).

Returns (EDIFACT)

2 messages are used for Returns:

- Announcement for Returns – Holt Jackson to publisher/distributor
- Instructions for Returns – Holt Jackson to publisher/distributor and publisher/distributor to Holt Jackson

Announcement for Returns

This message is used by Holt Jackson to notify a publisher/distributor of an intention to return any item(s) and to request authorisation where needed. It may be used to report:

- items which a supplier has recalled
- overstocks
- damaged items
- delivery shortages (clearly no items are returned)

Instruction for Returns

This message is used in one of two ways:

a) From publisher/distributor to Holt Jackson as a response to an 'Announcement for Returns' message.

The aim is to reduce handling costs by separating the items into those that will be:

- returned to stock ('green box')
- destroyed ('red box')

b) From publisher/distributor to Holt Jackson and Holt Jackson to publisher/distributor to communicate adjustments to a returns consignment.

The publisher/distributor sends the message:

- to confirm authorisation requested in an 'Announcement for Returns' message
- if customer returns different (ie lesser) quantity than authorised

The customer must confirm this message by returning an 'Instruction for Returns' message.

Graphical Representation of the Customer EDI Cycle

