

CPO Switches to TraceLink After Costly Integration Effort Fails

One contract packaging organization (CPO) believed their line equipment vendor, Systech, would be able to handle the company's Level 4-5 enterprise and network solutions for serialization as well. But after spending more than one year and over $1 million—and still failing to integrate with their customers—the CPO turned to TraceLink for its proven abilities in partner connectivity, serialization workflows, and regulatory compliance.

Four critical shortcomings

The vendor presented itself as a single point of contact that would manage "the full stack," including enterprise serialization. The vendor has built its reputation as a Level 1-2 line management system (LMS) partner, providing the hardware, automation, and control solutions that manage the printing and inspection of serial numbers and aggregation. They had acquired a small company with the shell of a Level 4-5 solution, but those capabilities were never part of their native solution or expertise.

The CPO discovered that relying on the vendor for Level 4-5 meant:

- **Unprecedented licensing costs**

  Licensing the vendor's Level 4-5 solution resulted in costs of "hundreds of

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thousands of dollars.” In one year, the failed project became “the single largest investment they have ever made,” the company says.

- **Lack of support for unpacking and packing scenarios**

The CPO specializes in reworking batch product that has already been commissioned—and then serializing it with new serial numbers. But the vendor’s basic tools could not manage the Level 4-5 serialization requirements for rework, and the solution was continually interrupting their business processes.

- **Point-to-point integration complexities**

The vendor lacked point-to-point integration expertise, was not able to develop the complex connections in a timely manner, and could not manage the custom requirements of the CPO’s brand owners.

- **Failure to meet implementation milestones**

Despite an initial promise that integration time would be less than two months, the vendor missed go-live dates repeatedly—in August 2016, November 2016, and March 2017. Being “a small guy” with a dozen packaging lines meant the specialty CPO was never a priority for the vendor, the company says.

Decision driver: Proven partner integrations to save cost, ensure supply

After spending over $1 million without ever being able to connect to their most important brand-owner customer for serialization, the company switched to TraceLink in April 2017 for:

- **Lower cost through an all-inclusive subscription**

Regardless of project size, TraceLink consistently delivers lower TCO than any other enterprise serialization alternative. Companies rely on the all-inclusive subscription model that TraceLink offers to eliminate many of the unpredictable hidden fees for integration, customization, and service they find with other

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solution providers.

- **A network model for faster partner connections**

Companies turn to TraceLink for its integrate once, interoperate with everyone network platform. The TraceLink Life Sciences Cloud enables them to onboard existing trade partners, manage all the unique brand requirements, and connect any new partners they begin working with in the future—at no additional charge.

- **Configurable workflows to support unique business requirements**

TraceLink uses configurable workflows to solve for all the unique business scenarios that companies have. For example, if a brand owner imposes a size limit on data files or requires a naming convention with custom data parameters, TraceLink will manage that.

- **A vendor-agnostic platform for serialization**

Working with TraceLink gives businesses flexibility and choice. Using an LMS vendor to manage network and enterprise serialization needs means companies are locked into that line system, without the ability to add in different equipment and systems to their operations.

Outcome: Leveraging interoperability with industry-leading expertise

Today, the CPO is able to easily connect with brands through the TraceLink network, depend on TraceLink to manage unique brand requirements, and rest assured that new pharma customers will also be seamlessly onboarded. They also have support for their own unique workflows, flexibility with line systems, and predictable costs—regardless of how their business may grow.

The TraceLink Life Sciences Cloud is the only purpose-built solution that digitizes the entire pharmaceutical supply chain to help drug manufacturers, distributors,

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hospitals, and pharmacies meet existing and emerging regulations in every geographic market. With 400 pharmaceutical and contract manufacturing customers on its network—including nearly 200 that are sharing live serialization data with partners today—TraceLink offers the only proven playbook for serialization-readiness. Contact us to learn more.

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