Nutra-Med Packaging Digitalizes its Supply Chain with TraceLink MINT



Kunal Gupta, CEO of Nutra-Med Packaging, explains why his company chose TraceLink Multienterprise Information Network Tower (MINT) to enable real-time digital integration and business transaction exchange with supply chain partners.

Nutra-Med plans to "start small" by leveraging MINT for the real-time exchange Advance Ship Notices (ASNs), and will eventually expand to POs, PO Acknowledgements, invoices, and much more. Gupta also offers some sage advice for those seeking a supply chain digitalization provider. Watch the video to learn more!

Video Highlights:

00:19 - How far along is Nutra-Med Packaging in its supply chain digitalization journey?
00:57 - What challenges are you tackling with supply chain digitalization?
01:48 - How will TraceLink MINT create business value for Nutra-Med Packaging?
03:23 - How has your experience been with the TraceLink team?
04:22 - How will TraceLink MINT shape the future of Nutra-Med Packaging?
06:12 - What is your advice for those choosing a supply chain digitalization

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provider?

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My name is Kunal Gupta, the CEO of Nutra-Med Packaging, and Nutra-Med is a pharmaceutical contract packager that was established by my father 25 years ago.

Our company has just started its journey around digitization of supply chain and digitization overall. The first step in that was really serialization. DSCSA changed the way we do business and helped us implement our first electronic systems.

Since then, we've now looked at other ways that we can improve our efficiencies, control our costs, and provide better service and visibility to our customers. That started for us with an ERP system.

We moved onto Netsuite not too long ago, then it was EQMS, and now we're looking at other ways to connect data with our customers.

The idea that knowledge is power and that information is power has really taken hold in our industry. So, our challenge is being able to fulfill those needs and those demands. So, as a business owner, I need to be able to respond, my business needs to be able to respond, whether we're there or we're not.

So, to address those challenges, we're looking for different tools that can do that for us. I don't want my project managers or my finance team working on tasks at 10 p.m. at night to get back to a customer to say, "Where is the product and packaging, or where's that packing list?"

If we can automate that through tools like MINT, then that's a huge win for not only

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the customer, who is getting the information they need when they need it, but a big win for Nutra-Med as well because we're able to free up those critical resources to work on other things.

So, the value of the network approach in digitalizing supply chain through a platform like MINT is incredibly obvious to me. And the best example of it was what TraceLink created with serialization.

When we first started our journey in serialization, we had a partner that said, "We're gonna do
one-to-one connections. So, trust us, no problem, Nutra-Med, we know you have 300 customers, but we're gonna set up that L4 connection on a one-to-one basis because it's all the same thing, it's gonna be easy." And we very quickly learned that that was not the case.

And then we saw TraceLink come about, right? And TraceLink said, "We're gonna be that intermediary and create that platform to do all the data mapping and translation.

So Nutra-Med, you can have the data in the format that you need it and, Customer A, you can have it how you want it, and Customer B, you can have it how you want it." It took the burden off of us to have to do that and figure that out and put it on TraceLink, who executed beautifully on it. And it makes sense. It's efficient because if Nutra-Med had to do it on a one-to-one, and the other competitor had to do it on one-to-one, and the other guy had to do it one-to-one, that's a lot of time, dollars, energy being wasted.

Instead, we have platform providers like TraceLink that say, "We can do it, we can do it better than anybody else, and we've let you, Nutra-Med, focus on what's important to you." So, for us, it's also a huge competitive advantage to start on this journey to be able to offer these solutions that others just can't even dream about.

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It makes us stickier and more important to our customers and to our network than ever before. So, experience working with the TraceLink team has been great. The truth is we're not a TraceLink customer, we're a TraceLink partner. So, TraceLink, until recently, wasn't even being paid by Nutra-Med.

But that did not ever stop TraceLink from supporting us and doing the right thing because of the value of the network. So, when we need help, we need support, we're establishing a connection with a customer of TraceLink, it's a phone call, it's an email, it's day, it's night, it's whatever it is, whatever we need.

We've always gotten that support. And that's also why it made it so easy to choose the MINT platform. Frankly, when we saw what TraceLink was doing for MINT, it really didn't even strike me that we should look at other providers because we have the experience we've had with TraceLink.

I knew the quality of service that we would be getting. I knew we'd be partnering with someone who I could rely on and depend on and wouldn't let us down. So, it was a very easy decision to say, "This is the right partner."

So one to two years from now after having onboarded with MINT, I expect a lot more transparency in our supply chain, a lot more real-time information exchange, and some of our resources to be freed up to do other things. We're starting with ASNs.

That made the most sense to us. Easier to implement. Low-hanging fruit with broad applicability.
So, while we work in the pharma industry, we also work in the OTC industry. We also work in dietary supplements. We also work in medical devices. But ASNs and packing slips and shipping notifications are common to all of our customers. So, our approach is to start with one customer, one transaction type, and then scale it, once we've demonstrated success, to everything else.

And that's scaling it horizontally across customers, and scaling it vertically across

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other types of transactions. So, we'll extend it to our other customer partners in a variety of industries. And then we'll scale to say, "We want to integrate purchase orders, we want to integrate forecasts, we want to integrate demand planning onto the MINT platform."

So, in two to three years from now, we're exchanging data over EDI in real time transparently with all of our partners, and no longer working in a 1000 different spreadsheets and over email and over text messages and over phone calls.

If a customer needs something on their time in their format, all it is is a click of a button for them. It's really gonna alleviate a lot of the pain points that we currently have of, well, this customer wants the spreadsheet colored in blue. This one wants it colored in green, and this one wants it striped with italics.

That doesn't matter anymore. We've provided the data and MINT does all of that for us. So, I'm really excited to see how it makes our interactions with our customers a lot simpler and allows us to focus on what we're really good and where we create value, which is the contract packaging piece.

Choose a solution partner that you get along with. And that seems a little trite to say, "someone you get along with," but it's so important. This is a long journey, and it's not an easy journey. There will be challenges, there will be failures.

But if it's someone that you trust and someone you can get along with, and at the end of the day are working towards the same common goal, you're going to be fine.

And we've found that with TraceLink, in the many years of knowing them and working with them, that's always been the case. We get along with the team. They have our best interests at heart, and the mission of saving patient lives, at the end of the day, is a common one.

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