

» AET® Films

The Company

AET Films, headquartered in New Castle, Delaware, is one of the largest North American manufacturers of oriented polypropylene (OPP) films, with annual sales exceeding USD \$275M. The company's products are used by the world's preeminent food and beverage manufacturers. AET Films products are used in labels for bottles and cans, packaging for confectionery and snack foods, pet foods, condiments, holographic films for gift-wrap and promotional packages, and specially designed barrier films used to extend the shelf life of snack foods, cheeses, meats and fresh produce. AET sells to converters who print and customize the film for the end customers.

What's Critical

It's a daunting challenge for a commodity business to differentiate itself from its competitors because, well, they are selling a commodity. But AET Films has found a way to do just that and the result is a devoted customer base that is actually willing to pay more for AET products.

"Only five to ten percent of our business is still on patent so we are a quasi-commodity business," said Jim Burger, director of information systems at AET Films. "Anything we can do to differentiate ourselves is good. SSA Outbound Document Services enables us to offer a higher level of service than our competitors, and that keeps us in business."



Finding the Right Solution

Most of what AET uses SSA Outbound Document Services (ODS) for is generated by its SSA ERP system. The tight integration to the SSA ERP allows SSA ODS to easily extend the standard document output capabilities delivering a streamlined process flow for AET.

"I had one customer call an account manager this morning who said they had dramatically increased the amount of material they were buying and now are getting too many copies of Certificates of Analysis [COAs]," Burger explained. "By simply checking a box in the user's profile, SSA ODS is able to make all COAs for future deliveries available as a PDF directly in the AET customer portal, so the user is no longer getting bombarded with so much paper."

AET ships approximately 275 million pounds of film a year. Each truck contains up to 25,000 pounds. Forty to fifty truckloads leave AET plants daily. All products move from the manufacturing floor to a hub warehouse that contains orders and products for multiple customers.

All documentation that travels with the shipments (i.e. manufacturing/shipping labels, packing lists, COAs, and customs documents) is generated by SSA ODS. AET also uses SSA ODS to produce bar codes, pallet labels, packing lists, warehouse documents, and invoices.

"There's no question that SSA Outbound Document Services gives us a competitive advantage, and, as a result, our customers are willing to pay a higher price for our products. Jim Burger, Director of Information Systems, AET Films

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Making it Pay

“The more we customize our communications for our customers, the harder it is for them not to do business with us,” said Burger. “Our goal is to integrate as tightly as possible with our customers, so it is quite uncomfortable for them to leave for a competitor, and SSA ODS enables us to build this kind of tight relationship.”

“We didn’t need to wait long to see a return on investment with SSA ODS. It was deployed in a week, and paid for itself in three months.”

Burger continued, “One of the real value-adds SSA ODS provides is the ability to do custom labeling. With SSA ODS, we have the ability to quickly create and deploy a new label format for a single customer with any variety of bar codes. That’s a unique capability in the marketplace and a real advantage for us.”

SSA ODS gives AET the flexibility to deal with converters large and small: “We ask our customers: ‘How do you want to communicate; how do you want us to relate?’ And SSA ODS supports that.

“We deal with very large multi-national businesses in addition to mom-and-pop operations. We have to and want to do business with all of them. SSA ODS gives us the flexibility to deal with companies large and small very easily,” concluded Burger.

About SSA Global

SSA Global™ (NASDAQ: SSAG) is a leading provider of extended ERP solutions for manufacturing, distribution, retail, services and public organizations worldwide. In addition to core ERP applications, SSA Global offers a full range of integrated extension solutions including corporate performance management, customer relationship management, product lifecycle management, supply chain management and supplier relationship management. Headquartered in Chicago, SSA Global has over 50 locations worldwide and its product offerings are used by customers in over 90 countries. For additional information, visit the SSA Global web site at www.ssaglobal.com

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