

Increasing treasury efficiency and reducing risk

Etex uses Fides to centralize operations and automate processes, increasing business efficiency



CUSTOMER PROFILE



Company: Etex
Industry: Manufacturing and building materials
Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium
Employees: 14,500
Website: www.etexgroup.com

Business Need

Belgian industrial company Etex needed to centralize operations and automate processes to improve efficiency, while seamlessly connecting multiple subsidiaries to 16 banks across 23 countries.

Solution

- Fides ARS and Fides EFT through City Financials TMS & SAP
- SWIFT Corporate BIC

Benefits

- Increased business efficiency
- Seamless TMS and ERP integration
- Automated payments and reporting
- Reduced risk through sanction filtering

About Etex

Etex is a Belgian industrial group that manufactures and sells a wide range of building materials, marketed worldwide under renowned brands. With over 14,500 employees working on 119 production sites in 45 countries and with an annual turnover of around 3 billion euros, Etex is an international player in sustainable building solutions.

Etex Group's Business Need

Etex's treasury is tasked with managing a high volume of transactions and reporting across 16 banks in 23 countries. Managing day-to-day operations was taking a significant amount of staff time. Etex determined that centralization of operations and process automation would deliver greater efficiency for its small treasury team, freeing up their time to work on more business-critical projects.

For bank connectivity, Etex treasury staff were primarily reliant upon the various portals provided by each individual bank. They also worked with a local company that provided a small level of connectivity across several, but not all, of the other banks.

Integration Delivers Significant Time Savings

Shortly before deciding to look for a centralized bank connectivity solution, Etex had switched TMS providers, moving to the City Financials TMS by ION Group. The company wanted to have the ability to retrieve bank statements and make payments directly through their TMS. ION Group is a Fides partner, and let the Etex team know about Fides' proven multi-banking solutions. The decision to go with Fides was an easy one.

Solution: Fides ARS and Fides EFT through City Financials TMS

Initially, Etex opted to just connect Fides with City Financials, setting up the ability for straight-through processing of SWIFT statements and payments, using its own corporate BIC. Everything is automated, providing a measurable time-savings and reduction in administrative work.

“It took my predecessor hours to screen through the different bank statements, reconciling partially in Excel and partially in our old TMS. Now, it takes me 15 minutes to reconcile 70 accounts.”

– Charline Renard, Treasury Analyst, Etex

Increased Efficiency and Control Through Automation

Etex has multiple accounting service centers, which are regionally centralized. A couple of years ago, treasury analyst Charline Renard was approached by the service center which manages central operations for Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and a few other countries. Having seen the success realized by treasury, the service center wanted to implement SWIFT connectivity for all its accounts as well.

Connecting 17 countries with 10 different banks in Europe plus an SAP ERP was a huge scope of work, taking two years of implementation time. Approximately 150 bank accounts were involved, and connectivity was needed for both statements and payments. This again proved to be successful.

Through process automation, Etex was able to achieve the business efficiency it had sought, saving hours of reconciliation time. The straight-through processing provided by connecting Fides with City Financials has also provided more control and better security on files exchanged between the Etex payment systems and the banks.

The SWIFT projects provided Etex with the opportunity to review and improve the payment file release process. With systems integrated and payment files encrypted, the process went from being semi-manual to fully automated.

Fides is able to convert any type of statement format, ensuring consistency. On the treasury side, the statements are always structured the same way, and the transfers are almost always zero balance movements. That makes it easy to automate transfers based on certain rules and triggers.

“Because our statements are now structured the same way, we have been able to automate a high percentage of transfers. When the system sees a specific narrative in a bank statement, it will automatically create the correct type of transfer.”

– Charline Renard, Treasury Analyst, Etex

The service center, on the other hand, is not working with structured numbers so there is still some manual work involved. However, with Fides in place, they were able to automate at least half of the statements and data to realize a significant time savings.

Sanction Filters Reduce Risk

One area of Fides services that Etex finds particularly helpful are its powerful sanction filters. Using Fides’ sanction filtering capabilities helps organizations manage and mitigate payment fraud, thereby reducing financial and reputational risk.

Fides pre-screens all transactions at the banking level, prior to market release, preventing any such transactions from being processed.

“Fides’ sanction filters have added a significant amount of value for us. There may occasionally be a legitimate payment that gets blocked or delayed, but it’s worth it.”

– Charline Renard, Treasury Analyst, Etex

Planning for Future

Etex plans to continue its relationship with Fides not only due to its excellent results but also because of the high level of customer service and support that Fides provides. Now, Etex is working with Fides to implement system connectivity to the Latin Americas region, as well as Asia and South Africa. The company is also considering Fides EFTweb as a backup portal solution in the event of any TMS system outages or downtime.

“Fides has always been supportive and helpful, and has prioritized work as needed to assist us when we have had issues of any kind.”

– Charline Renard, Treasury Analyst, Etex

About Fides

Fides is the global leader in multi-bank connectivity, enabling corporates to connect to any bank, in any region, through any channel. Fides helps more than 3,000 clients communicate with more than 10,000 banks globally within 170 countries. Whether you are using a Treasury Management System (TMS), Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), our Fides web applications, or any combination thereof, Fides is the only bank connectivity platform you need. As an independently operated subsidiary of Credit Suisse, Fides offers SWIFT connectivity to corporates who do not have their own SWIFT BIC code by leveraging the lead bank model. Fides also provides conversion, validation and security services. We are known for our outstanding project management and support services, ensuring a timely implementation and customer satisfaction. With Fides, clients can reach further, and connect faster.

Contact us

Phone: +41 44 298 65 66

Email: hello@fides.ch

www.fides.ch